



Government Removes 12-Minute Advertisement Duration Cap for Television Channels

Ad Duration Cap Removed to Enable Fair Competition and Ensure Ease of Doing Business

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The Government has decided to remove the 12-minute advertisement duration cap for television channels.

The advertisement duration cap for Television was introduced in the year 2006 under the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994. Since then, the TV broadcasting sector has undergone significant changes. In 2006, there were only 62 TV channels, compared to more than 900 channels at present.

At that time, Cable TV, the main platform for delivering TV channels, was analog and had limited carriage capacity, offering consumers very limited choice. Following the complete digitization of the Cable TV sector, all TV distribution platforms, including DTH, Cable TV, HITS and IPTV, are now digital. These platforms currently carry 300 and 500 channels or more, meeting diverse consumer needs and enabling greater variety. Consequently, there is now adequate competition in market dynamics.

In view of the changes that have occurred in the TV broadcasting sector, a need was felt to revisit the stipulations relating to advertisement duration. In India, the sector is heavily dependent on advertising, irrespective of whether a channel is 'pay' or 'free-to-air'. Furthermore, there was a non-level playing field for traditional TV channels vis-à-vis digital media, where no such stipulation on advertisement cap regulation exists.

The Ministry of I&B is of the view that there exists adequate competition in the market within the TV industry and between the TV industry and digital media. The Government has decided to remove the advertisement duration cap to enable fair competition and ensure ease of doing business.

The decision shall come into effect from the date of notification of the amendment in the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 in the Gazette.

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