

the Download

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

DirectLink Internet Traffic Up Since Oregon's "Stay Home" Order

With the implementation of Oregon's "Stay Home" order near the end of March, many people are at home to help slow the spread of the novel coronavirus. As such, we have seen a drastic increase in Internet traffic from our members that are working from home, taking care of kids, finding ways to stay entertained online, and much more. It can be easy to overlook how many aspects of our lives require a reliable Internet connection, more than accessing email, streaming movies, and playing multiplayer games. School districts and teachers work hard to continue to educate our kids, families and individuals use telehealth services to connect with their doctors and healthcare providers, local businesses continue to serve their communities through work-from-home initiatives, and so much more.

During a traffic study period between March 20 and April 30, there was a 20% increase in Internet traffic during work hours, a 14% increase in the evenings, and an 8% peak time increase, which is around 9:00PM in our area. The traffic increase during peak times in our area was nearly double the increase in traffic nationwide, according to a study by the National Cable Television Association.



Source: NCTA

Nationwide Locally

We've seen a 30% increase in traffic on our dedicated server designed to manage usage of a popular streaming TV service. 503.651.1210 We've taken steps to streamline the deliverability of certain popular entertainment services so that our members receive the utmost quality product



"What we have experienced here is certainly nothing we have seen before on our broadband networks but thankfully we have been able to scale our infrastructure to support the demand for our members," said DirectLink Senior Network Engineer Justin Radke.



without lag or interruptions. Finally, we saw a 16% increase in total minutes watched on EZVideo, our app-based TV program that uses members' DirectLink Internet connection to enable live, replay, and recorded shows and movies.

Despite the increase in traffic, DirectLink remains committed to our members and does not implement data caps or fees for high usage. 503.266.9885 Our members can feel confident in the advanced infrastructure we've put in place to reliably handle calls on a traditional telephone to family members and loved ones, connect with coworkers over a video conference call, and enjoy a variety of online entertainment options.

"We are always anticipating constant growth and we are doing our best to stay ahead of the demand to provide the best experience for our subscribers," said DirectLink Senior Network Engineer Justin Radke. "We'll keep doing our jobs so that our community can do theirs from home."

We're here for you.

Gadget Review: PopSocket PopPower Home Wireless Charger

\$60 MSRP at www.PopSockets.com

This smartphone charger accessory is a great addition for PopSocket users that elect to use wireless charging stations in lieu of traditional wired charging. Until this gadget released, it was almost impossible to charge a smartphone with a PopSocket grip on a wireless, Qi-enabled charging pad without taking off the phone's case or the PopSocket grip itself, which is understandably frustrating.

The PopPower home solves this problem by making room for the PopSocket grip on the wireless pad itself, so users no longer have to remove the case or grip to charge their phone. 503.845.6265 The grip fits into the charging pad through a small hole that keeps the grip snugly in place while effectively charging the phone.



Flowers Fund Scholarships for Local Students and Bring Fun!

We could all use a little cheer during these trying times. That's why DirectLink continues to work to help our local communities.



Canby Adult Center



Country Side Living



Rackleff Place

DirectLink purchases tulips from the Mt. Angel Lions Club every year to help fund two \$1,000 scholarships for John F. Kennedy High School seniors looking to continue their education. Since 1981, the scholarship program has awarded more than \$65,000 to 78 local students.

The beautiful tulips from Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm just outside Woodburn are usually given to DirectLink employees, but since most of DirectLink's workforce is out of the office due to the COVID-19 situation, we decided to donate them to three local organizations on the front line that serve our community every day.

We reached out to several organizations in Canby and Mt. Angel and received word back from the Canby Adult Center, Rackleff Place, and Country Side Living that the flowers would be of most use to them.

These organizations all received several tulip bouquets, which they generously shared with their residents, employees, and neighbors. Country Side Living used the flowers in an activity with residents that had them arrange the tulips into vase displays. 503.266.9484 The Canby Adult Center divided their bouquets among their programs, including the Meals on Wheels service, where they delivered flowers to local residents and gave some to drivers and kitchen volunteers. Rackleff Place donated a bouquet to a local family as well.

