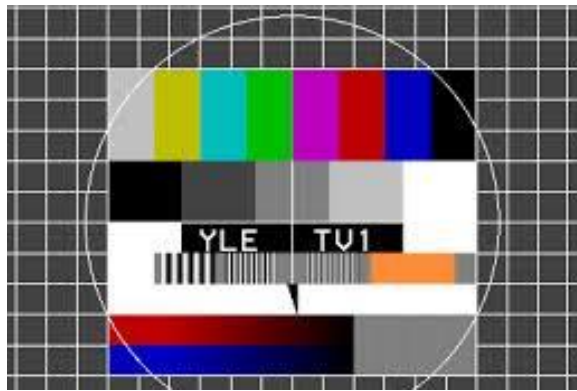


# Cutting the Cable



Mark Schulman

# Your Presenter



- Mark Schulman
- IT professional for almost 40 years
- No affiliation with any product

# Agenda

- Television
  - Sources of entertainment
  - How to watch
- Telephone
  - Alternatives



## Quote for the Day

“ Cable is doomed. Outside the outrageous fees, inflexible bundles, and horrendous customer service that most scum-sucking cable providers have become famous for, the existing cable system doesn't provide the freedom or variety that the Web does ... Ten years from now, cable will be a relic akin to AM radio. ”

— Digital Trends

# What's It Costing?

- 2013 FCC report:
  - Average price of expanded basic cable: \$66.41 (+5.1%)
  - Add a few channels: \$77.05
- Last 10 years, expanded basic cable up 65%
- Number of channels up 136%



# Advantages / Disadvantages

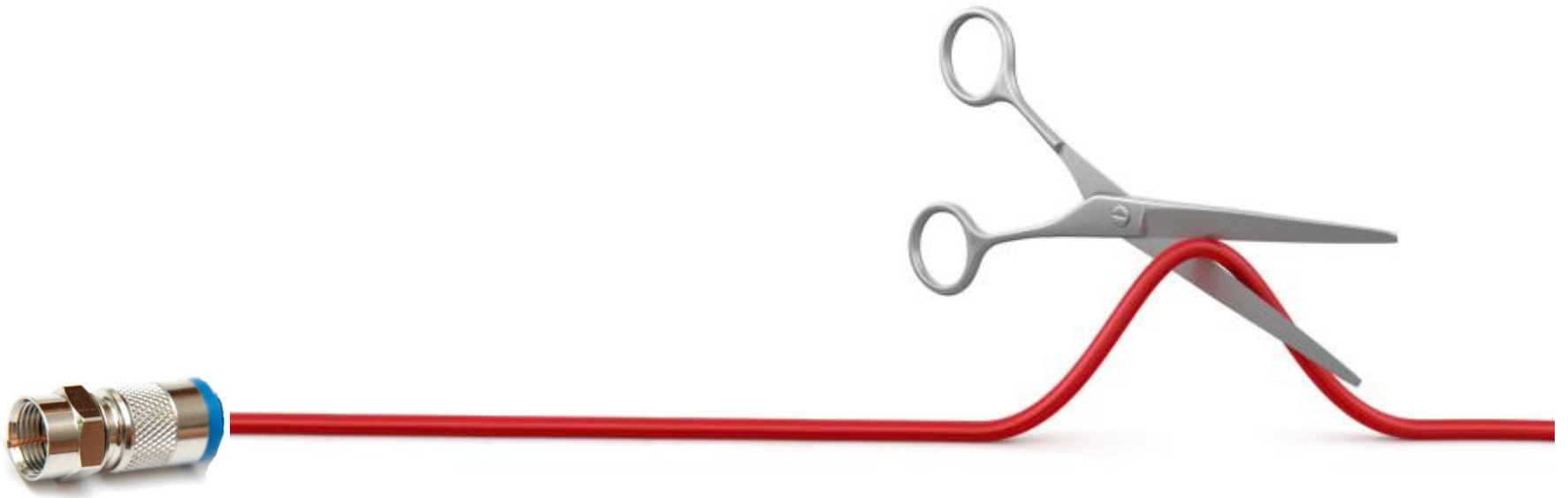
## Cutting the cable ...

