



**Determination No. M/05/051 of the Competition Authority,
dated 15th September 2005, under Section 21 of the
Competition Act, 2002**

**Notification No. M/05/051 – The proposed acquisition by
Trinity Mirror Digital Limited of Smart Media Services Limited**

INTRODUCTION

1. On 17th August 2005, the Competition Authority, in accordance with Section 18 (1) of the Competition Act, 2002 (“the Act”) was notified, on a mandatory basis, of a proposal whereby Trinity Mirror Digital Limited (“Trinity Mirror”), would acquire all the issued share capital of Smart Media Services Limited (“SMS”). The Authority, in accordance with Section 23(1)(b) of the Act, notified the parties that it considers the transaction to be a media merger.

THE UNDERTAKINGS INVOLVED

2. Trinity Mirror, the acquirer, is a subsidiary of Trinity Mirror plc, a UK-based newspaper publishing group. Trinity Mirror plc is the largest publisher of regional and local newspapers in the UK. It publishes nearly 250 regional and local titles in the South-East, Midlands, North-East and North-West of England, in Yorkshire, and in Scotland. It also publishes several UK national daily and Sunday titles, most notably *The Mirror* and *The Sunday Mirror*. Trinity Mirror plc does not publish any Irish regional or local newspapers in the State or Northern Ireland but certain of its national newspapers, including Irish editions (i.e., of *The Daily Mirror*, *The Sunday Mirror*, *The People* and *The Racing Post*) are distributed in the State and Northern Ireland.
3. SMS, the target, is a UK-based company that operates a website advertising new homes built by the construction industry. SMS’s website represents the largest directory of new homes on the internet in UK.¹ SMS’s website is primarily focused on the Great Britain. Although its website does have an overseas section, this does not include Ireland. For the financial year ended 30 September 2004, it generated no turnover in Ireland. SMS’s website also carries a small number of private housing adverts. Of these, SMS placed an ad for one Irish customer in December 2004, valued at STGE50 (approximately, €75).

¹ Information obtained from SMS’s website.

ANALYSIS

4. There is no horizontal or vertical overlap between the parties' activities in the State. SMS is active in the provision of online advertising of new home primarily to customers in Great Britain whilst, Trinity Mirror does not provide online advertising of new homes in the State or Northern Ireland. Therefore, the proposed acquisition does not raise competition concerns.

DETERMINATION

The Competition Authority, in accordance with Section 21(2) of the Competition Act, 2002, has determined that, in its opinion, the result of the proposed acquisition by Trinity Mirror Digital Limited of Smart Media Limited will not be to substantially lessen competition in markets for goods and services in the State and, accordingly, that the acquisition may be put into effect, subject to the provisions of Section 23(9)(a) of the Act.

For the Competition Authority

Edward Henneberry

Member of the Competition Authority