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Prepared by

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**Vista Royale Computer Club.**

This is not an official Vista Royale Association Document and may not represent positions of the Vista Royale Association or Board of Directors or the [Vista Royale Computer Club](#). These opinions are those of the author.

## WHAT DOES THE VISTA ROYALE BULK CONTRACT COVER?

The Vista Royale contract includes the

- Installation
- U200 channel lineup with local channels
- HD channels and HD technology fees
- A Whole House HD DVR with a remote
- Two additional wireless receivers with remotes
- A Wireless Gateway .\*\*
- A wireless access point for that talks to the wireless TV receivers

Page 2 part 2.1 of the contract

“No installation charges shall apply for standard installation of Bulk Services although End User requests for additional wiring, jacks and additional set top boxes, will be billed to the End User at the applicable retail rate.”

Found on page 12 of the contract.

### BULK VIDEO SERVICE

“AT&T video Bulk Service shall include U-verse® TV U-200 service, with approximately three hundred and sixty (360) channels including locals and music stations, to be provided to each End User including HD, provided, however, that the channel line-up may vary during the Term. At&T will provide video Bulk Service to three (3) End User provided television(s) per Residential Dwelling Unit via a Residential Gateway three (3) set top boxes, one(1) of which shall have DVR capability, provided by AT&T The video Bulk Service shall include the features and channels that are made available by AT&T for the equivalent retail offering of U-200 services similarly situated AT&T residential customers in the same geographic area”

**Note:** The contract wording above says we get music stations, but that must mean MTV and VH1, because we have since been informed that the Stingray Music channels only come with an internet subscription.

**\*\*Note:** we were told we get a residential gateway as part of the TV service and it is in writing on page 12 of the contract. Many installs are just getting a data access point if they don't sign up for internet or phone. I'm not sure if a wireless access point can be legally be described as a wireless gateway, but we were told at the meetings that I attended, that the wireless gateway included in the Bulk Service could be used as your modem router for the internet. So adding internet would be just a phone call. As far as I know, a wireless access point alone can not provide internet access, so adding internet may be a much bigger deal than originally described at the meeting if you got an install without the wireless gateway that provides internet access.

**Note:** The AT&T meeting handout that was specific to Vista Royale seemed to imply that there would be a monthly fee for your set top boxes. I asked if this handout could be corrected, but was told to see the contract. The contract does say they will provide three set top boxes. So if you were making decisions based on the fees, outlined in the handout, you will see that the first three boxes provided through the Bulk Service contract will have no charge to the End User. The original meeting handout can be found here <http://getzweb.net/vista/att/AT&T%20Handout.pdf>

The association is only responsible for this basic TV service. Additional premium services can be ordered directly through AT&T at the bulk service customer service center and will be billed directly to the End User.. The association does not intervene with Comcast rates and that non-interference will continue with AT&T.

When you negotiate for additional services with AT&T check out the promotion rates. Be sure to ask the terms of service of the promotion. For example what is the length of time you must subscribe to get those promotional rates, and what the early termination fees and vacation rates will be. Promotional rates might not be the best deal for SNOWBIRDS. Be a smart shopper. When your promotion period comes to an end, call to see what the new promotion is.

If you decide to wait and sign up for internet and/or phone later, there is an installation/truck fee for phone of \$89.95 or a reconnect of \$49.95.

## HOW DOES VACATION TIME WORK?

Good question. I asked about this at two meetings, and when I called to arrange for my service, I received matching information that said we could put things on vacation and it would count against any minimum commitment against promotional pricing. Now I'm hearing that our contract specifically doesn't allow our services to be put on vacation. People are being told to cancel their phone service, and that their phone number will be put in a holding tank, that should be retrievable for the next 9 months. At this point its anybody's guess how this is going to work.

## ARRANGING FOR SERVICE UNDER THE BULK SERVICE CONTRACT.

Only call the AT&T U-verse Bulk Service Center at 1.866.299.6824 and always specify that you are with the **Vista Royale Condominiums** when adding or making changes to your service.

