

UK Film Council
Response to
Second Consultation by the BBC Trust on an
application from the BBC Executive to define and
promote an IP television standard
(‘Project Canvas’)

September 2009

1. The UK Film Council is the Government-backed lead agency for film in the UK. Our goal is to help make the UK a global hub for film in the digital age, with the world's most imaginative, diverse and vibrant film culture, underpinned by a flourishing, competitive film industry.
2. We have read the new documents in relation to Project Canvas from the BBC Executive, as published by the BBC Trust, with great interest.
3. In overall terms, we would reiterate the points made in our response to the first consultation by the Trust on the subject of Canvas and submitted in April.
4. As we stated in that response, the UK Film Council strongly welcomes the proposal to create Project Canvas. In particular, we believe that it potentially provides a platform for audiences to access innovative services offering access to film, cultural content and other forms of content in new ways.
5. By delivering a rich mix of video content to the living room, Canvas will help to encourage the creation of new legal services of all kinds offering audiences opportunities to engage with on-demand content in many new ways. This should help to drive take-up of broadband and build Digital Britain.
6. Also as previously stated, by encouraging take-up of such legal services, Canvas will help to stem online copyright theft and infringement which is currently widespread in relation to digital content, including films and other audiovisual material. We believe it will be necessary however to have rigorous technological measures in place to prevent people from accessing material which infringes copyright.
7. For this reason, we are pleased that the new documents illustrate in a more detailed way how Internet Service Providers (ISPs) will be able to participate as shareholders in the new venture. We believe that having a stake in a venture such as Canvas will give ISPs an additional incentive to address the issue of online copyright theft and infringement.
8. We would note that research which has become available to us since we submitted our response to the first consultation provides hard evidence that consumers also see the current lack of availability of internet functionality via the television as a significant barrier to taking up legal online services.
9. A survey conducted by IPSOS MediaCT in May 2009 consisting of online interviews with 1006 people, who comprised a representative group aged 15-50, showed that 52% were interested in downloading a film from a legal service at the same time as it was available on DVD. However, among those not interested, 45% said that the principal barrier to entry was that their television was not connected to the internet. Therefore, the introduction of Canvas to the market and the ability of third-parties to access its services and, for example, to offer films legally for download is potentially a very significant step in addressing this barrier to take-up of online services.

Ends.