

Q: What is meant by Digitalization of Cable TV?

A: It simply means that cable TV will bring digital signal to your doorstep. With this technology subscribers will get superior picture and sound quality, a large bouquet of channels, choice of channel, games and movies on demand.

Q: What are the advantages of digital cable TV?

A: The state of art digital technology will make available enhanced picture and sound quality, large no. of channels and value added services like movies on demand, broadband, games, pay per view, HD etc. The digital cable TV service will be available through a Set Top Box.

Q: Can weather affect digital Cable TV?

A: : No. Digital Cable TV is not affected by rainy weather unlike the DTH service.

Q: What are the mandatory dates of digitalization?

A: (i).The plan is for complete digitalization of cable television in the four metros by October 31, 2012. (ii).The next target will be cities with over 10 lakh population by March 2013. (iii).By the end of 2014, the entire country is scheduled to have phased out analogue cable TV.

Phases of Digitalization of CATV in India

Phase	City/Town/Area	State/Union territory	Date
Phase - 1	1. Municipal Council of Greater Mumbai area	Maharashtra	31th October, 2012
	2. National Capital Territory of Delhi	Delhi	
	3. Kolkata Metropolitan area	West Bengal	
	4. Chennai Metropolitan area	Tamil Nadu	
Phase - 2	1. Bangalore	Karnataka	31st March, 2013
	2. Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh	
	3. Ahmedabad	Gujrat	
	4. Pune	Maharastra	
	5. Surat	Gujrat	
	6. Kanpur	Uttar Pradesh	
	7. Jaipur	Rajasthan	
	8. Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh	
	9. Nagpur	Maharastra	
	10. Patna	Bihar	
	11. Indore	Madhya Pradesh	
	12. Bhopal	Madhya Pradesh	
	13. Thane	Maharastra	
	14. Ludhiana	Punjab	
	15. Agra	Uttar Pradesh	
	16. Pimpri - Chinchwad	Maharastra	
	17. Nashik	Maharastra	
	18. Vadodara	Gujrat	
	19. Faridabad	Haryana	

	20. Ghaziabad	Uttar Pradesh	
	21. Rajkot	Gujrat	
	22. Meerut	Uttar Pradesh	
	23. Kalyan - Dombivli	Maharashtra	
	24. Varanasi	Uttar Pradesh	
	25. Amritsar	Punjab	
	26. Navi Mumbai	Maharashtra	
	27. Aurangabad	Maharashtra	
	28. Solapur	Maharashtra	
	29. Allahabad	Uttar Pradesh	
	30. Jabalpur	Madhya Pradesh	
	31. Srinagar	Jammu and Kashmir	
	32. Visakhapatnam	Andhra Pradesh	
	33. Ranchi	Jharkhand	
	34. Howrah	West Bengal	
	35. Chandigarh	Chandigarh	
	36. Coimbatore	Tamil Nadu	
	37. Mysore	Karnataka	
	38. Jodhpur	Rajasthan	
Phase - III	All other urban areas (Municipal corporations/ Municipalities) except cities/ town/ areas specified for the corresponding Phase - I and Phase - II above.		30th September, 2014
Phase - IV	Rest of India		31st December, 2014

Q: Whether NCR region is covered in Phase-I?

A: No, it covers only the municipal boundaries of Delhi. The NCR region will be covered in phase-II.

Q: What is DAS or Digital Addressable System?

A: Digital Addressable System (DAS) is a description normally used for a set of hardware devices and connected software used at different stages of distribution of a TV channels through which the channels are transmitted in encrypted form. It contains the following attributes:

- The subscriber is given an authorization depending upon his request to view one or more of such encrypted channels of his choice.
- The subscriber will pay for those channels which he or she has chosen to view in such a system.
- The authorization is given and controlled by the Multi System Operator (MSO) who owns the DAS in a Cable Television Network. In this, he is often assisted by the Local Cable Operator.
- "Addressable system" signifies that a subscriber is identifiable.
- The Multi System Operator and the broadcaster will know the exact number of subscribers of a channel or a bouquet of channels and the amount that is due from that subscriber.

Q: What is a 'Set Top Box'?

