

# the Download

*A newsletter from your local Internet, Video and Voice provider - DirectLink*

## Looking Back at the Top 5 Tech Innovations of the Last Decade

With 2020 here, we thought it would be fun to look back at some of the most influential or game-changing technological innovations of the last decade. 503.266.8691 Since we are an Internet company, we included a list of items that all involve the Internet.

### 1 Smartphones

The conception and adoption of smartphones like iPhone, Samsung Galaxy, Google Pixel, and more have undoubtedly changed the way we live our daily lives. Smartphones have consolidated so many devices and functions into one interface that fits in one's pocket, including a detailed GPS, Internet browser, gaming system, video recorder, a cell phone, and so much more. According to statista.com, the number of smartphone users in the United States grew from 62.6 million in 2010 to 265.9 million in 2019.



### 2 Social Media

In just the United States alone, Facebook had 130 million users in 2010 and had grown to 247 million users in 2019. 503.651.2671 That's approximately 75 percent of the country's population. Social media sites have changed the way people interact, how advertisers reach potential customers, and make up a massive amount of Internet traffic.

### 3 Gigabit Internet Speeds

There's no denying that access to a broadband Internet connection has become a necessity in today's world. From running a business, to working on schoolwork, to video chatting with a doctor, Internet communication has changed the world. 503.845.2140 The introduction and implementation of Gigabit Internet speeds gives users the freedom to perform nearly unlimited tasks on their network and opens the doors to even greater technology in the future. DirectLink was the first company in Oregon to launch gigabit Internet services in 2014, before Google Fiber and others.

### 4 Voice Assistants

The days of typing a question into Google, manually turning on the living room lights, or going to the store for groceries are just about over. The voice assistant (also known as smart speakers) phenomenon has become so big that nearly one-quarter of U.S. adults owns one. With the convenience and low prices of voice assistants like Amazon's Alexa, Apple's Siri, and Google Assistant, all one has to do is give a voice command and that device's respective software will work to fulfill the request. Ask Alexa who won the Super Bowl in 2018, for example, and she'll respond in seconds with the Philadelphia Eagles. Of course, you'll need to connect the device to WiFi to utilize its full capabilities, like play games, hear news briefings, get your day's schedule, and more.



"Hey Alexa"



"Hey Siri"

### 5 Streaming Video Services

TV has also changed quite a bit in the last ten years. Just over a decade ago, people still had to update their Netflix

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(Continued from cover)

queue and have DVDs physically mailed to their home in order to watch them. Now, Netflix has over 158 million users worldwide and is responsible for about 15 percent of all Internet traffic. In 2020, Netflix is just one of a plethora of streaming video providers that all offer a unique programming experience and that require an Internet connection to work. DirectLink was the first in the nation to offer live, local broadcast TV programming through a streaming media device in 2013. The entire operation was designed and built in-house right here in Canby.

**Did we miss something?** Let us know your top 5 tech innovations of the decade by emailing us at **HereForYou@DirectLink.coop**.

## What Makes Directlink Different than Other Internet Providers?



When was the last time you received a personal invitation from a corporate Internet provider to an event with free food where you could meet the president of the company and speak directly to the Board of Directors? What about a complimentary Internet speed increase as part of their commitment to your experience?

DirectLink exists because of and for our members. 503.845.6960 As a communications cooperative, our members are the shareholders of the 116-year-old company, and we continuously reinvest back into the community through advanced services and infrastructure. We take pride in our commitment to service and to make our local area a better place to live, work, and play. Take our annual Member Appreciation Day event, for example. Every summer, we invite all of our members to a street fair that includes local nonprofits, free activities for kids like face painting and a bounce house, and provides hundreds of free lunches. In 2019, we served more than 750 meals to local families.



Most DirectLink employees live here or in the surrounding communities, shop at local businesses, and take part in neighborhood events. We make significant financial and in-kind donations to local education initiatives, nonprofit organizations, and more year after year.

## Gadget Review: Roomba Robot Vacuum

From \$249.99 at [www.irobot.com](http://www.irobot.com)

The last thing you want to do when you get home from a long day of work is to vacuum a mess from the floor after a spill or from a leftover mess. 503.263.6768 Roomba robot vacuums have become a popular item for homeowners looking to set-and-forget one aspect of cleaning their home.