- Advantages:
  - Lower cost (trade one set of costs for another)
- Disadvantages
  - Convenience vs. Science project
  - Selection of content



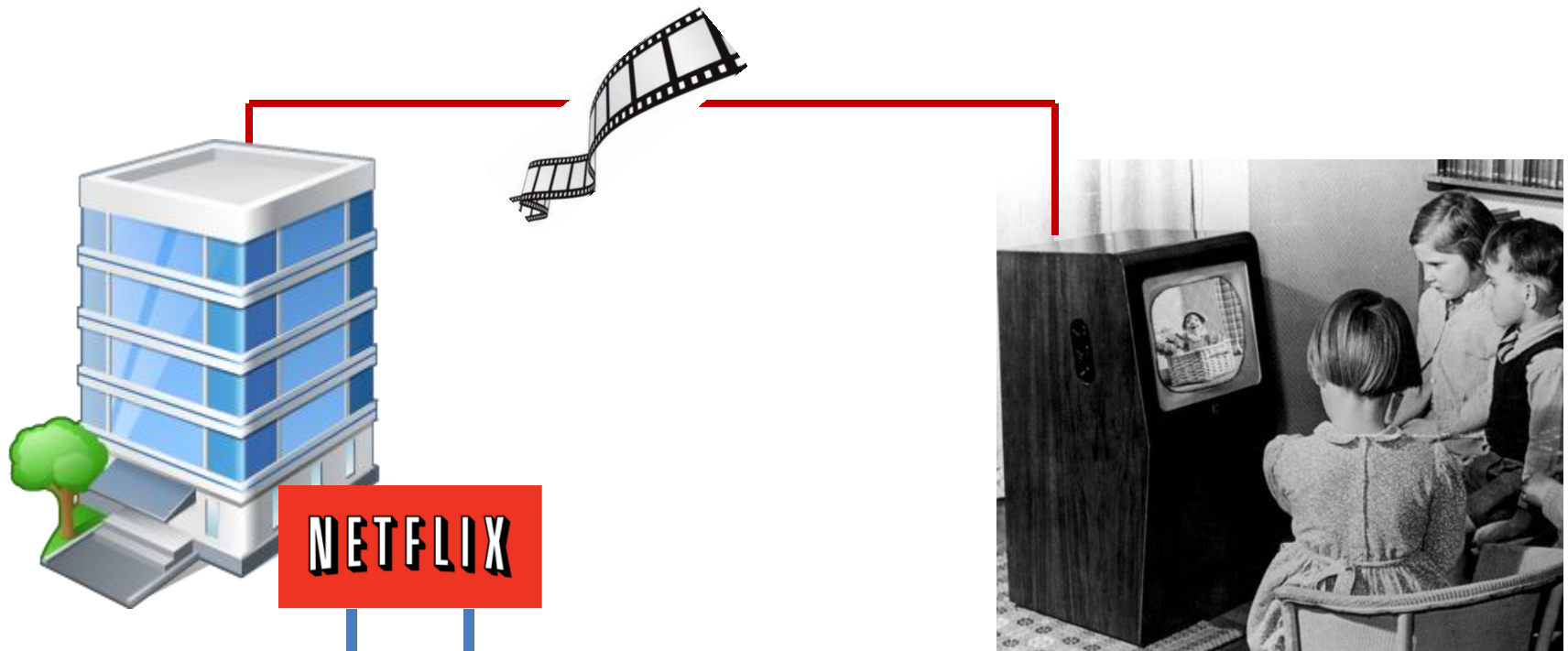


# Finding Entertainment Elsewhere



# Streaming

- Music or video transmitted over the Internet
- Starts to play immediately

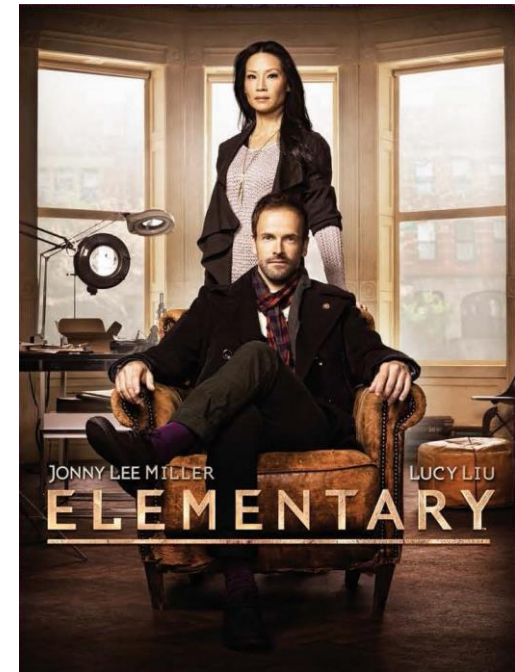
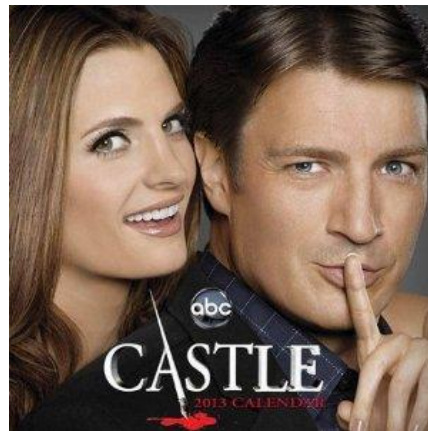




# Major Streaming Services



- 2013: 33 million US subscribers
