
Rebranding channels

Posted by King Mob - 15-05-2008 11:11

I see that a couple of freeview channels have undergone a chummy rebranding lately. And quite rightly - who's going to be interested in watching a channel called 'UKTV'? It hardly leaps up at you out of the listings. Far better to call it something blokey, like 'Dave'. Something better suited to endless repeats of QI and Top Gear. And something called 'The Fiver' has manifested itself on our channel list of late. M'lovely wife informs me that it previously went by the unappealing monicker of '5 Plus', or suchlike.

Well, why stop at the cheapo freeview channels? The BBC stations (remember when channels were called 'stations'? Wasn't that better? 'Station' implies something solid, somewhere you actually stop. An earmark of a superior social position. 'Channel' just seems to suggest a conduit for ephemeral waft, a pathway for meaningless drivel such as that spouted by spirit mediums) are rebranded these days in all but name, what with ONE's synchronised hippos and THREE's flowers and milkshakes. 'One' actually works pretty well for a station that still insists on styling itself as the nation's trusted informer and quality entertainer of choice, but to give your channels a number of lesser import equates to an admission of inferiority. Why not consider something more fitting? I've done a bit of blue sky thnking, and I reckon BBC2 could really dig out the niche audience it needs by calling itself 'Polenta'. Similarly, BBC3 needs to ditch the meaningless numerical reference and go by a name that's going to reel in the youth dem - I suggest 'Flange', or perhaps 'Cockpot'. By contrast, meaningless numerical references are what get BBC4 viewers hot, so from now on it'll be known as '239876928', although I'm flexible on the exact ordering of the digits.

Re:Rebranding channels

Posted by Lyra - 15-05-2008 12:05

apparently Dave has been very successful. I think you're right. It's only a matter of time before UKTV food becomes 'Grub' and Sky real lives becomes 'Get a life, Fatso'

Re:Rebranding channels

Posted by Alderman Barnes - 15-05-2008 12:17

Eh? "Channels"? "Stations"?

In my day, they were called "sides".

Re:Rebranding channels

Posted by ian.64 - 16-05-2008 08:48

apparently Dave has been very successful.

God knows why. The evenings seem to be filled with Dragons Den or old Billy Connolly travelogues and the good programmes are shoved around the 11.30 mark when it's time to hit the sack. 'Witty banter' has been replaced by indifference.

Re:Rebranding channels

Posted by dogbeak - 16-05-2008 09:15

In my day, they were called "sides".

In my day, they were called 45s.

Re:Rebranding channels

Posted by Spearmint Rhino - 16-05-2008 09:18

As far as I'm concerned, 'channels' has always meant TV and 'stations' has always meant radio. The phrase 'television station' sounds unnatural.

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Re:Rebranding channels

Posted by Fatter Hipper - 16-05-2008 09:28

I have no problems telling kids at work my name.

"Alright sir. Know you're the home of witty banter?"

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Re:Rebranding channels

Posted by ursus arctos - 16-05-2008 10:12

I always thought that using "stations" for television was an American thing (though my sense is that current American uses station and channel interchangeably for TV, while radio remains strictly station).

I think that the root of the term in American comes from the early days of the industry, when it was still thought necessary to place the studio in close proximity to the transmitter (the kind of set-up that one can still see in rural parts of the US (and on the Simpsons)). The "station" was therefore a discernable location that people had to go to in order to broadcast.

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Re:Rebranding channels

Posted by Mr Beast - 16-05-2008 11:17

CHAV TV can't be far away. You can take your pick which major channel would be best suited

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Re:Rebranding channels

Posted by King Mob - 16-05-2008 11:59

I would certainly say that BBC1 was a 'television station', but no, if it was showing a uninteresting programme (God forbid), I wouldn't say 'what's on the other station'. I suppose the distinction is between BBC1 as an institution, in which case 'station' seems appropriate, and the procession of stuff that appears on the screen, in which case 'channel' suits the purpose.

And yes, 'side' is probably the most frequently use used colloquialism. "What's on the other side?"... a fundamentally existential question to ask about so trivial a matter. I guess it worked better when there were only three sides to choose from, which is as far back as I can remember. These days, to imply 'sides' would be to conjour up images of a monstrous Lovecraftian dodecatriskahectahedron, hanging ominously in netherspace like something from a Grant Morrison comic.

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