

Dear Retailer,

## **Freeview national re-tune: 30 September 2009**

Improvements to the Freeview television platform mean that all Freeview TVs and boxes must be re-tuned from around lunchtime on 30 September. Satellite and cable services are not affected. Enclosed are some leaflets and a poster to help you highlight this event to your customers. More help and information, including product-specific re-tuning advice for the most popular models, is available at [tvretune.co.uk](http://tvretune.co.uk) or on an automated helpline at **08456 05 11 22**.

### **1. What is going to happen on 30 September?**

- The improvements will ensure that Channel Five is available to all Freeview homes at the point of switchover, and will also enable around half a million Freeview viewers to get Five for the first time from 30 September. For all 18 million UK homes with a Freeview TV or box, Channel Five and other services will move between multiplexes requiring a re-tune.
- Not all changes to the Freeview line-up have been confirmed yet, so please see [tvretune.co.uk](http://tvretune.co.uk) for updates on new channel launches and replacements.
- At the **Huntshaw Cross** and **Redruth main transmitters**, serving north Devon, west Cornwall, and the Isles of Scilly, all three commercial multiplexes will move frequencies (and change to the 8k transmission mode), and a re-tune will also be required from lunchtime onwards, to capture the UK-wide changes.

Even if the service name still appears on the on-screen menu, viewers will find that the channel itself is not available until they re-tune.

The technical process is expected to complete by lunchtime, and viewers with a Freeview TV or box will be able to re-tune their equipment at any point after that. Note that it is not essential to re-tune *on Wednesday 30 September itself* if they are not around, but they should re-tune as soon as they can to avoid losing services.

### **2. Will all digital equipment need to be re-tuned?**

Freeview TVs, Freeview boxes and recorders will need to be re-tuned. BT Vision and Top Up TV boxes (which use the Freeview signal) will also need re-tuning.

Note that while *some* Freeview equipment does automatically identify new services when they are first launched, the service moves on the 30 September are different, and we believe that most or all equipment will need to be re-tuned (sometimes called a "first time installation") by the viewer.

Analogue TVs do not need to be re-tuned.

### **3. Will anyone lose any services?**

- Around half a million current Freeview viewers will be able to receive Five for the first time after the re-tune, as it moves to a multiplex with higher coverage. Some viewers will lose coverage of other channels (see [tvretune.co.uk](http://tvretune.co.uk) for updates).
- Freeview viewers watching relay transmitters in areas that have already switched (Border, West Country and parts of Wales - less than half a million homes) will lose access to some services as they move to a commercial multiplex that is not broadcast from the relay transmitters.
- The Community Channel service on Freeview will be closed on 30 September in regions that have already switched over. It will close in other regions as they switch.

#### 4. What communications and support will there be?

- Consumer communications will include a new automated re-tuning phonenumber (08456 05 11 22) and website ([tvretune.co.uk](http://tvretune.co.uk)) providing product specific, easy-to-follow re-tuning guides.
- On-screen messages will run on the Freeview channels from Thursday 17 September, with full page on-screen messages in place of channels that have moved from Wednesday 30 September until Sunday 4 October.
- There will also be national press advertising on Sunday 27 and Wednesday 30 September, and there are the enclosed leaflets and posters.

#### 5. How should retailers prepare?

- Retailers that have already been through the digital switchover will know that re-tuning generates queries. Handling telephone traffic, while answering re-tuning questions in store and still enabling staff to sell, can require preparation.
- Some customers will be helped by friends and family, or will use instruction manuals or the internet for advice, but many will turn to their local retailers for help, and it is easy to underestimate the number of customers that will need help to re-tune their Freeview TVs and boxes.
- Some suggestions for how to manage this event include:
  1. Make sure your staff know how to perform a full re-tune of the equipment you sell now, or have sold recently. The exact menu terms, for example "Factory settings" or "Shipping conditions", are not always obvious to customers. Many re-tune enquiries are answered with simple reassurance that pressing "OK" when prompted is the right thing to do.
  2. By publicising the re-tune in advance, some people can be helped ahead of the day itself.
  3. Know where other help is available. A helpline and website are available, so use your answerphone messages and websites to publicise the number and web address.

Remember, re-tuning is an integral part of the Freeview platform, so customers buying equipment should be encouraged to re-tune from time to time. This will mean they continue to receive the channels and services available to them.

Yours faithfully,



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