

Orb TV Pushes Into the Living Room

By [NICK BILTON](#)

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There is a new contender in the the digital living room called [Orb TV](#), which can stream content from [Hulu](#) and other online services directly to a television.

The new gadget, which look like a thick pancake, plugs directly into a television through standard cables and streams content to the TV via a computer running free Orb software, called [Orb Caster](#). The software acts like a personal content control tower.

Joe Costello, chief executive and founder of [Orb Networks](#), maker of the new device, recognizes that he is heading into a crowded space with a lot of big-name competition, but he says he believes the simplicity of his new product will separate the Orb from other digital video goods.

In its quest for simplicity, the \$100 device doesn't come with a remote control. Instead, users are asked to download a free application for a smartphone or mobile device running the Apple iOS or Google Android. The phone then becomes the remote for the Orb.

“We've created a great user experience with the smartphone and we think this really separates Orb TV from the others in the space like Roku and Google TV,” Mr. Costello said. “This is key for simplicity as most devices in the living room are in an awkward phase right now — almost like an awkward teenage phase — but we're finally figuring it out.”

Another feature that separates Orb TV from gadgetry competing in the living room is its ability to play video from [Hulu](#), a service that does not work on most competing platforms. It includes mainstream television shows like “Glee,” “Modern Family” and “Family Guy.”

In addition to Hulu content, the Orb TV will play video available on YouTube, ESPN3, Comedy Central and Netflix.

Mr. Costello said there would be updates to the Orb TV in the coming weeks that will offer more content, including Hulu Plus, which includes more online video content.

“I think this is when the tidal wave gets unleashed for online video on the TV,” he said. “There is a great consumer demand and people are looking for flexibility.”