Digital Comparison Tools Market Study
RESPONSE OF BROADBAND.CO.UK

SERVICES LIMITED

Your details

Q1: Title (e.g. Mr, Mrs, Ms, Dr, etc)   Mr

Q2: Forename   Edd

Q3: Surname   Dawson

Q4: Email   [✂]

Q5: What is your role / profession?

CEO - Broadband.co.uk

Q6: Are you representing yourself or an organisation?   An organisation

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Q7: If you are representing yourself rather than an organisation would you be content for us to include your name when we publish your response? *Respondent skipped this question*

Your organisation

Q8: What is the organisation's name?

broadband.co.uk

Q9: Please could you briefly explain the role of your organisation, including the sectors in which it operates or has most interest?

We are a broadband information website.

We offer free tools (such as our broadband speed test) and information with help and advice for getting the most out of broadband.

We also offer an Ofcom Accredited broadband price comparison engine.

Theme 1: Consumers' perceptions, use and experience of DCTs

Q10: 1. When and why do consumers use DCTs? To what extent to they trust them?

For help learning about broadband, diagnosing problems and searching for information on new suppliers.

It's hard to say how much they trust particular individual sites, at broadband.co.uk we aim to be completely transparent and impartial, which is why we value the Ofcom accreditation scheme.

Q11: 2.How do consumers choose which and how many DCTs to use?

[✂]

Q12: 3. What are consumers' expectations of DCTs - for instance in terms of market coverage and the relationships between DCTs and the suppliers they list?

We have no information on particular expectations.

Q13: 4. What are consumers' experiences of using DCTs? Do they benefit from using them and, if so, how? What works well and what could be improved?

We have no information on experiences.

We suspect our site must provide a benefit to people otherwise they wouldn't use us and return again and again.

Theme 2: Impact of DCTs on competition between suppliers of the services they compare

Q14: 5. What factors influence suppliers' use and choice of DCTs and why?

We've never engaged with suppliers to ask them this question.

Q15: 6. To what extent do DCTs make it easier for suppliers to enter the market, attract more consumers and engage more effectively with them?

We are open to working with any supplier.

We have to maintain a staff to keep our database of broadband deals up to date and have costs associated with running the rest of the site that our sales must support so we can't list suppliers without a commercial arrangement. [✂]

Q16: 7. How have DCTs affected competition between suppliers?What impact has this had on the price, quality and range of products offered by suppliers?

I would imagine that it has driven down pricing and encouraged suppliers to improve their levels of service and rollout new technologies. The very fact consumers can easily compare prices, features and local availability all in one place must drive competition.

Q17: 8. What are the barriers, if any, to DCTs increasing competition between suppliers, and how can these be overcome?

Access to wholesale availability data from BT Openreach in particular.

Q18: 9. In what ways, if any, have DCTs changed suppliers' approach to consumers - for instance in terms of whether they treat consumers who use DCTs differently to those who do not?

We have no information on whether consumers are treated differently like this.

Theme 3: Competition between DCTs

Q19: 10. In what ways do DCTs compete with each other -for instance in terms of coverage, the savings consumers can make, the services they provide, their ease of use, transparency and how they protect consumers' data?

We definitely strive to provide the best guides and tools as compared to other sites.

[✂]

Q20: 11. What factors influence how effectively DCTs can compete - for example, whether they can secure the necessary consumer data, supplier information or other data?

Raw availability data is something we'd like access to from BT Openreach, however we have to use a third party supplier.

Q21: 12. If there are barriers to competition between DCTs, how significant are these and how can they be overcome?

[✂]

Theme 4: The regulatory environment

Q22: 13.Are there any areas of regulation or self-regulation applying to DCTs that lack clarity, certainty, consistency, or enforcement?

We strongly support the ASA rules for standards of broadband advertising and the Ofcom Accreditation scheme.

Q23: 14. Do there appear to be any areas where DCTs may not be meeting competition or consumer protection requirements?

Not that we can think of.

Q24: 15. Do any aspects of regulatory approaches to DCTs need to change and, if so, why?

Not that we can think of.

Future developments, other comments and further contact

Q25: 16. Finally and in relation to all of the issues above, what likely developments over the next three years should we take into account and why?

We've been working in the sector for over 12 years now, the environment is pretty stable now.

Q26: Do you have any other comments you would like to add?

No

Q27: Would you be willing for us to contact you to discuss your response? Yes