

Cable TV

By Karen Zhang

在中国，以前看电视的情景就是一家大小坐在电视机前看同一个电视节目，给人一种温馨、其乐融融的感觉。当然有时也会发生因为喜欢看的节目不一样而抢电视遥控器的情况。随着电脑平板和智能手机的普及，人们很少围坐在有线电视前一起看电视了，而是人手一部平板或手机，各看各的节目。美国的情况如何？我们来看看Karen怎么说。

Are you a couch potato? Do you like watching English-language TV series like *Friends* or *Seinfeld*? If so, in America, there are millions of people like you.

If you flip on any TV channel, you may find something that interests you. If not, you have, if not thousands, hundreds of channels to choose from, thanks to cable TV. In America, almost every day you have to make a decision. Pick a channel, for instance.

To promote business, American cable TV companies provide all kinds of packages subject to the cost. Even just the basic package, like the one in my house, has over 300 TV channels, including sports, movies, music, cartoons, news, nature and science, cooking, you name it. And yet, a majority of them are a waste. Other than watching primetime^[黄金时段] news programs on the national television networks, I have no idea what program is showing and when it is showing.



Now, with the popularity of tablets^[平板电脑] and smart phones, American people, particularly the young, watch TV programs on their smart phones, iPads or laptops rather than sitting in front of the big TV screen. Internet streaming has become a popular alternative. So every cable TV firm, online retail giant and even national television network is craving a lion's share.

You may have heard of fast food to-go. Now, in America, we have TV to-go or TV-on-demand. There are so many ways to say it. But the idea is the same—viewers can download their favorite

TV shows, usually after they subscribe^[预订] to the service or pay for it, then they can watch the shows anywhere, anytime. One of the most successful American companies is Netflix. I've heard so many rave reviews about Netflix, which offers its subscribers flexibility^[灵活性] and abundant^[丰富的] varieties of shows and movies.



Besides, companies like Netflix, Amazon and HBO are all producing their own original drama series. As a result, subscribers have full access to these shows on their screens of various sizes anytime they want. It is a privilege of the membership, or so the companies boast.

So what about the hundreds of cable TV channels at home? Well, it is no longer news that quite a few American families have gotten rid of their cable TV. Instead, they watch their shows, read their books and run their social lives on their own favorite screen. Is this the modern family? You bet! ☺