

Why TV advert breaks could soon get longer – and more frequent

TV advert breaks could get longer and more frequent as part of a review of UK broadcasting rules.

The regulator, Ofcom, has said market developments, including the availability of online streaming services, mean it would consider an overhaul of advertising regulations.

Currently, public broadcasting channels are limited to an average of seven minutes of advertising an hour across the day, while private channels are allowed nine minutes for advertising and an extra three for teleshopping.

Ofcom said that while the expanded choice of entertainment was “generally positive” for audiences it “put pressure on broadcasters, squeezing revenues, and made it harder for them to maintain their current offer”.

The regulator said: “We’re scoping a range of options, but before we form any plans we’ll listen to different views and examine what TV viewers say.

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“We need to strike the right balance between protecting viewers’ interests and sustaining our traditional broadcasters, which includes helping them compete with American streaming platforms.”

Ofcom said it expected to give more details about the potential changes later in the summer.