We're so grateful to be part of local communities that pay it forward by spreading cheer and supporting each other during this challenging time.

KEEP AMERICANS CONNECTED



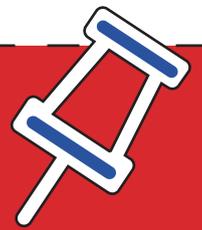
DirectLink Commits to FCC's Keep Americans Connected Pledge

The Federal Communications Commission has issued the Keep Americans Connected Pledge in an effort to ensure uninterrupted broadband access during the coronavirus situation. The goal is to keep the millions of students and Americans now forced to work or study from home connected to the Internet with reliable service.

DirectLink committed to the Keep Americans Connected pledge on March 18, 2020 and have waived late fees, suspensions, and disconnects for 60 days. Collections on past due accounts were also paused during this period.

DirectLink joins over 700 other service providers (as of April 16) that have committed to the Keep Americans Connected Pledge.

Community Classes



DirectLink's **FREE** and informative Community Classes are designed to help our members better understand and use technology. These events are open to everyone in both Canby and Mt. Angel service areas. Each class is repeated on the selected date for your convenience. 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

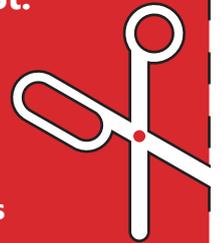
Mt. Angel - 155 N. Garfield St.

Time: 3:00PM-4:30PM

RSVP: Call 503.845.2291 or email
HereForYou@DirectLink.coop

Wednesday, September 9: (Tentative)
Getting Started with Smart Speakers

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



Sure, an Internet connection gives us access to email, online games, social media, and streaming entertainment options. 503.651.3840 But there are many more aspects of one's life that are affected by a reliable Internet connection to help one stay safe but continue with daily interactions. How have you used your Internet connection during the stay at home order? Let us know at HereForYou@DirectLink.coop

- Watch a YouTube video on how to make fabric protective masks at home or learn a new skill
- Continue employment through work-from-home initiatives
- Connect with teachers and schools through online learning opportunities
- Use online banking and bill pay functions
- Use telehealth services to conduct video appointments with doctors, nurses, and specialists to continue managing personal wellbeing
- Order groceries for delivery or pickup to limit the number of people in stores for safety
- Stay in touch with loved ones via video chats and virtual game nights
- Keep up to date with current news locally, nationally, and internationally
- Order takeout food to continue supporting local restaurants
- Backup photos, videos, and work files from smartphones and other devices connected to cloud storage services 503.263.3240
- Business owners can monitor closed storefronts through connected security cameras
- Find shows and movies to watch on popular services like Netflix, Hulu, Prime Video, and EZVideo





Teresita Miranda - Member Services Specialist

What Our Members Say...

“ The guy that I talked with was polite, listened to me, and gave me solutions to solve my problem, as they have always done. ”

“ [DirectLink] just got the job done really quick. The installer was very nice. It went really smooth, and it is working wonderful and I have no complaints. ”