There are a variety of models available for homes with different needs, like a pet-focused model that has a higher suction power perfect for cleaning up pet hair on the carpet. Others have self-emptying capabilities by returning to the charge port and emptying the dirt and debris contents into an AllergenLock bag that traps pollen, mold, and dust mites for up to 60 days.



Roomba robot vacuums utilize vSLAM navigation technology, which allows it to optimize coverage and thoroughly clean an entire level of the home. Plus, iRobot has a smartphone and mobile device app that lets users control their robot vacuum when away from home by setting vacuum schedules, set up vacuums, and more.

# Why Does Cable TV Cost So Much?

There's no denying that TV has gotten more expensive, for both TV providers and their members. But why exactly do costs increase every year? Why do members continually see their bills go up? There are a number of reasons for the high cost of TV, and we want to make it a little easier to understand.

## Local Station Broadcast Fees

Local station broadcast retransmission fees account for about 26% of the overall cost of a cable bill (Source: Forbes). Like you, we feel the discomfort when local broadcast stations decide to raise their prices. Portland-area broadcast stations include KATU, KRCW, KOIN, KGW, KPTV, KPDX, and KUPN. Most cable companies and TV service providers, DirectLink included, now list the programming charges from local stations as a separate billing line item so subscribers can be aware of just how much this content costs. The main goal here is transparency. Our Broadcast Programming Fee is a straight pass through cost that represents exactly what we are charged to carry these channels on our service. Unfortunately, local stations choose to increase these rates at high levels each year.

## Sports Broadcasting Rights

Sports games and shows are some of the most popular programs available, and the network executives know it. The price networks pay to air sports programming has caused basic cable and satellite TV bills to double over the

past decade. Most professional sports entities bring in billions for broadcast and cable rights to air their games.

