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CONSUMER ADVISORY

AT&T OFFERS TIPS FOR EVALUATING PAY TV PROVIDERS BEFORE THE JUNE 2009 DIGITAL TV TRANSITION

DALLAS — The digital TV transition is only a few months away, and consumers are — or should be — starting to evaluate their options to make sure they continue to receive TV programming. Many over-the-air viewers may be considering making the switch to a pay TV service. AT&T encourages consumers to use the transition as an opportunity to examine all of their entertainment options in their area.

Below are some of the most common questions consumers may have about switching to pay TV, as well as the questions they should ask to evaluate potential entertainment providers and choose the best television service prior to the June 2009 deadline. For AT&T's answers to the questions, you can refer to the fact sheet in our AT&T Advanced TV media kit online.

PAY TV VS. OVER-THE-AIR

Is switching to a pay TV service right for me?

Only you can answer that question, but here are just a few of the features and services available with a digital pay TV service.

- Better picture and sound quality.
- A large variety of channels and programming options, from sports, news and other special interest channels to movies, family-friendly shows and more.
- DVR service, which gives you the ability to record your favorite shows and watch them at your convenience.
- Video On Demand, which allows you to order and view movies and special events directly from your TV screen, without the hassle of traveling to the video rental store and worrying about late fees.
- Electronic program guides, which let you conveniently view the programming schedule for every channel with the click of a button.
- HD programming, which produces a higher-resolution TV picture and a clearer image on your HDTV screen.

If I switch to pay TV, will I have to buy a new TV set?

No. As long as your TV set is connected to a receiver (or set-top box) from your TV provider, you'll be able to get TV service. If you have an older analog TV set, however, you may decide you want to purchase a new TV set to be able to enjoy better picture and audio quality and HD programming available from your new digital TV service.

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What extra features am I getting that I didn't have with over-the-air?

You can do a lot more with your digital TV service than just change the channels. Digital TV allows providers to offer electronic program guides, Video On Demand and other interactive features that make your entertainment experience more enjoyable. Look at what providers currently offer or plan to offer in the future. Will these features enhance your TV viewing experience?

CONTENT

What channels will I gain?

Digital TV allows TV providers to deliver a wide range of programming options and channels. Evaluate what channels might be of interest to you and your family, and see if they're offered by providers and at what cost. Compare how many channels are included in each package, and note the costs of their additional programming tiers like movies, sports and Spanish-language packages.

I have children, and I'm worried about the content on cable channels. What can I do to control the content in my pay TV subscription?

Ask if the provider offers a family package that only includes family-oriented channels. Also, see if the service includes parental controls. Parental controls allow you to block content by rating or by channel so it cannot be viewed without a password. This puts you in control of the TV content your family watches.

PRICING AND CONTRACTS

How much "bang" do I get for my buck?

If you're switching to a pay TV service for the first time, this is probably an important question for you to examine. Many providers charge their customers extra monthly fees for necessary equipment like set-top boxes and DVRs. HD-capable equipment often incurs a higher monthly fee. Consider these add-on rental fees when comparing similar TV packages across providers to make sure you're getting the most programming options and functionality for the price you pay per month. Evaluate the price and value you'll receive.

What's the installation cost?

Look at how much you'll be paying to get the service installed, and if a technician or subcontractor will be installing the service.

How long am I stuck with this provider if I don't like their service?

Your first experience with a pay TV service should be a good one, but don't get stuck with a provider if you're not completely satisfied. Countless consumers switch to new providers without having a chance to try them out first. Look for providers who won't lock you into long contracts or agreements, or charge you if you want to end the term early.

What will my bill be long-term after introductory pricing expires?

Be aware of "introductory pricing" offers. Many providers offer discounted rates for new customers that increase after a certain period. When considering costs, calculate what your bill will be once these initial deals are over, in addition to your initial savings.

BUNDLING

Can I consolidate services with one provider? What do I get if I bundle services?

Look for a provider who can meet all of your entertainment and communications needs: TV, broadband, home phone and wireless service. Not only will you get a better deal, but you will have more integrated features and capabilities now, and in the future. Consolidating services can help you keep your bills straight and give you a single point of contact for any problems or inquiries you may have.

EQUIPMENT

What do I have to pay to connect all my TVs?

Ask what equipment is included with your TV package. Find out what the monthly fee is and whether that fee increases if you want HD-capable equipment.

Am I getting the latest equipment that will eliminate upgrade hassles in the future?

If you choose to subscribe to a pay TV service, this is an important question to ask. Determine the type of equipment you expect to receive (new, used, HD-capable, etc.), and verify if the provider offers it and at what cost. Many providers do not include HD-capabilities in all set-top boxes and DVRs, which means customers will need to upgrade and install other boxes when they decide they want HD.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

What kind of technical support is available if I have questions?

First and foremost, you want your pay TV service to be reliable and easy-to-use, but you also want to know that your provider is available to answer any questions and quickly respond to any issues. Find out what technical support and customer service your provider offers. Do they have a 24/7 phone number? What online support is available? Are you charged extra for service calls to your home?

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