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Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network to offer downloads: WSJ



1 hour, 47 minutes ago

NEW YORK (Reuters) - U.S. cable television channels Nickelodeon and Cartoon Network will offer the online sale of several half-hour programs for \$2.99 per download, the Wall Street Journal reported on Monday.

The paper said the episodes will be formatted to work exclusively with toy maker Hasbro Inc.'s VuGo portable media player, which sells for about \$100 a discount retailers.

Nickelodeon, owned by Viacom Inc., will offer shows such as "SpongeBob SquarePants," "Unfabulous" and "Rugrats" for download at VuGo.com, according to the Journal. It said that the shows that Time Warner Inc.'s will offer include "Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends."

The traditional TV industry has recently been eyeing a shift in viewership, as the Internet, digital media players such as Apple's iPod, cable TV's on-demand systems and video games now compete for attention.

Eyeing a shift in viewership, two top U.S. TV broadcast networks, Viacom's CBS and General Electric's NBC, inked deals with cable company Comcast Corp. and satellite TV provider DirecTV Group Inc. respectively to sell on-demand episodes of recently aired top shows for 99 cents.

Meanwhile, Apple and Walt Disney's ABC networks struck a landmark agreement in October to offer episodes of top shows "Desperate Housewives" and "Lost" for sale at \$1.99 per show that can be downloaded into recently launched new iPod digital music players. CBS and NBC are also in discussions to offer shows to Apple's service, sources have said.

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Reuters Photo: Spongebob Square Pants (L) and his friend Patrick (C), stars of Nickelodeon's highly rated show,...

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