

Video Cassette Recorders (VCRs) have been a standard item in most households for 20 years now. During this time Hollywood and the broadcast television industry have flourished in America, and worldwide. The ability to store programs for a later date is something Americans take for granted, and in no way impedes the ability of program producers to make money. To contravene this is not only unnecessary, but will in fact reduce the ability of producers to market content - to wit; if a person is not able to record programming on a time-delay basis and view it later, the program will go unviewed - meaning any potential revenue generated by advertising is now lost. And, just as important, a choice will no longer exist for consumers to watch this programming aside from purchasing it in prerecorded form at a later date. There is no guarantee that these sales will take place - many consumers (myself included) purchase content on Digital Video Disc (DVD) only AFTER having viewed it earlier in broadcast. If I had not known something about the content of the programs - I would have been considerably more reluctant to purchase. It is not hard at all to imagine viewership of popular programming to go down due to the difficulty in time-delayed recording. People cannot and will not reschedule their lives around television schedules - an important factor in the success of the VCR.

This control is an unnecessary impediment to consumer choice, and will impede the flow of creative ideas that non-profit redistribution of this material currently makes possible. (Schools recording programs from PBS for classroom viewing springs to mind.) Controls that make any medium more difficult to use only hurt the content producer in the long term, and ultimately make consumers more reluctant to use that medium.