

The COTS Project

Commercial, operational, technical standards
for independent local access networks

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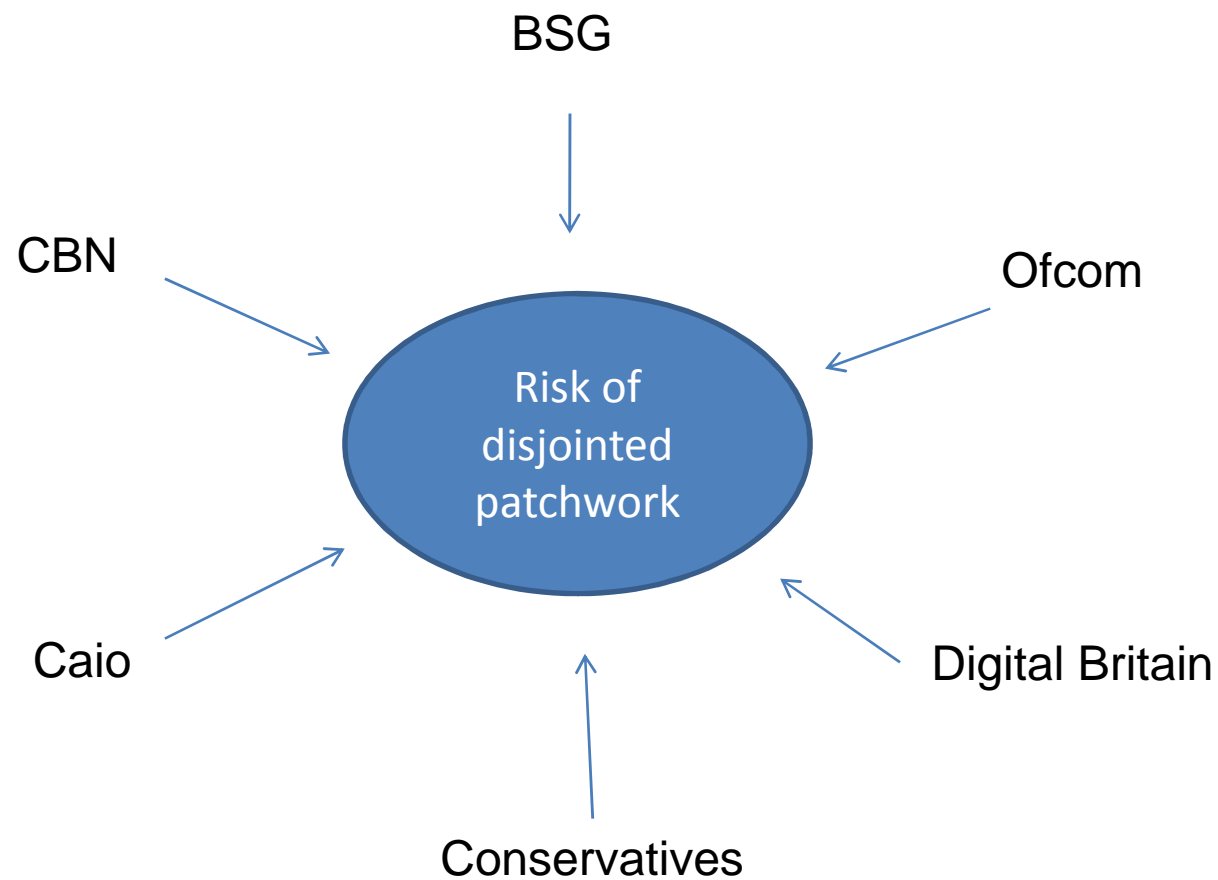
Agenda

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| Panel One | The policy context
- BSG, BIS, Ofcom |
| Panel Two | Perspectives on requirements
- IFNL, BSG, CBN, Malcolm Taylor
- Questions for clarification |
| Coffee Break | |
| Discussion | Perspectives from the floor
- wrap-up and next steps |

What we hope to achieve today:

1. Agreement that this is an issue for the industry to address
2. Confirmation of willingness to engage and participate
3. Initial thoughts on requirements, blue sky thinking on solutions

What's the problem?



Why?

- High costs involved in providing services over multiple local access networks – essentially the cost of doing things differently
- Standardisation/ harmonisation required at commercial, operational and technical levels in order to reduce these costs
- But mustn't inhibit the scope for innovation at the local level

Our objective

“to work with stakeholders to develop a low cost standardised approach to enable scale service providers to offer retail services over local or community-led open networks to end users.”

As a result consumers and small businesses should be able to access a wide choice of service providers, regardless of how the underlying infrastructure is either provisioned or owned.

It should be in the interests of all local or community-led projects to be compliant with this approach.

Why now?

- Why now?
 - Growing discussion and interest in this issue within the industry over the last 18 months
 - New willingness to engage in finding a solution
 - Consensus emerging that industry should address this problem
 - Approval of SYDR and USC & Final Third Project in DBR give greater need for this to be examined
 - In other markets, the issue is being discussed

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- What will the project look at?
 - Initial thoughts, based on discussions with stakeholders:
 - Wholesale product set
 - Operation, administrative and maintenance issues
 - Other commercial and contractual arrangements
 - But, scope is an issue to be discussed – interested in views today
 - Ultimately, steering group will take a view

Guiding principles

- The aim of this initiative is to promote inclusion, accessibility and consumer choice
- The approach should seek to minimise cost and complexity for both network operators and service providers
- The approach should maximise the opportunity for innovation at the local level, and the retail level
- The approach should seek to standardise and aggregate service elements where necessary to minimise cost and prevent geographic segmentation
- The approach should where possible build on existing work and standards
- The approach should be agnostic regarding the underlying access infrastructure
- Building on ALA principles, discussed with stakeholders
- Technology neutrality – this project should not just consider different fibre architectures, but other fixed and non-fixed technologies.

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- Issues raised
 - Project is not seeking to defend and entrench obsolete or out-dated business models
 - Agnostic on the likely solution – more interested in scoping the requirements first

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- Process
 - After today, steering group with an independent chair will be established over the summer, first meeting in September
 - Steering group will require a willingness to participate and engage from those who wish to be a part of it
 - How work will be undertaken will be an issue for steering group, but anticipate series of working groups examining specific issues
 - Have held initial discussions with standards bodies, who are open to considering requirements developed by COTS
 - Steering group work will regularly come back to wider industry, for consultation and feedback – we will facilitate an open and transparent process

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- Timescales
 - Industry consensus takes time
 - Indicative 9-12 month timescale, depending on work required
 - Steering group will take a view