Bulk Service Center hours are Monday to Friday 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM

## WHAT CHANNELS DO I GET WITH THE VISTA ROYALE BULK PACKAGE?

The Bulk contract delivers the AT&T U200 package with locals and HD channels. This package has nearly twice as many watchable channels as the old Comcast lineup. AT&T also has more channels that you can order. You will be responsible for the additional costs for subscribing to additional channels

The installers will give you a list of channels, I found the chart hard to read, so I prepared a list and posted it on my website:

<http://getzweb.net/vista/att/VistaRoyaleATT-U200Lineup.pdf>

Even though there is a lot more content, there are a few shortcomings.

**MUSIC:** The Stingray music channels are not included in the bulk contract. The Stingray music channels (1500 – 1578) come with an internet subscription.

**HALLMARK MOVIE CHANNEL** and **MOVIEPLEX**, are among the missing channels.

They are part of the U300 tier, that is available for \$16 per month. However you'd be surprised at how much you won't miss them with all the new content available on U-verse.

**PBS:** There are two PBS channels in the U-verse package, but the sub-channels PBS World, and PBS Create are not included in any U-Verse package. Also PBS does not seem to be included in the On Demand. I know that Comcast had *Downton Abbey* and a few other popular shows in their On Demand catalog. If you are watching a PBS series, I'd recommend recording the series on your DVR. If you missed out entirely, don't forget that PBS can be streamed from the internet. You can catch up on your PC, your iOS device, your Android. The PBSNow app is also available for the Amazon Fire stick, Android TV, Apple TV, and Roku streaming devices

## **WHAT IS A WHOLE HOUSE DVR?**

A DVR is a Digital Video Recorder. A DVR records television shows to a hard drive. The DVR we are getting allows you to record up to 4 channels at once. The vip2250 DVR that I received will store up to 460 hours of SD (Standard Definition) or 169 Hours of HD shows. It is easy to operate. Much easier than the old VCRs that we used to program. These DVR's work off the program guide, and shows are recorded by title.

All of the TV wireless receivers communicate with the DVR in a way that makes it seem like the DVR is in the same room. When you are watching live TV on any TV in your condo, you can pause and rewind because the DVR is temporarily recording what you are watching.

## **HOW CAN I LEARN TO OPERATE MY U-VERSE EQUIPMENT?**

Press the Help button on your remote, or go to channel 411 or 1411 to find how to videos on many aspects of using your new equipment.

Check out the user's guide:

<https://www.att.com/ecms/dam/att/consumer/support/2016/pdf/ATT102410735-13-U-verse-user-guide.pdf>

DVR Programming instructions

<http://getzweb.net/vista/att/Scheduling-a-Recording.pdf>

## **CAN I HIDE THE DVR/WIRELESS RECEIVER BOXES?**

The Comcast equipment came with IR dongles, so the equipment could be hidden away with only a small infrared receiver being visible. The new U-verse boxes don't have that option. If you really want to store the box out of site, there are two options.

1. U-verse offers a \$59 point anywhere kit.

[att-u-verse-TV-point-anywhere-rf-remote-control.html](http://att-u-verse-TV-point-anywhere-rf-remote-control.html)

2. A 3<sup>rd</sup> party IR repeater. I went this route and bought a an IR repeater for \$8.59

## **CAN I KEEP MY COMCAST INTERNET AND PHONE?**

You can keep your Comcast internet and/or phone. You may find that your Comcast price will go up significantly when you are no longer bundled with the Vista Royale Bulk TV package. Compare the AT&T and Comcast prices, and decide what makes the most sense for you. If you are concerned about your Comcast email account, make sure to read the section on [Comcast Email](#) later in this FAQ.

Please note there may be a service call fee if you decide to set up your phone at a later date.

