

**ONLINE CONTENT
EC CONSULTATION
SES GLOBAL
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Types of creative content and services online

2. Are there other types of content which you feel should be included in the scope of the future Communication? Please indicate the different types of content/services you propose to include.

As a preliminary remark, SES GLOBAL considers that online content should be defined irrespective of the distribution medium, independently of the fact whether one single distribution mechanism is used for its transmission (e.g. satellite Direct-to-Home reception) or a combination of several distribution platforms (e.g. satellite feeding up cable head-ends, or hybrid platforms satellite + terrestrial complementary ground component for e.g. mobile TV/radio).

Among those services which should be covered by the Commission initiative, any associated B2B services that are not editorial but facilitate the cross-border distribution and aggregation of various sources of online content, e.g. for an easy navigation over catalogues or databases (typically EPGs or Internet portals), should be promoted as key components of access to online content.

For instance, SES ASTRA has launched a new digital satellite infrastructure through a specific company called *Entavio* based near Munich. *Entavio* provides a set of services designed to support broadcasters and ISPs in their tasks of administering users' access to content, in terms of marketing, billing, managing hotline & call centres, smart card logistics or dealer / technology training in order, notably to facilitate the development of all forms of PPV or VOD.

Consumption, creation and diversity of online content

3. Do you think the present environment (legal, technical, business, etc.) is conducive to developing trust in and take-up of new creative content services online? If not, what are your concerns?

A remaining crucial issue is the circulation of content to all & everywhere in Europe. A pan-European infrastructure ensuring 100% coverage of the EU and beyond can address

the connectivity needs of isolated / remote regions (e.g. islands, mountains, less developed regions, etc.).

For instance, SES ASTRA has recently launched ASTRA2Connect, a unicast (point-to-point) stand-alone platform enabling triple-play services in 35 European countries. This is aimed at facilitating an immediate Europe-wide access to a broad variety of content (IPTV, Internet, any databases) across borders and under any standard.

In order to guarantee the strong presence of a pan-European backbone distribution system such as satellite that is able to operate either as a stand-alone technology or as a complement to others, there is a need for harmonization of licensing procedures and conditions of E-communications networks & services plus the need to support EU harmonization of the use of radio frequencies.

5. How important for you is the possibility to access and use all online content on several, different devices? What are the advantages and / or risks of such interoperability between content and devices in the online environment? What is your opinion on the current legal framework in that respect?

Online content already tends to be made available on any device. This is one direct consequence of the plurality of distribution systems which either compete or complement each other.

SES GLOBAL is convinced that mobile services have strong development potential, as mobile TV and radio reception are likely to be made available everywhere in Europe within the next few years. Presumably, as documented by multiple surveys and trials, end-users are unlikely to be 'device neutral', e.g. they will look at mobile TV on small handhelds differently from watching TV on large screens at home. They will behave differently and/or expect content in a different format or even ask for different content. The same tends to happen for content accessible through PCs and experiences with interactive TV or video-on-demand.

Another trend has developed: this is the joint provision of various contents on several, different devices that are related to the same source. For instance, APS (ASTRA Platform Services), acting as a service provider of *Entavio*, introduced "Blucom interactive": this new interactive service developed by APS is based on Bluetooth technology enabling wireless transfer of data over short distances and enables an individual dialogue between the end-user and the TV broadcaster or ISP in relation with a certain content. When people are watching TV, additional information related to a TV channel is transmitted via Bluetooth from a digital set-top-box STB (or directly via GPRS/UMTS) to a mobile phone. Receiving and displaying the content on the mobile phone is free of charge if the

user has a Blucom compatible STB (no connection to a mobile network is needed). A return channel is made available via SMS (text message) or GPRS.

A serious concern lies with copyright issues when to be addressed in a mobile environment: how to guarantee that the same content is made available across borders?

New business models and transition of traditional ones into the digital world

8. Where do you see opportunities for new online content creation and distribution in the area of your activity, within your country/ies (This could include streaming, PPV, subscription, VOD, P2P, special offers for groups or communities for instance schools, digital libraries, online communities) and the delivery platforms used. Do you intend to offer these new services only at national level, or in whole Europe or beyond? If not, which are the obstacles?

As illustrated above, SES Global believes in an evolution of delivery platforms as follows:

- ❖ Increasingly addressed & individualized content (notably with encryption facilities)
- ❖ Accessibility of content everywhere & anywhere
- ❖ Audiovisual / media content to mobile users & across borders
- ❖ B2B associated services to content providers

The main obstacles to this evolution, as identified above, are authorization of networks / services, access to radio spectrum and copyright related issues.

Networks

20. The Internet is currently based on the principle of "network neutrality", with all data moving around the system treated equally. One of the ideas being floated is that network operators should be allowed to offer preferential, high-quality services to some service providers instead of providing a neutral service. What is your position on this issue?

SES GLOBAL has always defended an open standards policy open to all business models, precisely to enable the vastest circulation of content across borders. Any preferential treatment granted to individual service providers, likely to distort the market with a direct impact on distribution players, should be very well justified from a competition point of view.

What role for public authorities?

32. What could be the role of national governments / regional entities to foster new business models in the online environment (broadband deployment, inclusion, etc.)?

National and regional / local governments should be giving a certain level of priority to the deployment and access to online services through specific programmes fostering both infrastructure (lower costs to encourage e-inclusion) and content. Online content should be made accessible in particular through the development of governmental applications. Regulatory measures should be as limited as possible in order to allow creative content and the development of new services to take place.

33. What actions (policy, support measures, research projects) could be taken at EU level to address the specific issues you raised? Do you have concrete proposals in this respect?

Structural Funds, although not directly in the hands of the EU, could be a good vehicle to stimulate the development of online services in Europe.