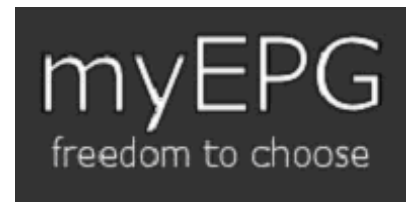


Media Release



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myEPG group fights to stop monopoly interests hijacking digital TV rollout in Australia

Community group launches online petition to put control of digital TV experience back into the hands of consumers

Australia – 25 July, 2008 –myEPG, a community-based group of home theatre PC (HTPC) enthusiasts, today announced the launch of its website (www.myepg.com.au) and an online petition and campaign designed to guarantee consumers access to crucial electronic guide information necessary to take full advantage of digital television. Access to this information is currently under threat.

The electronic program guide or EPG is the cornerstone of many of the advanced features that make digital TV a truly revolutionary broadcast technology, such as one button program scheduling and automatic detection of scheduling changes. While digital TV has been available in Australia since January 2001, the television networks withheld the provision of an EPG until January this year, denying early adopters the use of many of the features available on their equipment.

The guide information currently being broadcast by the networks is now under threat, as TV stations seek to put severe restrictions on its use. These restrictions would force all current owners of personal video recorders (PVRs) and HTPCs to buy, some at great expense, alternative equipment that has been 'approved' or even sponsored by the TV

networks in order to take advantage of EPG features and services. It also means those who currently have not made the switch to digital TV will have a severely limited choice of equipment when they do. The Government is set to switch off analogue broadcasting in 2013.

As part of the guide 'crackdown', TV networks are also trying to prevent consumers from having access to online EPGs delivered to PVRs and HTPCs via the web. Connecting a digital TV recorder to the internet has the potential to provide consumers with a powerful scheduling tool that will allow them search for upcoming programs in a variety of ways, record all episodes of a series regardless of when they are shown or on what channel, and remotely schedule recordings from their work PCs or mobile phones. TV networks are actively attempting to deny these features to consumers by exercising their copyright over the time and title information contained in the weekly schedules. This effectively prevents any company from developing such 'value-add' services in Australia.

Australia is one of the few countries that has rolled out digital TV without ensuring public access to EPG information. The current regime of self regulation within the industry is not working. The myEPG group believes the Government and the broadcasting regulator ACMA must step in immediately and make the unencumbered provision of EPG information a mandated part of any public digital broadcasting license to bring Australia into line with the rest of the world in terms of EPG services.

According to Mike Hancock, spokesperson for the myEPG group, *"It is madness that Australian FTA TV broadcasters think that the Australian public deserves so much less than the rest of the world. The fact that the biggest software company in the world, Microsoft, has been unable to negotiate any kind of program guide in Australia demonstrates how much control the television networks have been able to exert over our broadcast spectrum, and as a result, how far behind in this area we are, when compared to the rest of the world."*

The myEPG group are urging all consumers to visit its website at www.myepg.com.au and sign its online petition, as well as writing to the ACMA and relevant Government ministers. Template letters are available for download from the website along with all necessary contact information. The group believes that if action isn't taken now, the current network-

controlled guide information provider, HHW Limited, will have a monopoly on all guide information available in Australia, both print and online, and will be in a position to dictate how consumers watch television once analogue broadcasting is discontinued.

Hancock further observed, *“Other countries have operated an open system from the start of digital television. The networks' EPG data has been freely available to everybody, and accessible on any kind of digital recording equipment. In addition, there are many companies who have taken the opportunity to use the original guide data, and deliver a range of value added services and extras. This means that in those countries, consumers have a wide range of choice over their guide supplier and the equipment they can purchase to use the guide. If we don't act now, Australian consumers will be denied these benefits for the foreseeable future.”*

ENDS

About myEPG

myEPG are a group of volunteer lobbyists who share a common passion for digital TV in Australia. The group is not associated with any TV broadcaster, TV guide business or other interested commercial operation. The myEPG initiative was started purely to serve the DTV viewing public of Australia, and to oppose the obvious manipulative actions of parties with vested interests in controlling access to guide data in this country..

myEPG aims to have the appropriate Australian regulations and / or laws changed to ensure that FTA TV program guide data is available to all without restraint or fear of legal consequences. myEPG believes the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) can make this happen by setting conditions on the FTA TV broadcasters' licences. myEPG therefore intend lobbying the ACMA together with those who influence / control them. The ACMA is a federal government body, therefore it is there to serve the public of Australia by acting in the public's best interests.

More information can be found at the myEPG website at www.myepg.com.au.