



Sky Games Research / Finding my Digibox

Research into the now-defunct Sky Games platform, specifically the Digibox portion.

Information is just listed chronologically as I (or [Dan](#)) thought of it. Maybe soon I'll have a go at neatening it up.

[This company](#) seems to have made [most of the service's portfolio](#). [This man](#) worked on quite a lot of them.

11/04/19 - JaffaMeme: I have currently contacted Thomas Kronberg in an effort to learn what language the games used (He's the man who worked on quite a few of the sky games). I believe they used Java but wanted confirmation or correction directly from a sky games developer. You can look at the thread [Here](#).

12/04/19: [Dan's Tweet](#) got [a response](#) confirming the games made by Denki were written in C. The dev later [mentioned](#) that the games' turnaround time was often only 4-6 weeks!

Sky boxes and their interactive services ("[Sky Active](#)") were based on "OpenTV" which [presently](#) seems to use HTML5 and essentially be Electron for set-top boxes. Perhaps at the time these were just glorified Flash games as Dan thinks is plausible?

Despite Dan's memory, a landline was not required; we paid for the various passes through my mum's feature phone credit.

The games portion was formerly called Sky Gamestar.

While also referencing OpenTV and the Sky Boxes, the game development companies also mention DirecTV, a similar satellite telly service operated in the States.

According to Wikipedia:

The set-top box middleware is provided by OpenTV, but the EPG and all the software extensions that manage the PVR functions are produced by NDS under the name of XTV PVR

- [Sky+](#)

All Digiboxes used to run on OpenTV with Sky's EPG software and NDS VideoGuard conditional access. The Digibox receives software updates over the air, even when in standby mode should an update be available. The software features [...] the ability to view OpenTV or WapTV applications provided as "interactive" or "teletext" content on channels.

- Digibox

It certainly looks like the Sky interactive services used WapTV, a markup language/microbrowser for set-top boxes. The [Wikipedia page](#) directly calls out Sky's use of the system:

The platform brings internet-style content and interactivity to the Sky Digital platform by deploying a purpose-built WML microbrowser to the Sky Digital set-top-box over the satellite broadcast stream. Web site owners simply have to serve well formatted WTVML from their web servers to allow Sky set-top boxes and consumers to fully interact with their web services. In March 2007, Sky together with some of the Waptv founders "spun off" the technology into a new Company "Miniweb", with the goals of furthering the work on WTVML in a global forum, and enabling the deployment of the system in other networks and devices

[Here](#) is an archive of Sky's WapTV developer programme homepage. Sadly most of the content is locked behind the forum's authwall.

Identifying my Digibox

1. Made by Amstrad
2. "Amstrad" logo top left, **sky**digibox logo top right
3. Buttons on the top?
4. Potentially all grey?
5. Blue remote (dating it to before late 2005)
6. Viewing card slot near the lower right
7. Essentially the entire upper part of the remote as buttons on the front
8. Old blue/yellow/white EPG, ft Sky Active

The closest match I can find is the [Amstrad DX100](#), although I swore the thing was grey.

Update on my Digibox research



I have unearthed some photos from Late 2011 of our TV and you can just about make out the general shape and colour of the Sky box in the cabinet below. It matches the design of the DRX100 I found earlier, however it is definitely all-grey.





Further digging reveals they did in fact make an [all-grey DRX100](#). That photo says the unit is from 1997, so it is possible they changed the design to be black later on and we had an earlier version.

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Last update: **2019-05-26 23:02**