A: "Set top box"(STB) is a device, which is connected to a television set at the subscribers' premises and which allows a subscriber to view encrypted channels of his choice on payment. The basic function of the Set Top Box is to decrypt/decode the signals of those channels which the subscriber has been authorized by the multi system operator to receive and to convert the digital signals into analogue mode for viewing on television sets.

Q: What is a smart card or viewing card?

A: A smart card or a viewing card essentially functions like an ATM Card and comes along with the Set Top Box and allows the signals of only those channels to be seen which the subscriber has contracted to pay for a particular period.

Q: Who is a Multi System Operator?

A: "Multi-System Operator (MSO)" means a cable operator who receives a programming service from a broadcaster and/or his authorized agencies and re-transmits the same or transmits his own programming service for simultaneous reception either by multiple subscribers directly or through one or more local cable operators (LCOs), and includes his authorized distribution agencies by whatever name called.

Q: What is the role assigned to a multisystem operator with respect to DAS ?

A: Introduction of addressable systems requires large investments in equipment such as Headend, encryption, Subscriber management system and set top boxes. This level of investment can not be done by the local cable operator. Hence an MSO sets the platform to receive signals from the broadcasters, adapts it to provide for addressability, keeps the consumer database, ensures compliance of quality of service and other regulations of TRAI and through Local cable operators or in some cases directly provides channels to subscribers. Thus the local cable operator is supposed to enter into an agreement with one of the permitted MSOs.

(As per TRAI guidelines)

Q: Does one have to buy a new smart card if one wants to change the subscriptions of channels (i.e., opt for different channels)?

A: No. Since in DAS subscriber is addressable, a subscriber has to only intimate the change in package to the multi system operator directly or through the Cable Operator, the multi system operator can change the privileges attached to the viewing card or smart card attached to the Set Top Box.

Q: Will the Set Top box also make available free to air channels along with pay channels?

A: Yes. As both free to air and pay channels shall have to be carried in digital domain in encrypted format, both shall be receivable with the same Set Top Box.

Q: Does one require a set top box to view only Free to Air Channels?

A: YES. In case if a subscriber does not subscribe to any pay channels and wants to view only FTA channels, he must have a set top box attached to his television set as all the FTA channels will be transmitted from Headend in digital mode with encryption because of mandatory digitalization.

Q :-Where and from whom can I get a Set Top Box?

A: A subscriber can get a Set Top Box as mentioned below :

- i) On a rental basis from the Multi System Operator under a Standard Tariff Package prescribed by the Telecom Regulatory Authority or under any alternative tariff package offered by the multi system operator.
- ii) A subscriber is also free to buy on outright basis the set top box from the Multi system operator.
- iii) A subscriber can also get a Set Top Box against a security amount paid to Multi System operator or Cable operator.

Q: What do I have to do to get the Set Top Box?

A: A subscriber has to contact the Local cable Operator and make an application in a format prescribed by the multi system operator /Cable operator and comply with the formalities as required in the application to get a set top box.

Q: What is a bouquet and what is A-la-carte ?

A: "Bouquet" and "A-la-carte" can be explained as:

- "Bouquet" or "Bouquet of channels" means an assortment of distinct channels, offered together as a group or a bundle."Bouquet rate" means the rate at which a bouquet of channels is offered to the distributor of TV channels or to the subscriber.
- "A-la carte" with reference to offering a TV channels means offering the channel individually on a standalone basis and "A-la-carte rate" means the rate at which a standalone individual channel is offered to a distributor of TV channels or to the subscriber.

Q: What is meant by 'Basic Service Tier' ?

A: - 'Basic service tier' means a package of free-to-air channels provided by a multi system operator /cable operator which can be viewed with a Set Top Box (Because of Digitalization) attached to the television set.

Q: What is the amount of Basic Service Tier Charges that is required to be paid to the local cable operator for FTA channels ?

A: There will be a Basic Service Tier (BST) consisting of a minimum of 100 free-to air (FTA) channels comprising of at least 5 channels of each genre namely news and current affairs, infotainment, sports, kids, music, lifestyle, movies and general entertainment in Hindi, English and regional language of the concerned region. 18 channels of Public Broadcaster and Lok Sabha channel will also form the part of the BST. While Multi-system Operator (MSO) has to offer the Basic Service Tier, it is not obligatory for subscriber to subscribe to the BST. Instead subscriber can form his own package of a maximum of 100 FTA channels. In either case the MSO cannot charge the subscriber more than Rs. 100/- per month.