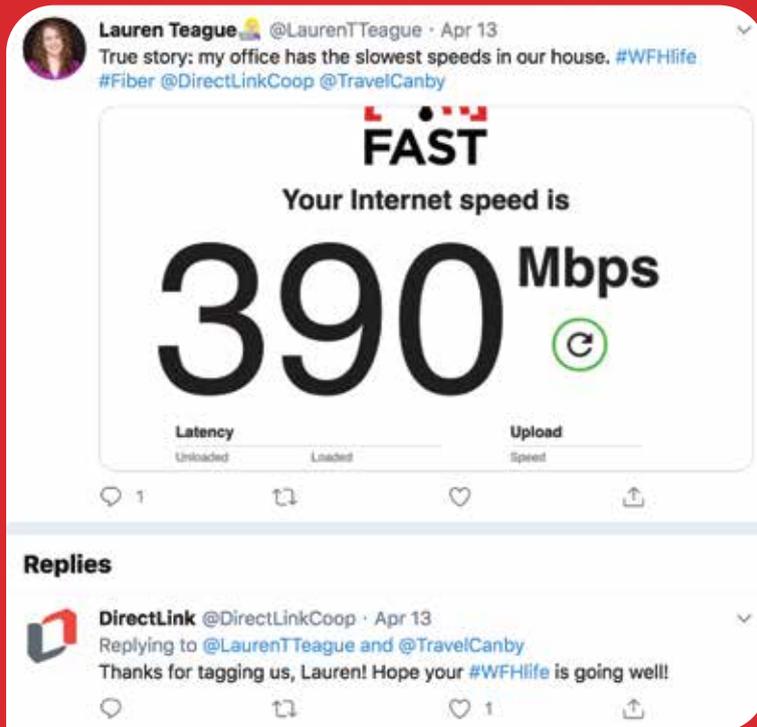
“ I have been with DirectLink for years - you guys are a 55, on a scale of 1-10! Teresita [Miranda] told me all about EZVideo and signed me up. I like the product. It is great! ”

Tech Tip

Have a hard time holding onto your smartphone while scrolling through Instagram or taking pictures?

Try a PopSocket (or related brand), a small device that sticks or magnetizes to the back of your phone providing a grip to hold onto! 503.845.6368

Twitter Tag!



DirectLink COVID-19 Update

Due to coronavirus/COVID-19 precautions and the safety of our community and staff, the DirectLink office is temporarily closed to walk-in traffic.

There are many ways to communicate with us outside of a personal visit:

- Call us at **503.266.8111** or **503.845.2291**
- Email us at **WeCare@DirectLink.coop**
- Chat with Tech Support 24/7 at **DirectLink.coop/support** and click the green box at the bottom-right of the screen
- Insert payments or communications into the external drop box at either office 24/7
- Log in to your SmartHub account for payments, bill amount inquiries, and subscription modifications at **DirectLink.SmartHub.coop**
- Mail payments through U.S. Mail



For information and updates visit our news page at **www.DirectLink.coop/news** or our Facebook page at **www.Facebook.com/DirectLinkCoop**.

We appreciate your cooperation and understanding while we navigate these unfamiliar times.

DirectLink Named Smart Rural Community



PROVIDER



DirectLink members enjoy some of the fastest Internet speeds in the country, perfect for streaming movies, playing online games, video conference calling, and so much more. As a rural broadband provider, we know how important it is to have a strong Internet connection at home, even if you're far away from the big city. We've prioritized building a strong, reliable network and were the first certified gigabit-speed Internet provider in Oregon. As such, the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association (NTCA) – The Rural Broadband Association, has named DirectLink a Smart Rural Community as recognition for our commitment to our members. 503.651.3442 The NTCA represents rural communications cooperatives nationwide and presents the Smart Rural Communities award to cooperatives that provide the highest level of Internet speed and service to their communities.

Smart Rural Communities represents a network of communities powered by innovative community-based broadband providers building a brighter future for small town America. The NTCA's Smart Rural Community program promotes rural broadband and its role in supporting innovative economic development, effective education, efficient energy distribution and use, state-of-the-art health care and other important issues for rural America.

Online Learning Resources for Kids at Home

While school is out during the COVID-19 coronavirus situation, parents may be looking for some online resources to keep their kids engaged and learning. Here are three free resources available that all focus on educational opportunities.

Khan Academy



Offers practice exercises, instructional videos, and a personalized learning dashboard that empower learners to study at their own pace in and outside of the classroom. 503.845.6412 Visit www.KhanAcademy.org to learn more and to see a list of the free courses available.

Reading Is Fundamental (RIF)



Provides resources such as books, STEM-themed classroom activities, professional development for educators, and parent engagement materials. Visit www.RIF.org to learn more.

