

VISTA ROYALE COMPUTER CLUB

January 14, 2021

Hi Members:

Vicky Getz was our speaker this week and she kindly provided the notes from her presentation. This is a great tutorial and there are some good links to other information

These are our announcements:

We had 22+ Zoom participants, including one invited guest who wants to join our club when we are allowed back into the clubhouses. We also gave away a 2021 calendar organizer.

The VR Board of Directors is still looking for a civic minded volunteer to work as a ZOOM moderator for monthly Vista Royale Association Board of Director Meetings; Contact the office if you want to volunteer.

Next week on Thursday, Jan 21, 2021 at 9:30 am Sandy McKenny will present on some of her experience in Dealing with Her Old Photos this past summer.... an ongoing endeavor. Maybe this will give you some tips, ideas, and motivation to start your own project and avoid some pitfalls.

The topic of our meeting was STREAMING DEVICES

Streaming is the transmission of music or video in a continuous flow of data. The data is played as it is received. This differs from a download, where the entire movie or song is downloaded to reside on the local device before playing.

Why do people stream?

1. To Get Commercial Free Content

Get commercial free content \$ Similar to subscribing to HBO, Starz, Showtime, Epix, TMC

Netflix, Amazon Prime, Apple TV+, Disney+, HBO Max

Pay Per View – Rental Redbox, Fandango, Amazon, Google

2. Supplement Viewing

Supplement Viewing

Free Streaming service

- Tubi, Pluto, Crackle, PBS, Roku -free

Supplement Cable OnDemand or watch their Cable Package while out of town using Cable apps included with your cable package. Of course, this only works with an active service, it will not work if the service is in vacation mode.

Activate on a computer with your

Billing Username and Password

Nearly every channel on your cable line up will have an app. There may be location restrictions especially on international streaming.

3. Cable replacement streaming service

Cable Replacement Package \$\$\$\$ not much cheaper than a cable package, and more difficult than watching straight cable.

Sling, Hulu, YouTube Premium, Roku Premium

No long term contract

TV PROVIDER

Vista Royale has AT&T U-VERSE which in addition to the individual apps lets you stream live tv with the U-VERSE app. AT&T also has a strictly streaming service called AT&T TV which uses the AT&T Watch TV app. They are not the same thing! Most devices have the AT&T Watch TV app, very few have the U-Verse app. The U-VERSE app came in very handy this summer when the Tennis Channel kept refusing my Uverse credentials, but it should not have been necessary.

When setting up a new Roku, you are asked to select your Cable TV provider, and it will offer you AT&T TV, again we have AT&T Uverse, so our VR cable service is not on the list.

You will need internet access and a streaming device in order to stream.

INTERNET ACCESS

Internet Service 24 Mbs or higher speed with bare minimum of 7Mbs at the streaming player.

STREAMING DEVICE

Computer -although fewer and fewer streaming services work through a browser and Windows 10 streaming apps are few and far between.

Tablet

Smart Phone

Blu-ray player

Gaming system

Streaming Stick such as a Apple TV, Chromecast, Firestick, Roku, Tivo

SMART TV

Advantages of a Smart TV

Simplified viewing experience having just one remote

Less clutter! No external equipment.

Disadvantage of a Smart TV

Get fewer updates, security.

Don't do things as well as the stand alone devices.

Smart TV Operating Systems

Now it's just as important to consider the operating system of your TV, as it was to consider the picture quality and number and position of input ports.

Consumers did a review of the pros and cons of various Smart TV Operating system

<https://www.consumerreports.org/tvs/smart-tv-systems-pros-cons/>

Make sure your Smart TV has a tuner

STREAMING STICKS and SET TOP BOXES

We talked about the difference between a streaming stick, a device that is designed to be attached and concealed behind the TV and a streaming set top box (STB) which is designed to sit on a flat surface. Sandy mentioned that she broke her stick's adapter when she moved her wall mounted TV too close to the wall. When choosing a TV/Rack

system, check the placement of the HDMI ports on the TV and how a rack allows access to them are two more decisions to make when choosing your equipment. You may need to get an extender HDMI cable to gain enough clearance.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR IN A STREAMING DEVICE.

Can the device use 5GHz Wi-Fi?

Many of the lower priced sticks do not support 5Ghz Wi-Fi. In some apartments at Vista Royale, Wi-Fi___33 congestion will make 2.4 GHz Wi-Fi___33 too slow too stream without buffering.

Does the streaming device support the apps I want to use?

Look for the current model year.

REMOTE CONTROLS

Streaming devices typically come with Bluetooth remotes because the devices are meant to be hidden behind the TV.

Additionally, control can via your TV's CEC with Smart phone apps.

Controlling with CEC stands for Consumer Electronics Control and it basically means that your TV has the capacity to control things that are plugged into your HDMI ports and vice versa.

Amazon FIRESTICK 4K

Firesticks are an Amazon device. The menu tends to be content focus, with heavy promotion of Amazon content. Vicky found it difficult to find streaming channels without prior knowledge of the channel name. These retail for \$49.99 but often are on sale for 29.99. The smartphone app for this didn't perform well, often needing to be uninstalled and reinstalled to get it to work.

ROKU ULTRA SET TOP BOX

Roku has a Roku Stick + which retails for \$49.99. But Vicky opted for the Roku Ultra Set Top Box which retails for 99.99 (on sale for \$79.99 until Saturday 1/16/21) This model has a better processor, better video up-scaling, comes with earbuds that plug into the remote for private listening, has a remote finder button which plays a sound on the remote to make it easier to locate, has an IR receiver to make it compatible for universal remotes, offers an Ethernet Port for wired connectivity, and has a USB player to play slideshows, music and movies from a USB device.

No USB slot, No Problem

USB players only make sense on set top boxes because the sticks are tucked behind the TV, but most streaming sticks have apps that will search out DLNA players on your network. And smart phones and tablets have apps that can CAST to your streaming device too.

WHY A CURRENT MODEL?

The hardware is more likely to meet the requirements of new updated Apps.

Devices age out of security update support.

Devices that are no longer getting security updates have no place on the internet!!!!!!

These minutes and minutes from prior meetings are available at the VR Computer Clubs Minutes Page.

<http://www.vrcc.info/minutes.html>

Enjoy your week, stay safe.....

Sandy McKenny, sec