- Huge selection of previous seasons



# Netflix

- Two separate services:
  - Streaming video
  - DVD by mail
- HD streaming, 2 screens at a time: \$8.99/mo.
- DVDs by mail, 2 at a time: \$11.99/mo.
- Blu-Ray discs by mail,  
2 at a time: \$14.98/mo.

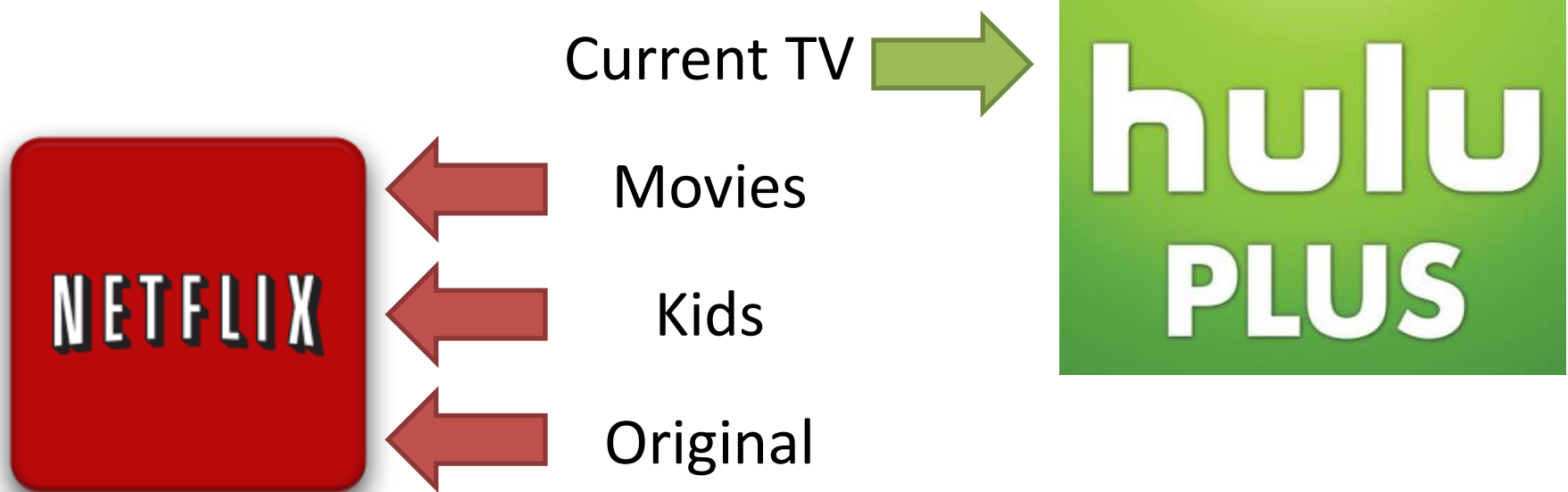
The Netflix logo, consisting of the word "NETFLIX" in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a black outline, set against a red rectangular background.