YouTube Learning



A destination designed to offer teens and adults quality learning content. 503.266.2467 Here you will find playlists that spark your curiosity and content ranging in subjects from physics to filmmaking.

Visit www.YouTube.com/learning to get started.



Select TV Networks Open Up Channels for All Viewers

TV viewing has been a popular activity while more people are at home practicing social distancing efforts to help slow the spread of the coronavirus.

To provide some expanded EZVideo entertainment options during this time, some networks have opened up their channels for all viewers.

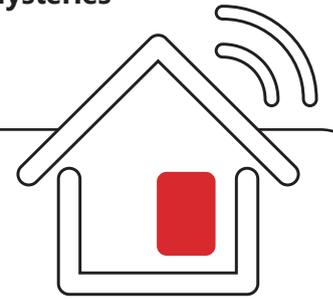
No action is required on your part to activate these channels. They will automatically appear in your guide and other areas of the EZVideo app as long as the content providers make them available. Any content recorded on the channels will be able to be kept after that timeframe. 503.845.6368 A current list can be found to the right and more channels may join in on this offer in the near future.

Check our company news feed for updated channel availability at www.DirectLink.coop/news.



Expanded Entertainment Options:

- American Heroes Channel
- DIY
- CNN
- Cooking Channel
- Destination America
- Discovery Family Channel
- Discovery Life Channel
- Discovery en Espanol
- Great American Country
- Hallmark Channel
- Hallmark Movies & Mysteries
- Hallmark Drama
- Nick Jr.
- Science
- Smithsonian
- Travel



3 Tips to Improve Your Home WiFi

If you have WiFi service from DirectLink, please call us if you have any issues. Read on if you use your own WiFi equipment or are with another Internet provider.

Does your movie ever stop to load while watching it? Do you ever experience lag or interruptions when playing online games? What about a weak WiFi signal in certain rooms or areas of the home? Read on for a few tips to help improve your home's WiFi connection.

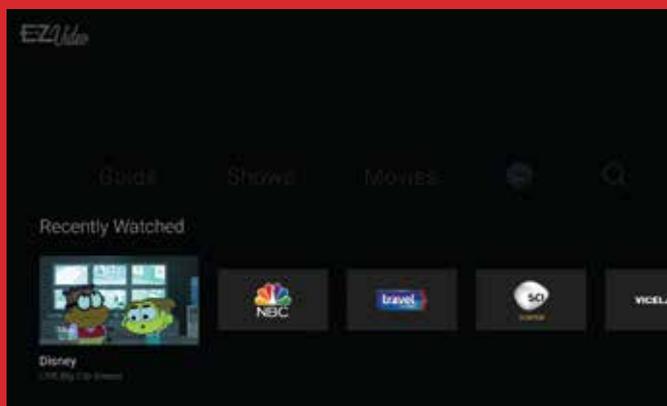
- 1 Try to centralize your WiFi router.** To provide a strong connection throughout the home, your router should be in a fairly centralized location so that the WiFi signal can reach different areas. Since some routers might not match your home décor or be pleasant to look at, you might be inclined to hide it in a cabinet or behind the entertainment center. This could weaken or interrupt the connection and interfere with its ability to provide a signal to certain areas of the home.
- 2 Purchase a new router every few years.** Just like smartphones, computers, and gaming devices, WiFi routers have a lifespan and become less efficient as they age. Upgrading to a newer router is an effective way to improve your home's WiFi range, strength, and reliability. If you experience slow web page loading times, video buffering, or trouble connecting in certain rooms, it might be time to upgrade your router to a more modern version.
- 3 Consider DirectLink's WiFi Home Networking solution.** Our technicians survey each home with cutting-edge equipment and then install a commercial-grade device in the optimum location for the strongest signal and longest reach available. 503.263.3605 Plus, our team of experts makes sure the equipment is up to date and functioning properly so you don't have to. WiFi Home Networking also comes with in-house technical support, so you can call us if any issues arise. Our team will be able to provide a solution in most cases without needing to send a technician out to your home. Visit DirectLink.coop/WiFi for more information.

