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AT&T not tuned in

"AT&T on verge of offering TV service" (ChicagoBusiness.com, July 22) mentions the concern that AT&T is shortchanging local access channels. AT&T thinks community channels are less important than commercial channels and is banking on the fact that future customers won't care about the loss of local channels off the regular cable channel menu. I disagree.

The village of Mount Prospect doesn't get very much local coverage from the commercial broadcast channels. Access channels are an important link for residents to get local information that the commercial broadcast news channels can't or won't cover. Public, education and government access channels are the great equalizers on television since they do not rely on commercial sales in order to stay in business. They show program-

ming that would never get made in a commercial environment.

With AT&T's system, PEG channels are not treated like other commercial channels. The viewers will have to make a time-consuming search for local programs through a list with

dozens of communities

lumped together into one channel.

Once there, the viewer will

not be able to

record the program-

ming on a DVR, see

closed captioning or jump

to broadcast channels.

If AT&T did this with commercial channels, it wouldn't get a single customer. AT&T is thumbing its nose at the state legislation it signed off on by offering access channels through an inferior delivery system. I guess AT&T figures it can keep the public dazzled with the prospect of new technology and the promise of cheaper cable rates.

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