# Hulu

- Hulu Free has episodes of many TV shows
- Hulu Plus (\$7.99/mo.) has more episodes of more shows
- Large library of new TV shows

The logo for Hulu Plus, featuring the word "hulu" in a bold, lowercase, green sans-serif font, followed by the word "PLUS" in a bold, uppercase, grey sans-serif font.

# Netflix vs. Hulu



# Amazon Instant Video

- Movies and TV episodes, buy or rent videos
- Rental: 30 days to start watching, then 24 hours to finish

	SD	HD
How to Train Your Dragon 2	4.99	5.99
Tangled	2.99	3.99
Big Bang Theory (episode, past season)	1.99	2.99
Elementary (entire current season)	34.99	44.99



# Amazon Prime Instant Video

- Extra benefit of Amazon Prime membership
- 40,000 movies and TV shows (May 2014)
- Amazon Prime membership: \$99/year



# YouTube

- Amateur videos
- Huge collection of web series
- Movies (free, rent)
- Older TV series
- Trailers, extras, behind-the-scenes





# Older TV Programs



- Dick Van Dyke Show
- Mary Tyler Moore Show
- Crosby Show
- Roseanne
- Honeymooners
- Sanford and Son
- Jeffersons
- NewsRadio
- The Golden Girls
- Designing Women
- Newhart
- Jack Benny Program
- Mork and Mindy
- That 70s Show
- Hogan's Heroes
- Scrubs
- Welcome Back, Kotter
- Wings
- Married with Children
- Twilight Zone

# Other Entertainment Sources

- Lots of other Internet sites ...

# Network Websites

- Many full episodes available on network websites
- Many extras: behind-the-scenes and interviews
- No relief from commercials



... and many more

# CBS All Access

- Huge library of past and present CBS programs, and other programs
- 6,500 episodes
- \$6/mo.
- Probably not quite ready for prime time
- Try 1 week free







# HBO Go

- HBO's online streaming
- Currently available only to HBO cable subscribers
- Sep. 2014: HBO's CEO hinted at a stand-alone option
- Content: Movies and original programming



# Sports

- A lot of sports available over-the-air
- Most leagues sell packages:

League	Site	Cost (yr)	Notes
	<a href="http://mlb.tv">mlb.tv</a>	\$110 (2013)	Blackouts apply
	<a href="http://gamecenter.nhl.com">gamecenter.nhl.com</a>	\$169	
	<a href="http://nba.com/leaguepass">nba.com/leaguepass</a>	\$149	
	<a href="http://gamerewind.nfl.com">gamerewind.nfl.com</a>	\$30 - \$70	Games delayed

# News

- Over-the-air news programs
- Roku and other devices offer free streaming news
- Local stations sometimes have streaming news (e.g. [www.myfoxorlando.com](http://www.myfoxorlando.com))
- Cable news networks have streaming shows and clips



# Education



[youtube.com](https://youtube.com)



[freevideolectures.com](https://freevideolectures.com)



[academicearth.org](https://academicearth.org)



[khanacademy.org](https://khanacademy.org)



[ocw.mit.edu](https://ocw.mit.edu)



[ONLINECOURSES.COM](https://onlinecourses.com)  
[onlinecourses.com](https://onlinecourses.com)



[edx.org](https://edx.org)



