

Get TV Without the DIRECTV or Time Warner Hook-Ups

April 18, 2016

TV Online Ed Technology Contributor Jacob Schandel

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Let's face it: at the end of the day, there are few teenagers who won't enjoy sitting down and relaxing, and many do so by sitting in front of a TV. Of course, a TV is useless without some form of content being fed into it, whether that content comes off the internet (which now has a lowercase first letter), from the cable company, or off of some other peripheral device. For some, there is a major problem: **traditional TV service is insanely expensive for a teenager!** Unless you are lucky enough to have a cable or antenna line in your room you can hook into (because rabbit ears and T-County don't tend to play nice with 3, 5, and 8 anymore), odds are you are forced to go to the living room to watch regular TV. Well, at least you think that. With these tips and tricks, you can get around those limitations to watch TV anywhere thanks to the cord-cutting movement (assuming you can find a way to get media from your device to your TV, which I will explain later)!

Channel Apps

If your family hasn't cut the cord and already have DIRECTV, Dish, U-Verse, or cable but you don't have the service tied into the TV in question, you can still take advantage of perks of the service on that TV! Many channels, from cable channels like A&E and HBO to the local channels like Fox and ABC have their own apps for streaming live shows as well as shows on demand over the internet. These apps can almost always be accessed from the internet, and most can be found with Chromecast integration and/or version for smart TV systems and media streamers. All you need to get into these apps to work is the online login for your family's TV provider. The best part: if you have the channel, you have access to the mobile streaming app, free of charge!

On-Demand Streaming (Netflix, Hulu, etc.)

If you cannot access a login for a TV provider, there are some very good online (paid) streaming services to choose from! The most common style of service is the on-demand streaming service. At the top of the stack (at the moment) is Netflix, which offers both original content (ex.: *Fuller House*) as well as content from other companies and regular TVs (ex.: *That '70s Show*, *The West Wing*) for you to stream at will. **Important note: due to this being a publication through a public school, I am obligated to note that certain content on Netflix is not censored like regular TV is (supposed to be) because, frankly, it is an online streaming service and is not bound to the requirements of regular TV. Please be advised when browsing for new shows and selecting a show you may not be familiar with, especially most Netflix originals.** With all of that said however, Netflix still offers plenty of family-oriented shows (including shows from when the Disney Channel was in its prime, cue *The Suite Life of Zack and Cody* and *High School Musical*) just ready for watching. While Netflix has a lot of content, its competitor Hulu excels in allowing for users to watch new episodes of broadcast shows as soon as the day after they debut on TV. (Oh, and they can binge on old seasons and watch some movies, too, like Netflix.) Hulu, on the other hand, is ad-supported with their lower package for streaming, which costs less than Netflix's lower package. If you can live without live television, these services are amazing for getting your favorite shows!

Live Streaming (Both Network Channels and Online Content)

If you want to watch a show the minute it hits TV or you want to be able to watch sports or news live, you will need a live streaming service to do that. Right now, two streaming services are available for streaming live cable/satellite channels. One is Sling Television, a spinoff company of Dish Network, and

the other is PlayStation Vue, which is a service by Sony. Because different people have different needs, it is hard to recommend one over the other. Since both of these options, let alone the concept of their existences, are so new, I recommend you check out CNET's in-depth comparison from March 2016. It is important to note, however, that neither service will give you *live* streaming of our local stations (3, 5, 8, 19, etc.). You don't have to pay to get live content, though. Many free live streaming services are popping up across the internet. For example, a couple of years ago, CBS News launched CBSN, a 24-hour live streaming news channel which is available on many platforms (except for, surprisingly, Chromecast). Also, YouTube is growing in live content options, as well as many other services on the internet. As time goes on, these options will only increase in numbers and improve in quality.

How to Get These Services

To get this content, you need some form of a streaming media device. Personally, I have fallen in love with the \$35 Chromecast (a dongle made by Google) because I can push a button and video or music can go directly from my phone to my TV. The app selection for Chromecast is also very large, and the device can even communicate with devices other than Android and Chrome OS devices (like PCs, Macs, and iOS devices). If you do not like the idea of relying on a mobile device, the next best option is a Roku. The \$50 streaming stick has gotten amazing reviews on the web for packing so much power into a small device. Another advantage to a Roku is that its streaming channel library is larger and more matured than any other platform, though Chromecast and others still do have some options you cannot get on Roku. It is worth looking at the apps you want (particularly live streaming apps or channel apps that hook into cable providers) to make sure they are available on your platform of choice before you head to the checkout on Amazon. Either way, these options are a great start to getting TV without traditional TV service.