EZVideo Tips



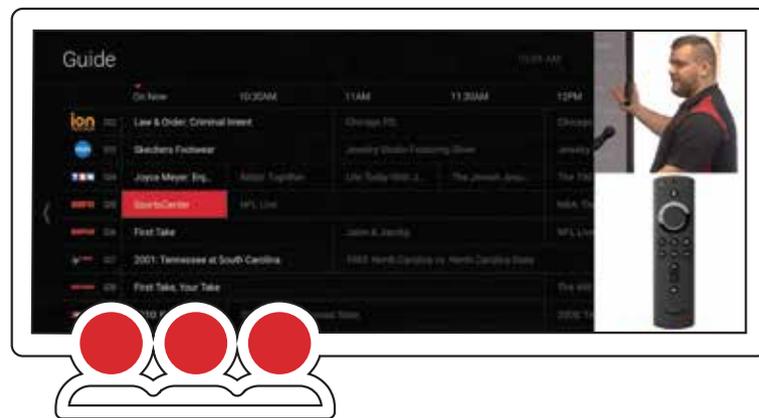
Hop back and forth between programs easily with the Recently Watched feature!

From the Main Menu on an Amazon Fire TV Stick, scroll downward to access the Recently Watched section. There, you'll see your 15 most Recently Watched programs organized from left to right, with the most recent on the left. This list includes content that is Live, Replay TV, and DVR recordings. And the best part is that the content organized in the Recently Watched section is specific to the profile viewing EZVideo!



Miss a show during the live airing or forget to record it? Use EZVideo's popular Replay TV feature!

Most channels have Replay TV functionality and allow their programs to be watched OnDemand for up to 75 hours after they aired live. So if you missed an episode of your favorite show on Sunday and forgot to add it to your DVR, scroll left from the Guide and watch it within 3 days of its live airing!



Check Out Our Virtual EZVideo Tutorial on Our YouTube Channel!

We are very excited to announce that a virtual EZVideo Tutorial is available now on the YouTube channel! While COVID-19 social distancing regulations may put live tutorials on the back burner for the foreseeable future, we hope this online tutorial will help you learn the ins and outs of the EZVideo app on an Amazon Fire TV device.

We'd like to give a big shoutout to Canby CTV Channel 5 for coming out to film our last public tutorial and prepare this video we hope will be helpful to you!

Visit www.bit.ly/EZVideoTutorial to view the online tutorial. (the URL is case-sensitive, make sure to enter it as it appears in bold). And while you're there, subscribe to the channel for more video content, and drop us a "like" and a comment on the tutorial to let us know what you think!

Ask Us Questions About EZVideo on Facebook Live!



We miss seeing all of you at our in-person EZVideo Tutorials hosted at the DirectLink offices each month. These tutorials are a great way for us to get to know our valued members, and for you to ask us any questions about the EZVideo service.

We're excited to announce that we'll be going live on the DirectLink Facebook page at the times below. And if you don't have a Facebook account, don't worry! You can still watch the video without joining in on the conversation by visiting our page at www.Facebook.com/DirectLinkCoop during the scheduled time. Plus, the videos will be available to watch after the live viewing.

Tuesday, May 19th @ 10:00AM



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. We are continuing to choose Pay & Win basket winners throughout the stay at home order, however, notification and delivery of the baskets will be delayed until after the order is lifted.

Canby Winners

January
Margaret Purvis



Mt. Angel Winners

January
Marlys Jones



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



Call us by May 21st to claim your discount.

Follow Us



Keep up with Directlink events, news, product updates, and more by following us on social media!



Let us know!

If you have an idea for a local article to be considered for a future edition, or comments about this or past newsletters, please email us at: HereForYou@DirectLink.coop

- facebook.com/DirectLinkCoop
- Instagram.com/DirectLinkCoop
- twitter.com/DirectLinkCoop

We're here for you.

February

Joanne Hauser



February

Willard Teem



March

Debra Ruggles



March

Shawn Wood