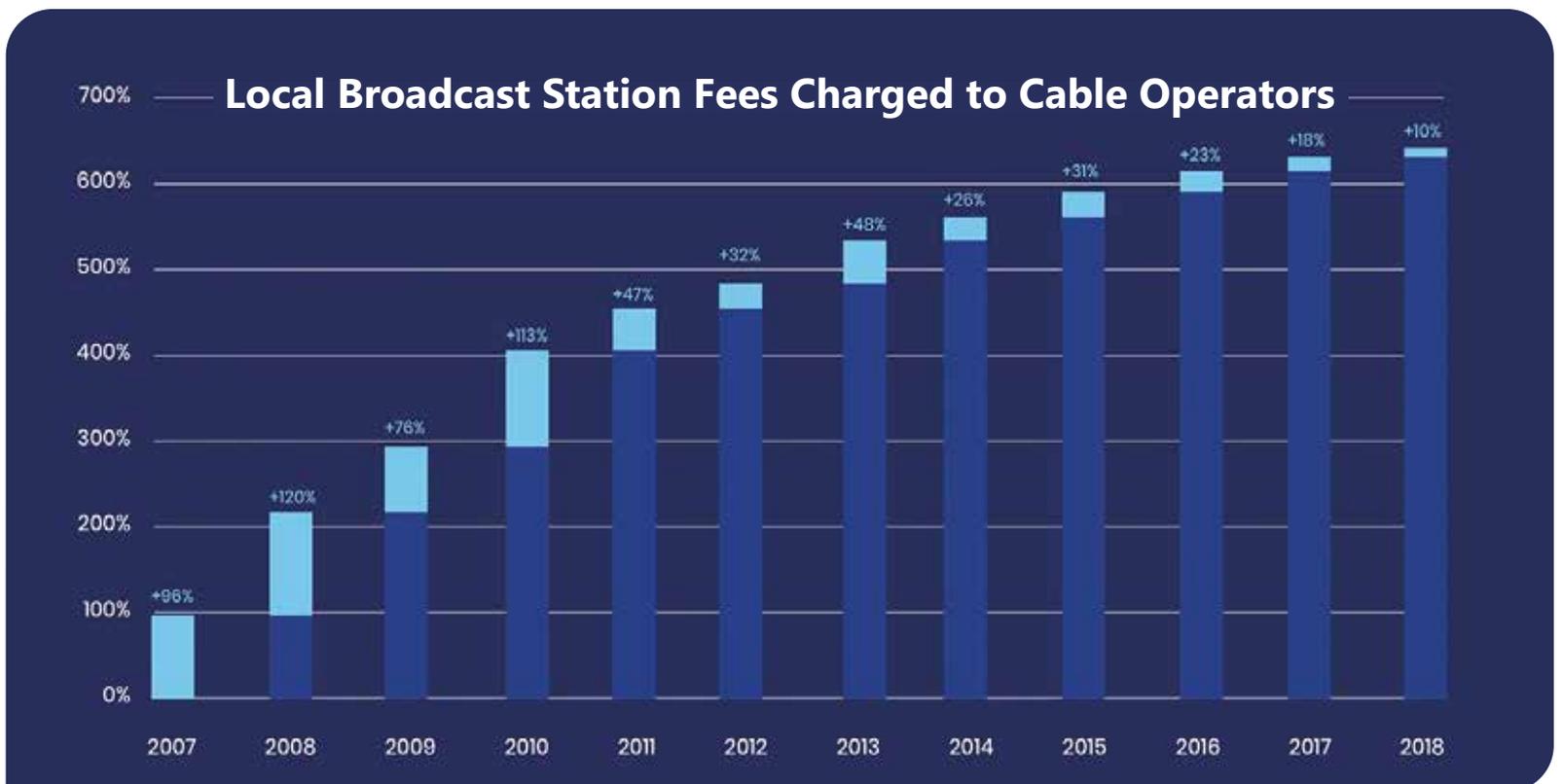
## Media Conglomeration

Most of the networks you watch are owned by eight corporations who, in turn, control the prices of the channels. To continue increasing their revenue, they require that DirectLink and others carry their less-popular networks on specific package tiers as a condition of providing the most popular ones. In addition, they use their size and market power to demand higher fees for their programming. If DirectLink does not agree to the new price, they threaten to remove the channel(s) from your TV package.

## What are we doing to combat the rising costs of TV?

We've developed and introduced **EZVideo**, an app-based digital TV solution for our members. Unlike traditional cable and satellite TV, **EZVideo** does not require a special set top box or DVR box with additional rental fees. Plus, HD fees have been eliminated, along with long-term contracts. **This saves the average household \$360 per year** over traditional TV services. 503.845.2990 While we have little to no control over the big corporations raising their prices for your favorite shows and movies, we're finding ways to combat them with innovative new products that reduce or eliminate the extra equipment and feature fees for members. Learn more on page 6.

Learn more about what DirectLink and other member-owned cooperatives are doing to keep prices as low as possible for TV subscribers at [www.TVOnMySide.com](http://www.TVOnMySide.com).





# We're Merging Facebook Pages

DirectLink has had two separate Facebook pages since our Mt. Angel members joined the cooperative family in 2016. As an effort to consolidate company information and to include all of our members together, we will be merging the Mt. Angel and Canby pages into one on Wednesday, February 19, 2020. Anyone that has liked or followed the Mt. Angel page that would like to keep up with us on social media should head to Facebook.com/DirectLinkCoop and like that page. We thank you for your continued support in your neighborhood communications company!

## What Our Members Say...



Debra Vilhauer,  
Service Center Technician

“DirectLink has been good to us for over 20 years.”

“Debra [Vilhauer] returned my call, she looked at my past history and saw the issue I was having. She explained what would be done to fix it!”

“I love how affordable it is and how great the people are! I have known DirectLink all my life, and it has been an overall great experience!”

“You guys are over the top! I have been a DirectLink customer for 18 years. We have never been disappointed in you at any time. You are a rock!”

## Scholarship Deadlines



**Do you or your child(ren) have plans to attend college in the fall?** Be sure to apply for a scholarship from DirectLink and the Canby Rotary Foundation by April 10, 2020.

Visit [www.DirectLink.coop/scholarship](http://www.DirectLink.coop/scholarship) for information and application instructions.

## Volksfest

Celebrate Mount Angel's German heritage at Volksfest (formerly Wurstfest), where you will find the best handcrafted German sausages as well as local and German beers. 503.266.7416 Enjoy other great food, live German music, dancing, games and demonstrations.