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Q: Where and from whom can I get a Set Top Box?

A: A subscriber can get a Set Top Box as mentioned below :

- (i). Every multi service operator or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall provide to the

subscriber the Set Top Box conforming to the Indian Standard, if any, set by the Bureau of Indian Standards.
(ii). A subscriber can also get a STB on rent/hire basis and every MSO shall publicize the salient feature of various schemes available for outright purchase or rent or hire purchase of Set Top Boxes from it, in addition to the scheme as regards pricing, hire purchase or renting of Set Top Box, if any, specified by the Authority;
(iii) A subscriber can also get a Set Top Box against a security amount paid to Multi System operator or Cable operator.

Q: What do I have to do to get the Set Top Box?

A: A subscriber has to contact the Local cable Operator and make an application in a format prescribed by the multi system operator /Cable operator and comply with the formalities as required in the application to get a set top box.

Q: What is the cost of Set top Box ?

A:The cost of set top Box depends upon its various features and specifications. *The Standard Tariff Package prescribed by TRAI shall lay down the costs of basic Set Top Box.

Q: Will I be able to use DD direct plus STB for receiving Cable TV services ?

A:No.

Q: Will I be able to use DTH STB (For e.g. Tata Sky, Dish TV etc) for receiving Cable TV services ?

A:No.

Q: Will I be able to use Cable TV STB for receiving DD direct plus or DTH?

A:No

Q:Will the government provide free STB?

A:No, the government will not provide free STB. The STB will only be provided by MSOs & Cable Operators providing cable services in their respective areas of operation.

Q:Can I return the Set Top Box taken on Rental Basis?

A:Yes, The security deposit, if any, deposited by the subscriber for acquiring the Set Top Box, shall be refunded to him within seven days of return of the Set Top Box by the subscriber to the multi-system operator or its linked local cable operator. (As per TRAI guidelines).

Q:In how many days will I get the refund of security deposit in case of return of Set Top Box taken under Rental Scheme?

A:In cases where a customer chooses to return a set top box, the refund of security deposit, if any, shall be made within seven days. This will not apply to cases of return of set top box where it is found that the set top box returned has been tampered with by the subscriber. In such cases the cable operator /MSO shall inform the subscribers within 4 weeks about their decision in the matter. (As per TRAI guidelines)

Q:What are the remedies if set top box supplied by the Multi System Operator malfunctions?

A:In cases where there is a malfunction of a set top box supplied, by a cable operator / MSO, then he will arrange for repair or replacement, (without any extra charge for one year).This will not apply to cases of complaints of malfunctioning where the set top box has been tampered with by the subscriber. (As per TRAI guidelines)

Q:Has TRAI prescribed any scheme for outright purchase of Set Top Boxes?

A:No, There is no as such scheme. Every subscriber shall be free to buy a set-top box of approved quality from the open market, if available, which is technically compatible with the system of the multi-system operator and the multi-system operator or the linked local cable operator shall not force any subscriber to buy or take on rent or on hire purchase the set-top box from him alone.

Q:Whether any charges are to be paid for installation, repairs etc. of the STBs at the place specified by the subscriber ?

A:No charges for activation, installation, smart cards, and repairs (upto one year) are to be paid by the subscribers either in the standard tariff package or in the alternative tariff package. (As per TRAI guidelines)

Q:What is the price if subscriber choose pay channels with or without FTA's?

A:In case subscriber chooses Pay channel(s) with or without FTA channel(s) the MSO can fix a minimum monthly subscription not exceeding Rs.150/-. If the total value of the channels/ bouquets opted by the subscriber exceeds Rs. 150/- then actual subscription charges has to be paid. It shall be open to the subscriber to subscribe to the BST or one or more FTA channels or one or more Pay channels or bouquets offered by MSO or any combination of these. (As per TRAI guidelines)

Q:Do I have to subscribe to bouquets of pay channel compulsorily?

A:No. The Tariff Order issued by TRAI mandates that the pay channels will be offered on a-la-carte basis by the broadcasters /multi system operator and Cable operator. A-la-carte basis means that the pay channels will be offered individually with a maximum retail price for each channel fixed by the broadcasters. Bouquets of pay channels can also be offered only in addition to the a-la-carte offer and not otherwise, and the right to choose will remain with the subscriber. The MSOs can fix the retail tariff and also package and price offerings.However, the sum of the a-la-carte rates of channels, forming part of a bouquet, shall not exceed 1.5 times the rate of the bouquet. Further, the a-la-carte rate of any channel shall not exceed 3 times the average channel rate of the bouquet.