## **WHAT IS U-VERSE PHONE?**

If you already have phone service with AT&T, it is probably a Plain Old Telephone Service,( POTS). POTS service doesn't qualify for any bundling with the AT&T U-verse plan. U-Verse has their own Phone

U-verse Phone is VoIP (voice over Internet Protocol). VoIP is the same type of service that a Comcast phone offers. VoIP service tends to be less expensive than a POTS line.

**Note:** a POTS phone will function in a power outage, a U-verse Voice telephone requires a battery backup to function!

**Fine Print:**

**U-verse Voice:** U-verse Voice, including 911 dialing, will not function during power outage without battery backup power. Compatible with many monitored home alarms and medical monitoring systems. Some call information may be blocked or otherwise not displayed, including information for some calls originating outside of AT&T's network and calls carried over facilities that do not transmit caller ID information.

**U-verse Voice Unlimited:** Includes unlimited calling Within the US and to Canada and US Territories, international calls billed at additional per-minute rates; higher rates may apply for calls terminating on mobile phones or other wireless devices, Other conditions and restrictions may apply to all offers

Read more about the features here:

Battery backup for phone

[https://www.att.com/support\\_media/images/pdf/uverse/b2c154417\\_battery\\_backup.pdf](https://www.att.com/support_media/images/pdf/uverse/b2c154417_battery_backup.pdf)

Voice User's guide

<https://www.att.com/ecarecms/dam/att/2016/support/docs/voice-user-guide.pdf>

Voicemail wallet card

[https://www.att.com/support\\_media/images/pdf/uverse/uv\\_um\\_pocket\\_guide.pdf](https://www.att.com/support_media/images/pdf/uverse/uv_um_pocket_guide.pdf)

Voicemail Viewer User's guide

[https://www.att.com/support\\_media/images/pdf/uverse/att\\_vmviewer\\_user\\_guide.pdf](https://www.att.com/support_media/images/pdf/uverse/att_vmviewer_user_guide.pdf)

## RETAINING YOUR PHONE NUMBER

If you are changing your phone service, you need to start the new service before you cut out your old service or you will lose your phone number! See the FCC rules:

<https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/porting-keeping-your-phone-number-when-you-change-providers>

## THE WIRELESS GATEWAY OVERVIEW

We get a “residential gateway” with our Bulk service. There is no rental fee for the gateway. I've noticed that my neighbors that have not opted internet or phone, did not get the wireless gateway that I am going to describe here. See the [WHAT DOES THE VISTA ROYALE BULK CONTRACT COVER?](#) Section for more information.

The U-verse wireless gateway has the latest and greatest technology. The wireless gateway is true dual band, meaning it can broadcast in 2.4GHz and 5GHz bands simultaneously. Both channels are set to broadcast the same Network name (SSID) by default. If you see your SSID (Network name) listed twice in the list of nearby networks, your equipment is 5GHz compatible.

If you have equipment that can make use of the 5GHz band, the 5GHz wireless speed may be significantly faster than what you can achieve on the 2.4GHz band. Ideally the equipment should select the 5GHz band when both SSIDs are the same, but in practice the equipment may connect to the 2.4GHz because the signal may be perceived as stronger. If you change the SSID on the 5GHz band, you can force the 5GHz equipment to select the 5GHz wireless band. You might want to try the AT&T speedtest <http://speedtest.att.com/speedtest/> on the 5GHz band and the 2.4GHz band to see the speed difference. The 5GHz band doesn't get interference from microwaves, old cordless phones, so it won't fall out every time your neighbor microwaves a snack, or talks to someone on their antique cordless phone. If your 5GHz band keeps disappearing from your list of networks, you may need to change from autochannel as the gateway may use DFS channels that your older 5GHz equipment can't see. DFS channels include channel ranges of 52-64 and 100-140. The gateway also has the ability to set up a guest network on the 5GHz and/or 2.4GHz band. A guest network has a different SSID and different password from the home network. This means devices connected to the **Guest network** will NOT be able to share files and printers connected to the home **network**.



## IS AT&T INTERNET FASTER THAN COMCAST INTERNET?

Many people are under the impression that just because AT&T's internet service is delivered by FIOS, it is going to be faster. That is not true. Speed depends on the speed of internet service you contract for.

