[DE] Federal Cartel Office Prohibits Joint Video Platform of RTL and ProSiebenSat.1

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In accordance with its provisional assessment of 22 February 2011 (see IRIS 2011-4/19), the Bundeskartellamt (Federal Cartel Office - BKartA) rejected on 17 March 2011 the plan of RTL and ProSiebenSat.1 to set up a joint venture for the establishment and operation of an online video platform.

In the Cartel Office's opinion, such a platform would further strengthen the two broadcasting groups' existing market-dominating duopoly. In particular, the plan would have the effect of preserving the current situation on the television advertising market and transferring it to in-stream advertising in online video content.

In the authority's view, the statements issued in the meantime by the broadcasters on the provisional assessment were unlikely to dispel its doubts on competition grounds. Above all, it said, the companies had shown no willingness to make fundamental changes to their plans and had still not offered to open up the platform further, either technically or for the use of other providers (apart from television broadcasters).

Immediately after the decision to reject the plan was published, the two broadcasting groups announced their intention to appeal.

Pressemitteilung des BKartA vom 18. März 2011

http://www.bundeskartellamt.de/wDeutsch/aktuelles/presse/2011_03_18.php

BKartA press release of 18 March 2011

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