Q:Will the cable operators be eliminated because of DAS?

A:No.

Q:Will I need two set top boxes if I have two TVs at home ?

A:The subscriber will need two set top boxes if he has two TVs at home, otherwise with one set top box connected to two TVs, he will be able to watch only one programme at any give point of time on the two TVs.

Q:Will I have to pay twice the amount for pay channels as compared to a single TV?

A:As far as subscription amounts for pay channels/free to air channels are concerned, the tariff fixed by TRAI is on per connection (i.e. per TV) basis. However, a lower subscription for the second TV in a home is possible at the option of the service providers (i.e. broadcasters, MSOs and cable operators).

Q:Why do I have to pay for the free to air channels?

A:When we pay for a pay channel, we are mainly paying for two components of it., viz.,

a) payment to the broadcasters who own the channels and who charge for the "content", and
b) payment to the MSO/Cable Operators who own the cable network infrastructure and who have to be paid for transmitting signals to our homes (which is the "carriage" part).

In the case of FTA channels, there is no payment for "content" component to the broadcasters, but payment will have to be made for the "carriage" component because the physical infrastructure of cable network is used for transmitting signals.

Q:How do I know which channels are free to air and which are pay? What are the Maximum Retail Prices declared by broadcasters for pay channels?

A>Your local cable operator and multi system operator will give you the details along with the application form. The details will also be available on the Broadcasters site. Press releases from Broadcasting and Cable services division as available on TRAI's website www.trai.gov.in also give the details.

Q:Why should there be advertisements when a consumer is required to pay for pay channels?

A:There are two streams of revenue for a broadcaster. One is the subscription revenue the other is the advertisement revenue. A rough estimate is that approximately 70% of the revenue is from advertisements and 30% from subscription .If the revenue stream from advertisements is reduced to nil a Broadcasters will have no other option but to meet expenses from subscription revenue. Hence cost to consumer will further increase. The ceiling on MRP of Rs 5.35/- per pay channel per month by TRAI has been decided by TRAI taking into account this important factor.

Q:I want to subscribe to digital cable TV service? What is the procedure?

A:You have to fill an application form that would be made available either by the local cable operator or the MSO catering to the area. Every subscriber whose application has been accepted will be given a unique ID number.

Q:What are the contents of the application form ?

A:The application form will contain details such as payment terms, reasons on which the application is liable for rejection, number of TV sets requiring STBs, location where connection desired, individual channels and/ or bouquet(s) desired, value added services, if any, procedure for handling complaints either in the application form or separately in the form of booklet /pamphlet indicating, possible areas /causes of complaint, contact details of at least two persons responsible for redressal of the complaint, procedure to be followed in getting the complaint redressed, areas of complaint, maintenance / service policy either as a part of the application or as a separate booklet/pamphlet. **(As per TRAI guidelines)**

Q:Is there any time limit in which my application for cable connection is to be responded to by the cable operator?

A:An application duly signed and complete in all respects for subscribing to digital cable TV service, from any subscriber, residing in the area specified in the Registration Certificate of the cable operator should be responded to by the cable operator within five working days of receipt of application, indicating the deficiencies/shortcomings, if any, in the application, as the case may be, expected date of activation of the connection /reactivation of connection. **(As per TRAI guidelines)**

Q:Is there any time limit for activation/reactivation of the cable connection ?

A:In case, the cable operator finds that it is possible to provide connection, i.e, there is no technical non-feasibility, the activation/reactivation of the connection should be completed within two working days of the completion of the formalities on the part of the subscriber. **(As per TRAI guidelines)**

Q:Can a subscriber's application be rejected on the ground that the premises where the connection is to be provided falls within other cable operators area ?

A:No request from a subscriber for cable service at a location which falls within the area for which a cable operator has a valid registration certificate to provide cable service can be rejected by that cable operator, solely on the ground that the location or the household has been demarcated for that other cable operator authorized to provide cable service in the same area. **(As per TRAI guidelines)**

Q:Whether there is a system for shifting of the connection within the same area or from one area to another area ?

