

Best Efforts. That is what you get when you try to send internet video. Its absolutely impossible to assure anyone , anywhere that a video you or any Content Delivery Network hosts will be able to be delivered at the equivalent quality of any TV show being broadcast today.

There is a reason why Content Delivery Networks exist. They exist because the internet is a best efforts medium. The internet will always be a best efforts medium, if only because of Net Neutrality. If all bits are created and delivered on an equal basis, then there is no way to be sure that the bits carrying your TV show will be delivered with any Quality of Service assurances.

For some reason, every Internet bigot out there seems to think that there is some magic bullet that will cure this problem. There is a reason why Cable companies spend so much money on equipment and engineers to make sure that your favorite TV show shows up when you change the channel. Those same engineers do everything they possibly can to make sure that you get that show at the highest possible picture quality. Delivery is not just about bandwidth allocation, there is an incredible amount of engineering that goes into getting TV signals to your screen. It works because those engineers control the signal end to end. Its deterministic, not best efforts.

Its for this reason I have turned away from the internet as the future of entertainment and am focused on Digital TV, whether its delivered by a satellite, telco or cable company. While its true that the companies offering TV often step all over themselves and make things far more difficult than they should be, all of the real innovation is happening on the Digital TV side of the ledger. Why ? Because its a stable, deterministic platform.

With digital video, particularly for cable and telcos, there are specifications and tolerances that developers can use to design interactive applications. Satellite has different advantages in terms of broadcast solutions.

in addition, those set top boxes that continue to be upgraded and swapped out more often than you swap out your computers ? They are application specific platforms. They are being built at the software and hardware level to drive digital video and interactivity. Contrast that with the Windows /Vista platforms that most users have.

Cable has [Tru2WAY](#), Dish Network and DIRECTV have their development platforms. They are not perfect, but the feature sets are expanding and the application base and number of developers are expanding as well.

Call me crazy, but when given the choice of developing new applications for a deterministic platform connected to a specialty application box connected to a high definition TV with a remote control or a best efforts internet platform connected to who knows how fast a connection to a PC running who knows what operating system connected to a monitor and a keyboard, I will take the first option.

But thats just me.