[worldscienceu.com](https://worldscienceu.com)



# Education

Many major universities have free online courses and lectures



# And One Last Source of TV Shows



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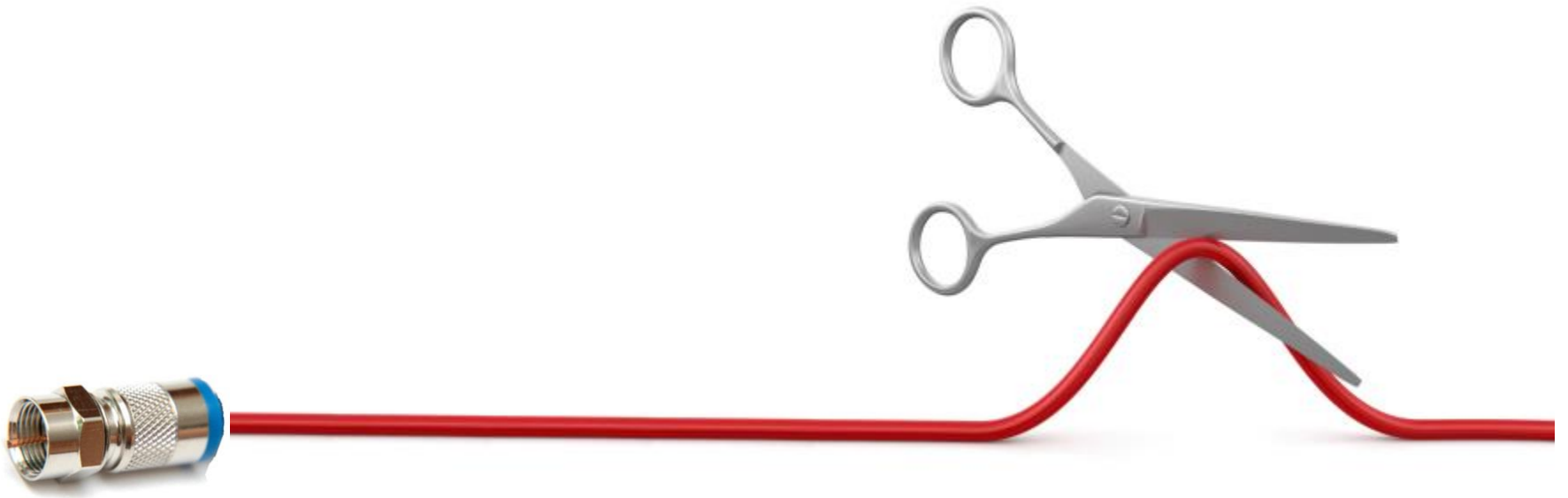
# Over The Air

- Network stations available over the air
- Depends on location
- Antenna: \$40 - \$100





# Television: How to Watch



# Ins and Outs of OTA TV

- You need an antenna
- May have to try several – look for a no-hassle return policy
- Sites to help you predict what type of antenna you'll need and what you'll be able to receive:
  - [antennaweb.org](http://antennaweb.org)
  - [antennapoint.com](http://antennapoint.com)
  - [TVFool.com](http://TVFool.com)



# Smart TV

- Internet-connected TV
- Typically includes Netflix, Hulu Plus, YouTube, Amazon, others
- Must pay for some services
- Advantages: easy
- Disadvantages: may be hard to update



# Smart DVD Player

- Very common in Blu-Ray disc players
- Typically includes Netflix, Hulu Plus, YouTube, Amazon, others
- Must pay for some services





# Roku

- Plugs directly into TV and connects to your wireless router
- Streams video over the Internet
- Huge variety of sources (channels): Hulu Plus, Netflix, and Amazon, Vimeo, MLB.tv, NHL GameCenter, hundreds of others
- Different models



# PC, Laptop, Tablet

- Watch on your PC, laptop, or tablet using a browser or app
- Extremely versatile