Comcast usually came in 3 tiers.

Basic	9Mbs
Performance	25Mbs
Blast	85Mbs

AT&T offers many tiers of service with speeds from 3Mbs to 100Mbs

Wired Ethernet is faster than Wi-Fi. WI-Fi is subject to all sorts of interference. If you have Wi-Fi interference with one provider, you will have the same kind of problems with another provider. It is not unusual to have 85Mbs but only be able to get 25Mbs or less wirelessly. That is the nature of Wi-Fi, and will not change when you switch to another Internet Service Provider (ISP).

**My Tests:** I had 25Mbs service with Comcast, and opted for 24Mbs with AT&T. I ran some tests with both before I turned off Comcast internet. I used the AT&T speedtest. My download speeds with Comcast were averaged 29Mbs vs AT&T with 26 Mbs. My wireless upload speed on Comcast averaged 6Mbs vs 3 Mbs on AT&T. Tests were done over on the 2.4GHz Wi-fi Channel 11.

## WHAT INTERNET SPEED DO I NEED?

When you call for service the rep will ask you how many devices you connect to the internet and what do you do with them. My answer was 10 and we stream. The rep immediately came back with an offer of 100Mbs. We run 1 HD Netflix stream and use two internet devices simultaneously. 100Mbs would be extreme overkill for our home but would have been a perfectly acceptable rate for the Computer Club Lab where we have 10 or more computers running simultaneously.

### FOR NETFLIX?

It depends on the type of Netflix account do you have, Standard Definition, High

Definition or Ultra? Do you both stream simultaneously or will there only be one stream? Does someone play high speed games while the other streams? They say that on ATT, TV streaming HD TV is also going to effect your needed internet speed. Netflix SD streams at 3 Mbps, HD 5Mbps, Ultra 25Mbps PER STREAM.

I'd recommend selecting a speed that is at least 2x your Netflix streaming rate.

### **FOR HIGHSPEED GAMING?**

Gamers typically have purchased a very powerful computer that is specifically designed for gaming. If you are playing games on a run of the mill computer you are probably not what I would call a highspeed gamer. If you are running high speed gaming, I would recommend being at a speed of 20Mbps or above. If both of you game simultaneously, you would double that.

**My Experience:** At our house we both surf the internet while running a single Netflix HD Stream to our Roku, and we've been very pleased with 25Mbps from Comcast, and so far we've been very happy with AT&T's 24Mbps. Our streaming is fine.

### **AT&T NATIONWIDE HOTSPOTS**

AT&T offers hotspots for its highspeed internet subscribers and some AT&T qualified wireless customers and some AT&T data connect plans .

Under the **Internet** section of your U-verse bill you'll see that U-verse offers access to the entire national AT&T Wi-Fi Hot Spot network. These hotspots are offered to all highspeed internet Customers all speed plans included. No ordering required! Simply use your primary AT&T high-speed Internet membership ID and password at any AT&T Wi-Fi Basic Hot Spot. Learn more at: <http://www.att.com/gen/general?pid=6431>

I've been on a qualified AT&T wireless plan for the past 3 years. I use my AT&T smartphone everywhere, all the time. In those 3 years, I've only found one (1) of these AT&T hotspots.

I'm sure that most of you know that Comcast offered xfinity hotspots for their 25Mbps or higher speed internet subscribers. These xfinity hotspots were everywhere within the Vista Royale, because Comcast used home subscribers routers throughout the Vista Royale complex to provide these hotspots. They actually posed a nuisance, because people would accidentally connect to them, and didn't know how to "FORGET A NETWORK", so consequently their mobile devices would insist on connecting to xfinity if it was present, often even in their home.

If you are connecting to xfinity even at home, you need to remove xfinity from your list of preferred networks; see this video

Managing preferred networks. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kPkRGT99mw>

Whenever you connect to an unsecured WI-FI, including an AT&T hotspot, you should remove the network from your preferred networks before you leave the vicinity.

