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Watching on the Web

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The digital age turned the entertainment industry upside down. The past decade saw publicized lawsuits and staggering drops in sales within the music industry, leaving the head honchos with no choice but to find different ways to coax hard earned money out of your bank account. Now the people behind TV shows and movies are feeling the music industry’s pain. With so many shows available online through legitimate services, many are starting to wonder if cable companies are still necessary as each generation becomes more tech-savvy. Film companies have been dealing with bootleggers for a while now, but sources illegally posting content on the Internet are doing even more damage. Legal or not, the new opportunities the Web provides mean you may not have to spend a fortune on your entertainment.

In the eyes of a college student with a demanding schedule, cable TV might as well be another lecture. It costs too much, it forces you to tune in at inconvenient times and it tends to spread out 30 minutes worth of material over the course of an hour. Services like Netflix are a godsend, putting viewers in charge of what they watch and when, and all without commercial breaks. Netflix has quickly become a staple in James Grill’s viewing habits. “My roommates and I watch it everyday through our Xbox 360,” Grill, freshman in pre-landscape architecture, says, “because it’s much more convenient than TV. I really only watch TV if a new episode of a show I like is on.”