

Sony offers 'Cloudy' early to people with its TVs

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(AP) -- In a bid to sell living room electronics and spur buzz for "Cloudy with A Chance of Meatballs," Sony Corp. is offering the movie for free to U.S. buyers of its Internet-connected TVs and Blu-ray players starting Monday.

People who buy that equipment will be able to watch the movie in any 24-hour window from Dec. 8 until it is released on DVD and Blu-ray disc on Jan. 5.

Sony's move highlights the way that movies are increasingly becoming available on TVs that connect directly to the Internet as the entertainment industry strives to come up with new business models.

Amazon.com Inc. and Blockbuster Inc. offer [movies](#) for rental or purchase on certain Internet-connected TVs, while Netflix Inc. will make its streaming catalog available to its subscribers with Sony Bravia TVs.

Those services, however, don't provide the early-release jump Sony is trying with "Cloudy with A Chance of Meatballs," which comes from the Sony Pictures movie studio.

"What we're doing is game-changing for TV," said Robert Jacobs, senior business development manager for Sony Electronics Inc.

Existing owners of Internet-connected Bravia TVs will have to pay \$24.95 for the early rental, which will stream in 720p - a lower

resolution than full high-definition [1080p](#) on Blu-ray discs. Viewers will be able to fast-forward, rewind and pause but not record the movie.

Last year, Sony streamed "Hancock" to Bravia TV owners for two weeks before its home video release. The promotion created a "halo effect" helping electronics sales and the movie's DVD purchases and rentals, Jacobs said.

For now Sony's focus is on TVs and Blu-ray players, although the early home-release window eventually could come to owners of [PlayStation 3](#) video game consoles, he said.

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