Generic hotspot names can easily be set up by malicious people, to set up man-in-the-middle-attacks. If a generic hotspot name is in your list of preferred networks, you could accidentally hook up to a malicious site. Use public WI-FI wisely.

## **WHAT ABOUT ANTI-VIRUS SOFTWARE**

If you were depending on Comcast's Constant Guard that was free with your xfinity internet to protect your computer from you might be wondering if AT&T offers something similar. AT&T U-verse highspeed internet customers (3Mbps or higher), qualify for a free subscription to AT&T Security Suite powered by McAfee, Learn more here:

<https://www.att.com/esupport/article.html#!/u-verse-high-speed-internet/KM1010110>

## WHAT HAPPENS TO MY COMCAST EMAIL IF I SWITCH TO ATT U-VERSE?

There seems to be a lot of confusion about what happens to your Comcast.net email if you switch internet providers. This was my topic at the Vista Royale Computer Club on January 12, 2017. see the minutes <http://www.vrcc.info/minutes.html> .

## COMCAST's EMAIL POLICY FOR FORMER CUSTOMERS

As of June 2016

If a customer terminates service and is in good standing, active email accounts will be retained as long as you log in at least once during the last 90 days prior to disconnect.

Source of the information

<https://customer.xfinity.com/help-and-support/internet/email-only-faqs>

<http://customer.xfinity.com/help-and-support/internet/using-email-only>

After you close your Comcast account you need to accept the *Web Service Terms of Service* to continue using your Comcast email account.

If you are using an App or a desktop application you might receive this message from xfinity in your email.

[My Account](#)

xfinity


### Stay Connected!

We're sad to hear that you're changing your XFINITY services. However, we're happy to let you know that you can continue using your existing email address, [youraddress@comcast.net](#), to stay connected with the important people in your life. Just keep accessing your email like you always have.

All you need to do is accept our [Web Services Terms of Service](#) and Web Services Privacy Policy, and you're good to go!

If you have any questions about your email account, please check out our Product Support and Frequently Asked Questions sections online.

## How do you accept their Web Service Terms of Service?

1. Click the **My Account** link in the email, or navigate to xfinity.com in your browser (Internet Explorer, Chrome, Edge, Firefox, Safari are browsers.)
2. Sign in
3. Navigate to your email. Go to email by clicking the **Envelope**  in the upper right or click **Check Email** button in the lower left.
4. Click on the **Yes I Accept** button on the screen shown below after you read the Web Services Terms of Services message.

Good news! You can keep using your email address.



We're sad to hear that you're changing your XFINITY services. However, we're happy to let you know that you can continue using your existing email address, to stay connected with the important people in your life. Just keep accessing your email like you always have.

All you need to do is accept our [Web Services Terms of Service](#) and [Web Services Privacy Policy](#) below, and you're good to go!

As a reminder, your use of this email account will continue to be subject to the [Web Services Terms of Service](#). We may terminate your access to this email account as permitted by the Web Services Terms of Service including, but not limited to, for breach of the Web Services Terms of Service or for inactivity. Termination will result in deletion of all content in your mail box.

xfinity © 2015 Comcast | [Site Map](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Contact Us](#)

COMCAST

You will need to scroll down to find the **Yes I Accept** button, it is near the bottom of the

There are two things that might make you worry:

Note at the bottom of the acceptance it said:

As a reminder, your use of this email account will continue to be subject to the [Web Services Terms of Service](#). We may terminate your access to this email account as permitted by the Web Services Terms of Service including, but not limited to, for breach of the Web Services Terms of Service or for inactivity. Termination will result in deletion of all content in your mail box.

