

Satellite TV and Local Stations - Setting the Record Straight

Contributed by CJ Pepler

For viewers considering their television programming options, satellite TV and cable television are their primary choices. Both services offer their customers hundreds of premium channels that provide quality entertainment in the home. For some consumers however, there still exists a misconception that they are not able to receive local channels with satellite TV services. Although this might have been true several years ago the situation began to change back in 1999 and is now merely a myth in most situations.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) provides oversight for the rules and policies related to satellite stations in the US. In 1999, the Satellite Home Viewer Improvement Act was introduced and then revised in 2004. One of the primary results of the act was that it allowed satellite TV companies to provide local broadcast signals to subscribers residing in the market area for such stations as described by Nielsen Media Research. Consumers wishing to seek out additional detail about the SHVIA can visit www.fcc.gov for more information.

For viewers hoping to benefit from the programming offered by satellite TV providers and yet also receive programming from their local television stations, this was welcomed news. The previous inability to obtain local news and sports was a significant drawback for many viewers. Luckily, satellite TV providers were also motivated to offer this service as it would allow them to compete better with cable companies. Although the response of satellite TV in making local programming available was fairly rapid the need to enhance bandwidth to accommodate the programming resulted in a process that phased in the addition of local programming over a period of years. Now, nearly a decade later, the availability of local stations via satellite TV is prevalent.

At this time Dish Network for instance, is offering local channels in a few hundred of their service areas. The satellite TV provider routinely offers ABC, NBC, CBS, PBS, Fox, CW, and My Network TV as well as other area specific stations. UPN and WB super stations are also available rounding out their offerings to meet the viewing needs of most customers.

Where available local stations can be added on to any satellite programming package for around \$5 per month. Determining the availability of local stations in any given area is simple. The Dish Network website for example allows users to search by address or zip code to check the availability of local channel services on the spot.

The days of missing all local broadcasts or erecting a large over-the-air antenna on the rooftop to receive the local signals are fading into myth. Most satellite TV customers are able to enjoy their local stations with the same satellite service that can provide the most diverse programming and largest volume of HD broadcasts in the industry.

Christine Pepler writes informative articles about various home entertainment services which are available on her homemedias.info website. By visiting, readers can learn more about movie downloads, online movie rental, satellite radio, and satellite TV.

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