A:Yes, In the case of subscriber shifting his premises within the service area of such operator, he shall be given a transfer voucher for provisioning of new set top box on the same terms and conditions on the new address.

Q:Whether there is a provision for complaint handling ?

A:All complaints received by a cable operator/ MSO in a DAS area should be registered and a serial number of the complaint given to the complainant. The complaints should be taken up for redressal preferably in chronological order of registration. **(As per TRAI guidelines)**

Q:What is the arrangement for lodging complaints as per the QOS regulations ?

A:Each cable operator/MSO has to maintain a customer service center or help desk from 8:00 hrs to 00:00 hrs, 7 days a week with a toll free no. A facility for automatic recording of complaints or some other mechanism for registering of complaints will be in place. **(As per TRAI guidelines)**

Q:Whether there is a time limit for attending to the complaints ?

A:The following benchmarks are to be observed in regard to the redressal of complaints:

- i) All complaints will be attended to or at least responded to within eight hours of receipt of complaint, except those received during the night which will be attended to the next day and satisfaction report obtained from subscriber.
- ii) Where it is not possible to attend /respond to the complaint within this time limit, the response should indicate the anticipated time for redressal of the complaint.
- iii) If it is not feasible to comply with the benchmarks indicated hereafter for reasons beyond the control of the cable operator /MSO, the reasons for the same will be communicated to the subscriber, while responding to the complaint.
- iv) A system of rebates in the form of discounts to the subscriber due to interruptions on account of no signal or weak signal or disruption of service, will be put in place by the cable operator or MSO, as the case may be, and the subscriber should be made aware of the same.

(As per TRAI guidelines)

Q:Whether a notice has to be given for disruption in service for preventive maintenance ?

A:In case signals have to be disrupted for facilitating preventive maintenance, the subscriber should be given a clear notice of at least 3 days, if the disruption is likely to be for one day or less and the notice period shall be 15 days if the disruption is likely to be for more than a day. (As per TRAI guidelines)

Q:Whether carrying identity cards is necessary for the employees of cable operators?

A:Yes, All cable operators / MSOs will ensure that their representative(s) carry proper identification along with a photograph, and are polite in their behavior with the subscribers. **(As per TRAI guidelines)**

Q:Is there any specific billing procedure ?

A:Every multi-system operator shall offer cable TV services on both pre-paid and post-paid payment options to

the subscriber and shall be responsible for generation of bills for the subscribers. It shall be open to the subscriber to choose either the pre-paid or post-paid option.

In case of post-paid bills, the subscriber shall be billed, generally on monthly basis and the bill shall contain the Service Tax Registration Number and the Entertainment Tax Registration number of the multi-system operator. The entries in the bills shall be itemized to indicate the price of individual channels or bouquet of channels along with the names of channels in the bouquet, charges for basic service tier and the channels comprised therein, charges for set top box, taxes along with the rates of taxes levied and the charges for value added services availed by the subscriber, if any. Provided that this sub-regulation shall not in any manner prevent the multi-system operator from promoting different schemes of payment.

Every multi-system operator or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall on request from a subscriber, who has been provided pre-paid service, supply to such subscriber, at a reasonable cost, the information relating to the itemized usage charges showing actual usage of service:

Q:Whether Subscriber can change its billing from post paid to pre paid or vice versa ?

A:Every multi-system operator shall, on request from the subscriber, change his payment plan from pre-paid to post-paid or from post-paid to pre-paid, without any extra charge.

Q:Whether there is a time limit for making payments and penalties for delayed payments ?

A:: Every multi-system operator or its linked Local Cable TV Operator, as the case may be, shall give fifteen days time, from the date of the bill, to every subscriber for making payment of the bill and in case the subscriber fails to make payment after expiry of the due date of payment, the multi-system operator or its linked local cable operator may charge simple interest of 12% per annum on the amount due for the delay in making payment.

Q:Whether a notice period has been prescribed prior to disconnection of service by Local Cable Operator ?

A:No multi-system operator or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall disconnect the cable services to the subscriber without giving prior notice of at least fifteen days to such subscriber indicating the reasons for such disconnection and the period of fifteen days shall be reckoned from the date of receipt of the notice of disconnection by the subscriber.