

## Next big media scandal?

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As the man who invented the phone-in, I can say this.

It's time OFCOM clamped down on those stupid phone-in contests (dead easy question; no hope of winning; brain dead morons phone in; it's abuse).

I started this in the 90s in order to get a quick idea of which of 4 finalists hooked listeners on BBC2 - we tried it on Wogan; it worked; so I pushed to get Eurovision viewers involved; we managed that (too late for Gina G; just in time for Katrina; now it's become an epidemic).

It was one of the hit ingredients of our Record of the Year Shows in 1998 and 1999 and inspired Simon for Pop Idol.

But it's been overused and for the wrong reason - to make money. Admittedly that was one reason I gave to ITV to use the technology (they needed persuading in 1998) but it's become the **ONLY** reason.

And it's time it was stopped. It's immoral and quite possibly illegal.