## **And in the terms and conditions, you did read them didn't you?**

### **24. Special Note about Comcast Email for Users who are not XFINITY Internet Subscribers.**

If you are not a subscriber to our residential XFINITY Internet or XFINITY Voice service, the following applies to your use of a Comcast-provided email address such as yourname@comcast.net ("**Email Service**"):

#### **Modifications, Suspension, and Termination**

You understand that Comcast may modify or discontinue the Email Service at any time with or without notice to you. If we do give you notice, it may be provided on any of the Comcast Services, or via email, newspaper, or any other permissible communication. You understand that Comcast may suspend or terminate your access to the Email Service for any suspected or actual violation of these Terms. In addition, you understand that Comcast may suspend or terminate your access to the Email Service if you have not used the Email Service at least once within a nine-month period. If Comcast suspends or terminates your Email Service, your email will be deleted without the ability to be recovered.

If that gives you concern you may wish to transfer to another service. There are plenty of free email services.

**It is much easier to change to another provider while you still have access to your old email address.**

#### **Steps to take**

- Set up an email account with a new provider.
- Notify your contacts of your new address.
- Transfer you contacts and email to your new account
- If your new account won't check for email from your Comcast account use forwarding and the auto responder.
- Visit all sites where you have a password, and update your contact

information to reflect your new email account.

**What about websites where you use your email address as your user ID?**

- No problem, those sites will allow you to change your user id to your new email account.

Two of the top free email providers, Gmail.com and Outlook.com (formerly Hotmail), both allow you to import your Comcast email, and continue to bring in new mail as it arrives in your Comcast account.

Other emails might not have the importing and checking capability, but Comcast offers auto forwarding and auto response that will help you to some degree if you choose a different provider.

I prepared the video below, showing the Computer Club how to transfer a Comcast emails to a Gmail account.

[https://youtu.be/6P85\\_ijSDgA](https://youtu.be/6P85_ijSDgA)

**AT&T ID AND PASSWORD OVERVIEW.**

After your TV installation, you set up a username @ ATT.NET and a password. This ID can be used to access some very useful features included in the Vista Royale U-verse package. .

- This ID can be used to log into att.com to manage your billing, troubleshoot your equipment and manage your service appointments and download AT&T Security Suite
- This ID can be used to log into Uverse.com to stream live and on demand content to your PC as well as manage your DVR.
- This ID can be used to log into the U-verse APP on your phone or tablet, to stream live TV and On Demand TV as well as manage your DVR from anywhere in the US. The Uverse app also allows you to use your tablet or phone as a remote control when you are on your home network at Vista Royale.
- This ID can be used to access streaming features many of the channels included in your subscription.
- For internet subscribers, this ID can be one of the 11 email accounts you are allowed to set up with your AT&T internet subscription. . Note: AT&T email is provided by Yahoo. The Yahoo webmail is old fashioned, and seems to require you to allow popups to do many things. As you know, popups, especially on pages that have advertising can be a security problem. So while this can be your email address, I'd recommend looking elsewhere.
- Internet subscribers can use this ID to access AT&T's network of hotspots



**ACCOUNT INFORMATION TO KEEP FOR YOUR RECORDS.**

Call the **1-866-299-6824** for connected community ordering and for billing questions. Service center hours are Monday to Friday , 8AM to 8PM. Always specify you are with **Vista Royale Condominiums**. The repair phone number is **1-800-288-2020**

ACCOUNT # BAN \_\_\_\_\_

4 DIGIT PIN \_\_\_\_\_

SECRET QUESTION #1 \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWER TO QUESTION #1 \_\_\_\_\_

ATT USERNAME \_\_\_\_\_

ATT PASSWORD \_\_\_\_\_

SECRET QUESTION #2 \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWER TO QUESTION #2 \_\_\_\_\_

SECRET QUESTION #3 \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWER TO QUESTION #3 \_\_\_\_\_

WI-FI NETWORK NAME (SSID) \_\_\_\_\_

WI-FI PASSWORD \_\_\_\_\_

ADVANCED CONFIGURATION <http://>\_\_\_\_\_

DEVICE ACCESS CODE \_\_\_\_\_

(Password for advanced configuration changes)

PARENTAL CONTROL PIN(s) \_\_\_\_\_