Special events include Senior Day for those 65 and older, with special giveaways on Friday from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. On Saturday, the Wurst Run 5k and 10k begins at 9:30AM. Register at [www.racenorthwest.com/wurstrun](http://www.racenorthwest.com/wurstrun).

So dust off your lederhosen, starch up your Bavarian dirndl, and join the happy folk of Mt. Angel for a fun-filled, three-day celebration of the Wurst (Sausage) at Volksfest.

- Location:** Mt. Angel Festhalle, 500 S Wilco Hwy, Mt. Angel, OR
- Date:** March 1 – March 3, 2019
- Time:** 10:00 AM – Midnight March 1 & 2 • 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM March 3
- Cost:** \$5 for adults 21 and older  
\$10 with specialty stein or glass (limited availability)  
Guests under 21 get in FREE if accompanied by adult

**More information:** [www.mtangelvolksfest.com](http://www.mtangelvolksfest.com)





## Christmas Toy Drive Results

Every year, organizations and individuals in Canby and Mt. Angel work countless hours to place collection bins around the community. People from both areas rally to donate food and toys, time, and funds to support local families in need. Businesses like DirectLink partner with these causes with financial donations and collection bins. We are thrilled to relay the results below.



The **Canby Kiwanis Community Food & Toy Drive** provided holiday assistance to 360 local families, 503.845.7098 including gifts for more than 925 children.

This annual effort takes the support of the whole community. To see a full list of organizations that donated time, money, or served as a donation site, visit [www.CanbyKiwanis.org](http://www.CanbyKiwanis.org).

The **Mt. Angel Community Food and Toy Drive** for Mission Benedict hosted by St. Joseph's Shelter reported that over 4,500 pounds of food and 520 pounds of toys were distributed to local families. Countless local individuals and organizations worked to make the toy and food drive happen.

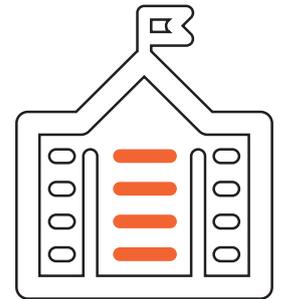
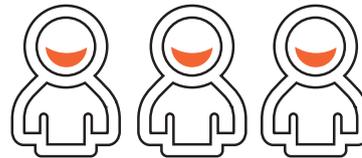
## Friends of the Canby Public Library Annual Meeting

**Date:** Thursday, February 20, 2020

**Time:** 5:30 PM

**Place:** Willamette Room

**Everyone is invited to attend!**



## Community Classes



DirectLink's free and informative Community Classes are designed to help our members better understand and use technology. We ask that you please RSVP for the class and time you'd like to attend using one of the methods below so that we may prepare accordingly.

### Canby - 150 SE 2nd Avenue

**Time:** 10:00AM-11:30AM, 6:30PM-8:00PM

**RSVP:** Call 503.266.8111 or email [HereForYou@DirectLink.coop](mailto:HereForYou@DirectLink.coop)

### Mt. Angel - 155 N. Garfield St.

**Time:** 3:00PM-4:30PM

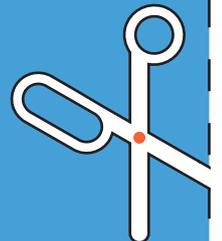
**RSVP:** Call 503.845.2291 or email [HereForYou@DirectLink.coop](mailto:HereForYou@DirectLink.coop)

**March 11: Microsoft Word Basics**

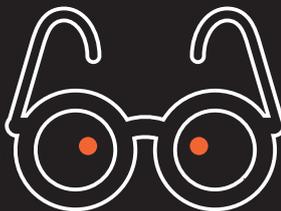
**June 10: How to Sell Things Online**

**September 9: Getting Started with Smart Speakers**

**December 2: Internet Basics: Search, Settings, and Safety**



## Tech Tip



**Hard time reading the menu at a restaurant?**

*Use your smartphone like a magnifying glass: take a photo of the menu and zoom in!*



## watchTVeverywhere with your EZVideo TV subscription

Your **EZVideo TV** subscription includes a variety of benefits and features, from **FREE** DVR storage, to zero equipment fees, to a personalized viewing experience, and so much more. One of the great perks **EZVideo** provides is free access to **watchTVeverywhere**, a service that allows subscribers to watch a huge library of OnDemand content anywhere and anytime with your favorite Internet-connected device.

