

## **BT Group / EE merger inquiry provisional findings**

### **Response from 24 Seven Communications – received 20 November 2015**

Dear Sirs,

I founded 24 Seven almost 14 years ago, with the simple aim of providing better telecoms for businesses. Over that time, we've helped thousands of SMEs get to grips with all their telecoms needs and introduced new ways of working and innovative services.

I read with some concern, the provisional findings of the CMA into the merger between EE and BT. At a time when Ofcom are looking to increase competition, something our business has played an important role in, this will be bad for the industry, but worst of all – it will be bad for customers. There's a significant risk for end-users in all of this: that they'll be the forgotten partner.

EE is already the largest mobile network in the UK and BT has near monopoly in many areas of their business. This move will make things very difficult for smaller operators, and MVNOs such as my own.

Given the Government's commitment to empowering and equipping SMEs, as well as supporting market innovation within the telecoms and technology sectors, I feel Parliament should look more closely at the risks. I believe this merger should not be allowed to proceed without remedies to protect and support a healthy wholesale market. MVNO's rely on competition and difference in order to provide a service. Further consolidation of the market, will clearly hamper this. The merger will be a direct threat to MVNOs and the telecoms resale market in general.

I'd urge you to take into account the need for competition from smaller operators, not only to provide some accountability from these giants of our industry, but also to help drive innovation and provide customers with the best service.

We've built our business on providing a total telecoms solution for small businesses. I can only see this deal, should it go through, being bad news for businesses at large. Telecoms is an enabler and we need to ensure customers are given the power to hold industry to account.

Yours sincerely

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24 Seven Communications Ltd