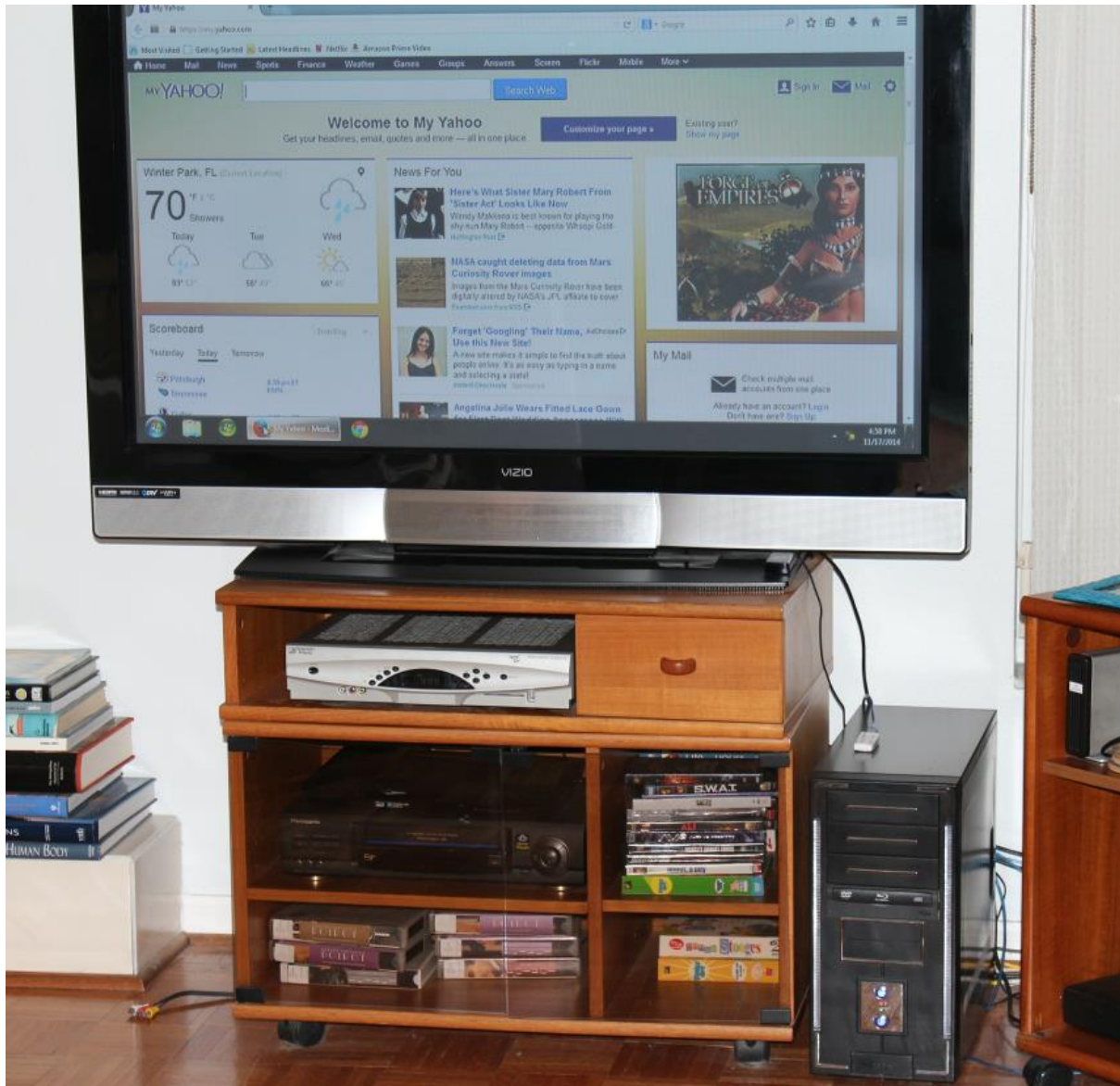


# Home Theater PC

- PC connected to your TV
- Old PC or mini PC
- Simple to hook up
- What you need:
  - PC
  - HDMI cable
  - Wireless adapter (maybe)
  - Remote (maybe)
  - Keyboard (maybe)



# For Example ...



# Watch When You Want

- Most web content available any time
- Some time-shifting possible through web sites
- Easy but expensive: Tivo Roamio: \$150 + \$15/mo.
- Almost as easy: Channel Master DVR+: \$300
- But my favorite ...