**It's like having a free built-in Hulu styled service with access to:**

- **Just Aired Shows**
- **Bonus Channel Content**
- **Complete Seasons**
- **Popular Movies**

Once you're set up with an **EZVideo** subscription, head over to **wtve.net** to sign up for your **FREE** account. Choose **EZVideo** as your provider and then use your account number (located on your bill) to register. 503.263.1945 After that, you'll have access to OnDemand content from the networks in your **EZVideo** subscription tier, but you get to pick and choose what content you'd like to watch. 503.651.2531 For example, you can download the USA Network app on an Amazon Fire TV Stick, smartphone, Apple TV, or view in a web browser, then sign in with the watchTVeverywhere account credentials that you just created (if USA Network is in your channel tier). At that point, you'll have access to a library of content specific to the USA Network and can watch shows and movies anywhere as long as you have an Internet connection, either on WiFi or a wireless mobile data plan.



## Join Us to Learn About EZVideo TV!

**EZVideo is the way of the future.** Join us for an upcoming tutorial and see for yourself what makes **EZVideo** better than traditional cable TV, including more features, less restrictions, and an **average household savings of \$360 per year.** This app-based TV service works on a number of different devices that are likely already in the home, and it features most of your favorite live, local channels, sports programs, and national networks. We ask that you please RSVP using one of the methods below so that we can prepare accordingly. Classes without RSVPs may be cancelled, so if you plan on attending, please let us know.

### Canby

**When:** Thursday, February 20: 10AM, 3PM, & 7PM  
Thursday, March 19: 10AM, 3PM, & 7PM  
Thursday, April 23: 10AM, 3PM, & 7PM

