

Channel Five to push broadband TV catch-up service

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Channel Five has launched a promotional campaign to back the official launch of its broadband TV catch-up service Demand Five, featuring the tune The Windmills of Your Mind from 1968 film the Thomas Crown Affair.

The promo, which launches on Five's channels tonight, is based on the theme of the "indulgent TV" experience that the Demand Five service offers.

Demand Five's promo, which will run on Five and digital spin-off channels Fiver and Five US, features three fans of the broadcaster "bingeing" on their favourite TV shows.

"Most viewers understand that you can now get your favourite TV online which allowed us to create a fun, accessible spot that reflects Demand Five's easy-to-use service," said Dom Sykes, the Five on-air brand director.

The promotional campaign, which was created by Five's creative services team in conjunction with production company Superfad, will use 20-and 40-second versions of the ad, which run for three weeks.

Five is the last of the UK's major terrestrial broadcasters to offer a full broadband catch-up TV service.

Demand Five, which has a sponsorship deal with Dell <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2008/jun/10/channelfive>.

advertising, offers a mixture of free and subscription content depending on the deal with each rights holder.

Free shows include series such as Neighbours and Home and Away. Shows available only on subscription include US imports such as CSI and House, which will be charged at 99p to rent for a 48-hour period with up to 14 days to download.

The website, demand.five.tv [<http://demand.five.tv/Home>].

aspx], states that high definition content will be charged at £1.99 per download.

Demand Five runs with an online strapline online "Find it, watch it, shout about it", tying in with the social ambitions of the My Five website, which allows users to rate and review shows.

"Five is the last of the UK's major terrestrial broadcasters to offer an online catch-up service and in some respects it is the most advanced service available," said Arash Amel, senior analyst and head of broadband media at Screen Digest.

"Video is higher quality than many comparable offers [and] it provides a good range of key US shows, and the integration of rating and reviewing provides a level of interaction that other services lack."

However, Screen Digest believes that the service has limitations and "at least in the short term Demand Five is unlikely to see the sort of uptake that the iPlayer has enjoyed".

One reason is that many of Five's flagship US shows are only available as paid-for downloads. Another is that the service uses Windows Media Player 11 digital rights management, which means that every programme, both streaming and download, requires a registration process.

"Part of the success of the iPlayer is down to the instant access to content that it gives every user," said Amel. "It is expected that subsequent iterations of Demand Five may follow suit, with a switch to more audience-friendly streaming formats."