

In Tech: Dish techs fix iPhones, Best Buy gets Oculus VR

May 3 2016, by By The Associated Press



In this June 11, 2015, file photo, the new Oculus Rift virtual reality headset is on display following a news conference in San Francisco. Best Buy will sell the Oculus Rift virtual-reality headsets at some of its retail stores starting Saturday, May, 7, 2016. (AP Photo/Eric Risberg, File)

When Dish technicians aren't busy installing satellite TV services in people's homes, they'll be making house calls to replace iPhone batteries and broken screens.

The new program represents Dish's latest effort to diversify its business as it faces a decline in TV subscribers—currently at 13.9 million, down 1 percent from a year ago. Technicians are also being trained to set up Wi-Fi networks and smart-home systems.

Dish will charge \$75 for a battery replacement and \$135 to \$185 for a screen repair, depending on the iPhone model. Multiple repairs on the same visit are cheaper because the first one includes a \$35 charge for visiting the home or office. Dish plans to extend the service to Android phones later.

Buyers beware: As with many other third-party repairs, Dish's program isn't authorized by Apple and will likely void any warranties.

— Anick Jesdanun, AP Technology Writer

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This item has been corrected to show that prices include the \$35 visit fee.

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Best Buy will sell the Oculus Rift virtual-reality headsets at some of its retail stores starting Saturday.

Oculus is making its \$600 headsets available at the stores even though many who ordered them directly from Oculus have yet to receive them, more than a month after the company started shipping the headsets.

Oculus has blamed the delays on an "unexpected component shortage."



This Aug. 26, 2015, file photo shows an Apple iPhone with a cracked screen after a drop test at the offices of SquareTrade in San Francisco. In a new service offered by Dish, technicians will start making house calls to replace iPhone batteries and broken screens. Dish plans to extend the service to Android phones later. The new program represents Dish's latest effort to diversify its business as it faces a decline in TV subscribers. (AP Photo/Ben Margot, File)

To appease people who ordered the Rift early, Oculus says stores will prioritize those customers if they show up to buy one. They will need to then cancel the original orders.

Oculus said Monday that a "small number" of the headsets will be available at 48 Best Buy stores initially, with more coming this summer. They will also be available online from Microsoft and Amazon, but not on Best Buy's website, starting Friday. Until now, the headsets have been available only through advance orders made directly with Oculus.

Oculus has gotten a lot of the early VR buzz, in part because Facebook bought the company two years ago for \$2 billion, signaling a long bet on VR technology that the company hopes will go well beyond gaming. But the Rift is losing some of that early advantage. Some games originally designed to be Oculus exclusives have been unofficially modified to work on the HTC Vive, which launched about a week after the Rift, but hasn't experienced shipping delays.

— Barbara Ortutay, AP Technology Writer

TiVo is eliminating monthly fees for a digital video recorder aimed at cable cord-cutters.

The catch: The box costs \$400 up front.

A previous version cost just \$50, but with monthly fees of \$15 a month for TiVo's service, which gives you data on shows to record and other necessities. That's more than \$400 spread over two years. The new DVR is a better deal for people able to pay up front—and more likely to appeal to cord-cutters, who are already averse to paying recurring fees to their cable company.

Unlike regular models, TiVo's Roamio OTA works only with over-the-air broadcast channels through an antenna. There's no ability to connect a cord for cable channels, though TiVos do come with a few apps for

streaming services such as Netflix. Orders for the new model began Monday. Models that work with cable channels start at \$300 but carry a \$15-a-month fee after the first year.

Last week, digital TV listing company Rovi announced plans to buy TiVo Inc. for about \$1.1 billion.

— Anick Jesdanun, AP Technology Writer

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