**Where:** DirectLink Community Room  
150 SE 2nd Ave. Canby, OR

**RSVP:** Call **503.266.8111**  
or email **HereForYou@DirectLink.coop**

### Mt. Angel

**When:** Tuesday, February 18: 10AM  
Tuesday, March 17: 10AM  
Tuesday, April 21: 10AM

**Where:** DirectLink Conference Room  
155 N. Garfield St. Mt Angel, OR

**RSVP:** Call **503.845.2291**  
or email **HereForYou@DirectLink.coop**

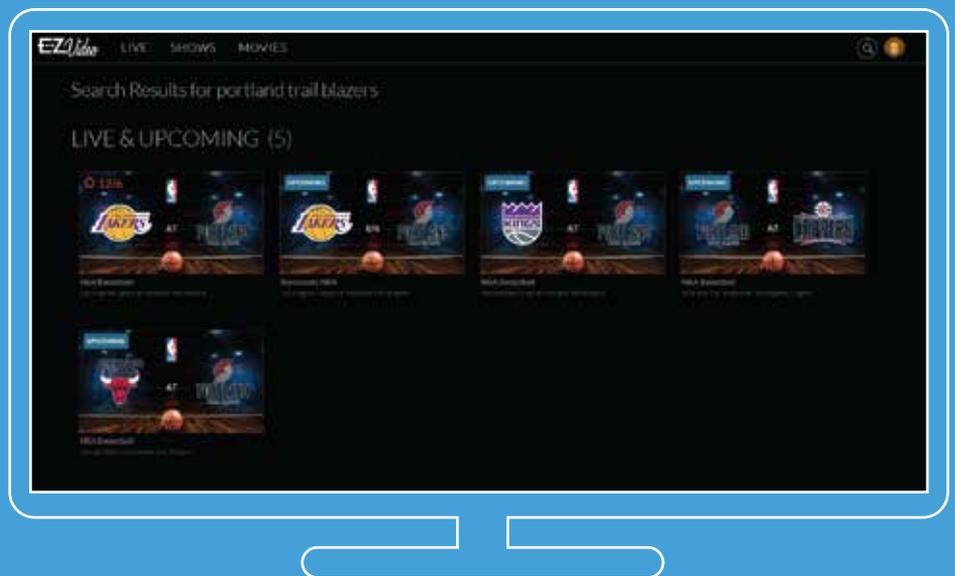
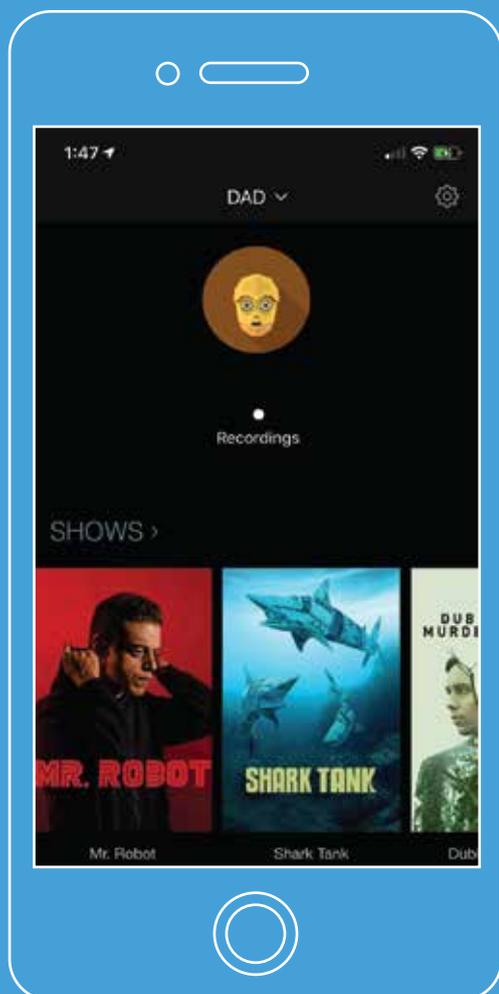
# EZVideo Tips



 **Do you have two shows on at once you'd like to record?** Maybe 3? How about 5? Record as many programs at once as you'd like with **EZVideo TV**. Most other providers have limits for the number of shows you can record at one time or how long you can keep recordings for. Some streaming TV options delete recordings after 28 days, for example. With **EZVideo** from DirectLink, there are no limits on either.

 **Having trouble finding the program you'd like to record?** Scrolling through the Guide trying to find a show can be tedious, especially when you're looking for something coming up in the future you'd like to record. Try **EZVideo's** built-in Search function and find what you're looking for in just a few clicks! Look for the magnifying glass symbol on your device and enter keywords such as "Portland Trail Blazers," for example. And if you'd rather not type out a search query, simply press the microphone button at the top of your Fire TV remote, speak, and then release the button - make sure to do this while in the Search area of **EZVideo**.

 **Be gone, lag! Ever see a loading circle in the middle of the screen when watching a program on EZVideo?** Believe us, we know how frustrating that can be. **EZVideo** is powered by your DirectLink Internet connection, which means it uses bandwidth just like all of the other devices on your network. 503.651.2559 If you experience interruptions when watching TV on **EZVideo**, give us a call and we'd be happy to help diagnose the issue and work with you to provide a better entertainment experience.



Did you enjoy the **HBO** FREE preview weekend last month on EZVideo?

Add the HBO family of channels to your subscription and get the first month for FREE! Give your local DirectLink office a call by February 28, 2020 to take advantage of this fantastic offer.



190 SE 2nd Avenue  
P.O. Box 880  
Canby, Oregon 97013-0880

# Pay & Win

Every on-time payment is placed into a drawing for a themed gift basket each month. Payments made using autopay are included in the random drawing, so set up autopay with SmartHub for a chance to win each month!

## Canby Winners

**October**  
*Heidi Lael*



## Mt. Angel Winners

**October**  
*Beatrice Perez*



## November

*Rosie Cranston*



## November

*Linda Bentz*

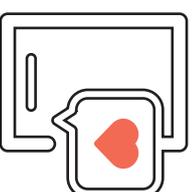


## Find Your Number, Get \$20 Off Your Next Bill!



Call us by February 20th to claim your discount

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[Instagram.com/DirectLinkCoop](https://Instagram.com/DirectLinkCoop)



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*We're here for you.*

## December

*Gary Barrett*



## December

*Jeff Cuff*

