

# MEDIA DELIVERY STRATEGIES

No single delivery platform is capable of supporting the whole range of broadcast services and reaching all types of receiving devices. EBU Members already employ multiple platforms to ensure universal reach of their services. Cooperative use of networks could further exploit synergies between different technologies.

## BACKGROUND

Broadcast services have evolved to include on-demand, data, hybrid, interactive, multi-screen and other innovative services in addition to the traditional linear programming. At the same time, the capabilities of receiving devices are expanding. Broadcast services can be accessed not only on conventional radio and TV receivers but also via connected TVs, personal computers and mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. Viewers and listeners are increasingly agnostic about the technology as long as it enables them to access media services at their convenience and on a device of their choice.

The traditional broadcast networks are still the principal means of delivery. As none of them are capable of reaching all viewers and listeners, EBU Members are present on multiple delivery platforms, including terrestrial, cable, satellite and, increasingly, IPTV. However, broadcast networks cannot support all types of service nor can they reach all user devices. Therefore, broadband networks are increasingly used, in particular, for the delivery of innovative services. Broadcast and broadband networks have always operated independently of each other. However, if networks were used in a cooperative way it may be possible to make use of synergies between different technologies. This would provide new opportunities to broadcasters, network operators and users.



## THE CHALLENGE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA

As EBU Members seek to offer a portfolio of linear and nonlinear services to their audiences, they are confronted with a number of challenges related to the growing number of delivery options and the proliferation of receiving devices. Two particularly relevant issues are:

1. *Linear radio and TV are the most popular services and, ideally, must be available on all platforms and on any receiving device.* The traditional distribution networks (e.g. terrestrial, satellite or cable) serve those users that are equipped with suitable broadcast receivers well. However, these networks cannot easily reach the growing population of alternative user devices, in particular, personal computers, smartphones and tablets. Hence, there is a risk that the users of these devices would never become a mass audience for Public Service Media (PSM).
2. *The reach of innovative media services (e.g. hybrid, on-demand, multi-screen) is constrained by the penetration and the capabilities of broadband networks.* These networks seldom have sufficient capacity for the delivery of broadcast services to large audiences, in particular, for popular live programmes. Most broadcast receivers still cannot connect to broadband networks. In addition, broadcasters have limited control over signal integrity and quality of service, while delivery costs could be excessive. Furthermore, the potential of wireless broadband technologies for the provision of broadcast services is largely unknown.

EBU Members must fulfil their remit, which implies providing their services free-to-air while leaving the choice of receiving device up to the user. Consequently, broadcasters need to be present on multiple platforms, since no single platform is capable of delivering the whole range of services to all types of receiving devices. This increases both the complexity and the delivery costs.

Terrestrial delivery is well known and in many countries a large part of the population relies on it for access to broadcasting content. In particular, digital TV networks are technically sound and cost efficient, they are successful on the market, and supported by broadcasters and the industry alike. Currently, over 40% of European viewers rely on terrestrial TV delivery. Nevertheless, the question of the future of terrestrial broadcasting has recently gained prominence, in particular, because of the pressure to release some, or all of the TV spectrum to other users. Reduced spectrum availability would constrain future developments and may lead to the decline and ultimately perhaps even the end of terrestrial broadcasting.

At the same time, wireless delivery is the only way to serve portable and mobile devices. The demand for mobile media is evident in the strong growth of mobile broadband, which is largely driven by media services.

## WHAT IS THE EBU DOING?

The EBU's *Strategic Programme on Future Distribution Strategies* was established to study the different distribution options, the on-going changes in the media distribution value chain and their impact on the PSM. This includes both broadcast and OTT delivery models. In addition, the group will consider future requirements on the delivery infrastructure, taking into account the evolution of media services, and technology, as well as, the changing user behaviour.

## FIND OUT MORE

EBU SP-FDS homepage

<https://tech.ebu.ch/groups/fds>

EBU SP-CTN-Mobile homepage

[tech.ebu.ch/groups/ctnmob](https://tech.ebu.ch/groups/ctnmob)

EBU Tech Report 026: 'Available Options for the Distribution of Broadcast Services'

<https://tech.ebu.ch/docs/techreports/tr026.pdf>

EBU Tech Report 027: 'Delivery of Broadcast Content over LTE Networks'

<https://tech.ebu.ch/docs/techreports/tr027.pdf>