# HTPC + Tuner

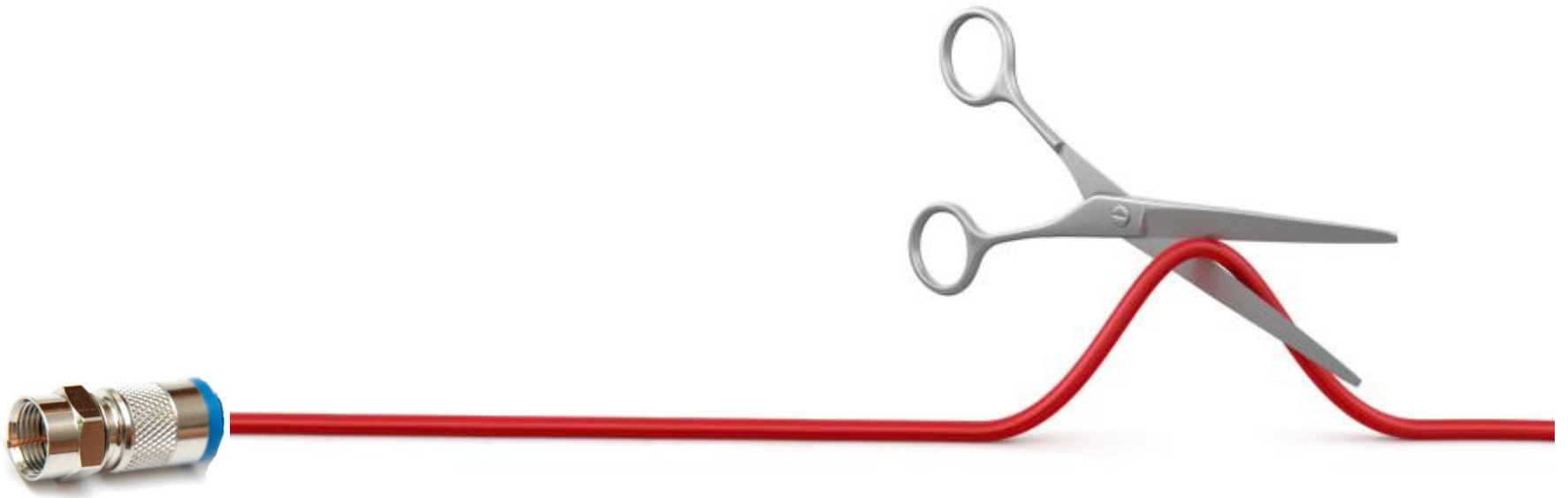
- PC + Tuner Card + antenna + free software = complete DVR
- Software: XBMC, MediaPortal, Windows Media Center, others
- DIY project
- Can display a program guide, record live TV, and access Internet content
- Card ~ \$100



Hauppauge 1213 WinTV-HVR-2255  
Dual Hybrid PCI-E TV Tuner Board



## Television: Summing It Up



# Step by Step

- Make a list of what you watch
- Specific programming vs. something entertaining?
- Can you wait?
- What can you get over the air?
- What will subscriptions such as Netflix cost?
- What will it cost to get just Internet?



