

Breaking Up Is Easy to Do

Living without pay TV isn't as hard as it sounds. All it takes is great internet access.

By Jaime Fink / *Mimosa Networks*

When my partners and I launched Mimosa Networks, we knew that new wireless broadband would be the future of fiber-fast internet access for homes around the globe. For years, I've predicted the demise of traditional "linear" TV, yet every month I would look at my \$168 cable TV bill and shrug, "What other option do I have?"

Though consumer adoption of "pure" internet services – with no TV or phone bundles – has been slow, the writing is most certainly on the wall. By 2030, as many as 40 percent of U.S. households are expected to cut the cord, according to predictions in a new report by market analyst TDG Research.

Determined to "eat my own dog food," I made it my mission to see whether this "internet-only" industry is really ready to cut the cord.

Researching streaming options was a bit more complicated than I had hoped. On a positive note, there are finally lots of streaming video options, including DIRECTV Now, Sling TV, YouTube TV, Hulu, PlayStation Vue, and upstarts such as fuboTV and Philo. On the downside, there are actually so many choices that sorting through the channels and packages to match our viewing preferences was confusing and complicated.

In the end, no one streaming provider got it perfect. For my family's viewing needs, we settled on DIRECTV Now, which gave us all the major national networks and broadcasts, as well as local and national sports programming. We also added fuboTV's Sports Plus package, ensuring that my wife can follow her Arizona Wildcats in the Pac 12 and I can still follow the SF Giants and the essential NFL RedZone. With the combination of DIRECTV Now and fuboTV, together with Netflix and Amazon Prime, our family has even more content than we had before, and we don't miss a show or a game that we used to watch on our cable TV.

To put a cherry on top, by switching our cellular package to T-Mobile ONE, I also get free streaming of fuboTV and DIRECTV Now anywhere on my iPhone, and T-Mobile now

pays for my Netflix! Switching all my content to the Apple TV 4K delivers the programming at 1080p HD resolution, and of course the 4K video and the new HDR look amazing.

So how much did I save? My previous bill – formerly \$196 a month, including TiVo and Netflix – is now down to just \$85, saving me a whopping \$1,332 a year! Count me as a fan!

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE ISP

Fortunately, this cord cutting exercise was all possible due to my amazing independent ISP, Google Webpass, which gives me unlimited data and great 300 Mbps+ speeds for just \$46 a month.

Sadly, it may not be this easy for half the homes in the U.S. – those that don't have access to true broadband speeds of 25 Mbps or whose data plans may be capped by a DSL or cable provider. This is where having real ISP competition in the market truly matters, and new technologies to enable fiber-fast speeds – such as Mimosa's – will be critical to consumers in this brave new world where demand for internet bandwidth will explode in the post-linear TV era.

The freedom to cut the cord starts with great internet access. My advice? If you're a consumer, find a great ISP that supports your digital demands with superfast bandwidth. If you don't have one, now is a great time to speak up and let the FCC know you support broadband competition, and they should give local ISPs the access to spectrum they need to provide great competitive services in your neighborhood.

If you're a provider, get ready for the gradual disappearance of traditional pay-TV service, and formulate a business strategy that will take account of this consumer trend. Most important, recognize that you have to up your broadband game. Consumers want great internet access, and sooner or later, if you don't deliver it, a competitor will. ❖

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