

Recently Comcast replaced all the analog channels (local stations plus a few others) with digital channels. This move made somewhat useless my VCR and DVD recorders (which have analog tuners and are programmable), as I can no longer set up a series of different channels to record in the evening when I'm at work or asleep. This is because even though Comcast provides DTAs, these units are not programmable (their channels must be manually changed).

Now we are being advised that Comcast is in the process of encrypting these basic channels, making useless my HDTV with a (QAM) digital tuner for those basic channels (SD and HD). Contrary to what Comcast is saying there is a lot of electronic equipment in use by customers that have QAM tuners (but do not have 'Cable Cards', I personally have 5 such tuners), that would be rendered useless by encrypting the limited basic (local channels on Comcast cable). It should also be noted that these QAM tuners are still being sold and would likewise be useless on an encrypted Comcast cable system. The only valid reason I have heard is that a move like this would prevent cable theft (of which I have not seen any verifiable data on), yet I see many paying cable customer being inconvenienced (at best) and losing basic service (at the other end). This is something that the FCC should not allow to happen, until Comcast can guarantee that no customer will be inconvenienced and not incur any additional cost. This entire encryption process could be eliminated with the installation of filters), thus not requiring any addition boxes/activations/resets and all the other hazards being proposed.