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DIF gives cautious welcome to European Commission's rejection of mandated standards in digital interactive TV

The Digital Interoperability Forum (DIF), which includes some of the foremost players in Europe's world-leading digital television industry, today welcomed the European Commission's decision at present not to impose a mandatory technical standard for digital interactive television in the European Union. However, DIF reacts with caution to the European Commission's proposals to encourage implementation of a particular technology (MHP) and to permit Member States to offer consumer subsidies for certain digital television receivers.

Sheila Cassells, Chair of DIF and Head of Economic Policy at BSkyB, said: "DIF welcomes the Commission's acknowledgement that at present there is "no clear case" for mandating standards in digital interactive television. However, further details about the proposed consumer subsidies and promotional measures are required in order to ease potential concerns about inequality in the treatment of different technologies."

Ms Cassells added: "DIF members will continue to be active in the development of industry-led solutions. We look forward to further constructive dialogue with the European Commission as it prepares for a second review in 2005. We will continue to work with other stakeholders including DVB to ensure that interactive services can be made available on the widest possible choice of platforms and devices."

end

About the Digital Interoperability Forum

The Digital Interoperability Forum (DIF) was created in November 2003 to promote industry-led solutions that make digital and interactive television services available on the widest choice of platforms and devices. DIF represents nineteen companies from Europe's world leading digital television industry, including some of the foremost players in the delivery of digital and interactive television through European satellite, cable and digital terrestrial platforms: Advanced Digital Broadcast, BSkyB, CANAL+, Flextech, Liberate, Microsoft TV, Nagravision, NDS, ntl, Numéricable, OpenTV, Pace Micro Technology, Premiere, Sky Italia, Telewest, TF1, TPS, UPC/Chello Media and ZetaCast.