

Crossing the Digital Divide (v59)

“numbness”

By Joseph Feigon for the Observer

We're a mere 150 miles away from the Golden Gate Bridge, the Redwood Highway is paved, and just a few counties south of us, broadband and content options are staggering. At some point in the near future, rural connectivity solutions will increase. Once users have more choices than low-end DSL and sub-optimal satellite service, gamers will delight and media junkies rejoice. There's so much experience when one's access to the Internet is unfettered.

With a “real” connection to the Internet, the real power and depth of the World Wide Web can be experienced. Gamers will rejoice in low-latency connections, enabling them to compete on a global gameboard. Media junkies can rejoice in a wealth of service options, all supported by very high-speed Content Delivery Networks (CDN's), which are:

A content delivery network (CDN) is a system of distributed servers (network) that deliver web pages and other Web content to a user based on the geographic locations of the user, the origin of the webpage and a content delivery server.

This service is effective in speeding the delivery of content of websites with high traffic and websites that have global reach. The closer the CDN server is to the user geographically, the faster the content will be delivered to the user. CDNs also provide protection from large surges in traffic.

Case in point, just posted on Streamingmedia.com:

Less than two months after it was officially announced, YouTube has entered the skinny bundle space with [YouTube TV](#). The rollout is limited for the time being to five metropolitan areas: New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, and Philadelphia. The company says more cities will be added soon, but didn't provide details.

YouTube TV costs \$35 per month, although anyone interested can first sample a one-month free trial. The service includes a cloud DVR with unlimited storage, although recordings will expire after nine months. Look for cloud DVRs to become an essential amenity in skinny bundles.

Channels include live streams from ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, and more for 50 channels total. The lineup includes AMC, BBC America, and IFC, all of which weren't included in the initial announcement. Those and a few others are listed as "coming soon," so don't expect them at launch. Subscribers also get access to YouTube Red's original programming. Showtime is an \$11 per month extra.

A subscription includes six accounts, each of which includes an unlimited DVR. Only three of the accounts can stream at any one time. The service is multi-platform, working on computers and mobile devices. After customers have paid for one month of service, they'll get a free Google Chromecast. For now, that's the only way to get YouTube TV on a TV, since there aren't yet apps for connected TV devices. YouTube says they'll come later this year.

We'll see more content aggregation services as the major providers continue with their consolidation. We're fortunate to live in a region where it's unlikely the next broadband provider entering this market will be Charter or Comcast; we're a non-viable (in terms of profits) market for them. Better to have bandwidth and then be able to choose your own options, whether it be Apple TV, YouTube TV, Free TV, or no TV.