

The Luddite Lounge

Episode 5 Transcript, 09/29/15

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You're listening to The Luddite Lounge where we're serving up news, views and how-tos for the digital world we've all come to depend on—whether we like it or not!

Hey there glad you can join me today in The Luddite Lounge. I'm Elizabeth Kricfalusi, publisher of the Tech for Luddites blog and Chief Luddite.

This is Episode 5 of The Lounge and a new edition of Five Five Tech, where I discuss five items in five minutes. You can find show notes with related links at ludditelounge.com/episode5.

Number 1. In the last episode of The Luddite Lounge, I interviewed Ryan Downey of the Streaming Advisor. We spent a fair amount of time discussing how there was almost no real information available about a potential upgrade to the Roku streaming media player. Literally within hours of ending that interview, all sorts of information started showing up that does make it seem like the Roku 4 will be available to buy before the holidays. From these reports, it looks like the new version will include 4K support. Elias Saba over at AFTVnews.com also managed to find an image of what the new Roku box might look like. It's shaped differently from the current boxes with a larger surface area, but also looking a little flatter than the current box from what I can tell.

Also streaming-related, Google had a big event today where they announced the latest version of their Chromecast player. It really has a new look, with the main part of the device being round and with multiple colors available. It supposedly has improved Wi-Fi, which is good because that's something that was seriously lacking in the first version, and a new app to make it easier to find content on your device. They're calling the latter a "TV Guide for Chromecast."

With the potential new Roku on the horizon, today's Chromecast announcement, and new versions of the Apple TV and Amazon Fire TVs that were recently announced, I'm expecting that streaming media players are going to be majorly promoted in the upcoming holiday season. If you want more information about how these devices work and which ones might work best for you before all the hoopla begins, you can check out my special section at techforluddites.com/streaming.

Number 2. Something else that you're going to be seeing before too long is great deals on big screen TVs, which is great. But as I saw on a segment of the Today Show this morning, these TVs can pose a safety risk to young children. A new study from the University of Toronto has shown that as sales of these types of TVs have increased, so have the number of children between the ages of 1 and 3 being admitted to the hospital suffering from serious neck and head injuries. They get curious, climb up on the furniture, and they end up accidentally pulling the TVs down. Fortunately, there are easy and affordable ways to prevent these types of accidents. You can either mount your TV on a wall or, if you do have it on a stand, you can get anchors that will bolt them to a stud in your wall.

Number 3. Have you recently seen an onslaught of Facebook posts warning you that the company is about to charge you to keep your status updates private, or maybe they're telling you to copy and paste an update declaring your ownership of what you post? These posts have been making the rounds for years. For some reason, every once in a while, they have a big resurgence. That seems to be happening again now. The important thing to know is that both of these things are false. Facebook has no intention of charging users for any part of their service. It doesn't make sense because they need our eyeballs to sell advertising, which brings them far more revenue than user fees ever could. And posting a status about what rights you are granting Facebook over your content has no legal standing whatsoever. We all agreed to their terms of service when we created our accounts and that's what determines what they can and cannot do. Please, if you see these posts, inform the person who passed them along that they're sharing hoaxes, and just don't share them yourself. Basically, it's the Facebook equivalent of sending out chain letters.

Number 4. How was your weekend? I'm betting it wasn't quite as good as Apple's, what with them having sold **13 million** iPhone 6S and 6S Plus phones, a new record for them for a new product launch. Now I really don't have a lot to say about iPhones—I'm much more of an Android and Amazon device person. But if you are one of those 13 million people, congratulations on your new phone!

On a related note, I also wanted to point out an interesting article on TechCrunch about Apple becoming even more transparent about their privacy policies. They have a new page that explains them in language that even non-lawyers can understand.

And finally...

Number 5. They found water on Mars!!! Not only is that cool in and of itself, but it adds yet another proof point to my contention that there is nothing that can happen in this world—or other worlds apparently—where you can't find a relevant reference in an episode of either Friends, The West Wing, or Sex and the City. In this case, it's one of my favorite West Wing episodes titled, appropriately, *Life on Mars*. It's one of the ones that had Matthew Perry on as a guest star.

And that's it for this episode of Five Five Tech. Again, you can find the show notes at ludditelounge.com/episode5.

Thanks for listening! Until next time...