# Cutting the Cable Worksheet

- Slate's worksheet enables you to see what you'll save
- Link available on presentation website

## 2. How much is your cable plan with just Internet?

Enter the cost of the plan you would get if your household depended more on the Internet for streaming. *Default: Time Warner's 50 mbps "Extreme" Internet plan's 12-month promotional cost, \$34.99.*

\$34.99 per month

## 3. Select streaming services to subscribe to.

Prices reflect the cheapest payment schedules.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amazon Prime offers TV shows, movies, and original series like <i>Transparent</i> , <i>Alpha House</i> , and <i>Mozart in the Jungle</i> .	<b>\$99.00</b> per year
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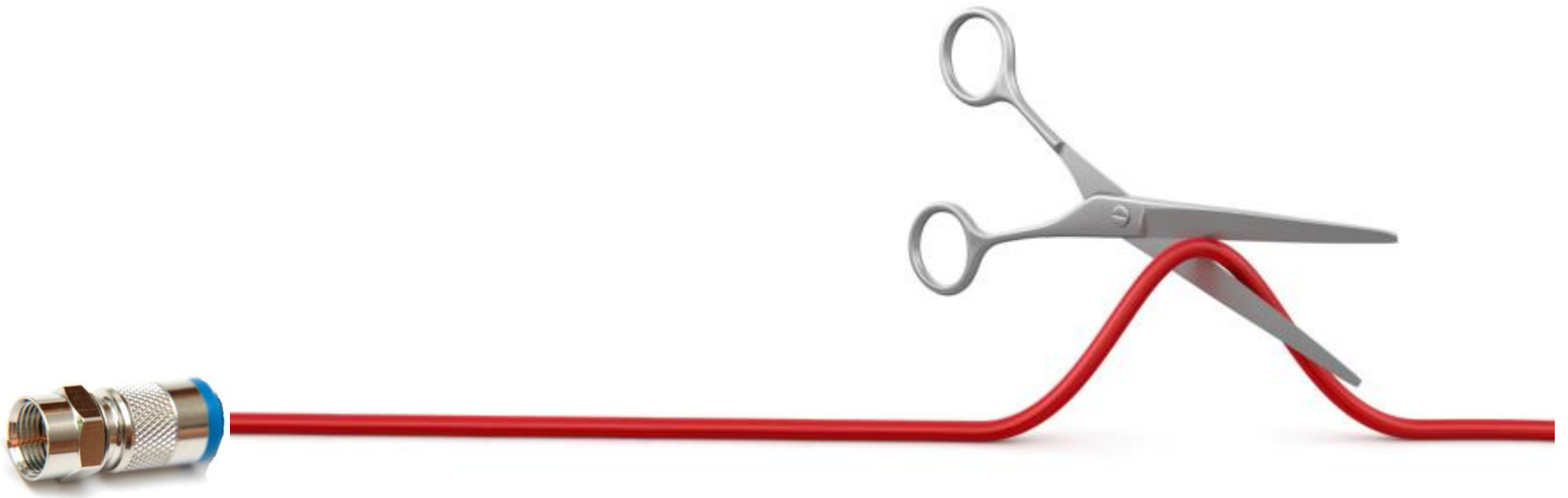
# What If You Can't Give Up Cable?

- Can you get by with a cheaper package?
- Negotiate!
- Call when promotional periods are up





# Telephone



# What's It Costing?

- \$30 - \$40 / mo.
- Long distance often not included



# Great Option: Cell Phone Only

- Do you really need a home phone?
- Possible advantages of a home phone:
  - unlimited calling
  - fax
  - 911
  - no dead spots



# Cordless Bluetooth Phones

- Turns your cell phone into a whole-house cordless phone
- Works with landlines and cell phones
- Panasonic and vTech
- Sam's Club and Costco



# Great Option: Voice Over IP Service

- VoIP uses the Internet to transmit your call to the phone company
- Use your regular phone (cordless works great)
- Keep your current number



# Providers

 Vonage™

\$27.99

 phonepower™

\$8.33

 ooma®

\$129 for equip, then \$0

 BasicTalk™


\$9.99

Taxes apply to all providers



# VoIP Advantages

- Free long distance in U.S.
- Dirt-cheap long distance internationally (e.g. PhonePower: UK 0.5¢, Brazil 1.4¢/min, Australia 2.4¢; 60 free minutes)
- 911 service
- Fax-compatible
- Take it anywhere!



Presentation and notes at:  
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