

# HDTV's that Can't be Repaired

Reported by: John Matarese Channel 9, WCOP ABC TV, Cincinnati, Ohio, April 25, 2008

If you're in the market for a High Def TV...one of the first things you'll notice is the big difference in price. On the high end, Sony, Panasonic, and other well known brands. At the low end, discount brands you've never heard of.

But before you buy one to save a hundred bucks...wait till you see what you could be in for.

## The Problem

Melissa Steinkamp says with the exception of a little red light, her TruTech High Def TV is "No Def" TV. She says just one month after its one year warranty ended, the LCD TV went black in her Anderson Township home. She called Target - where she bought it - but tells me the store couldn't help, since the warranty had run out.

When she tried to find TruTech, she found its not really a TV manufacturer....just Target's in house brand name.

Melissa says "I can't find any way to contact TruTech even online...I can't find a way to phone them about fixing the TV."

When she Googled TruTech online, she found dozens of complaints. So Melissa started calling repair shops....where she got some stunning news about some off brand High Def TV's.

She says "as soon as you mention you have a TruTech, they tell you they can't help you.

## TV Repair Shop's Perspective

That sounded impossible. So we checked with some TV repair pros.... at Graff's TV on Beechmont Avenue in Cincinnati.

Owner John Graff says "every day of the week someone comes in with a brand purchased in a discount store... and we're unable to do anything with it. Its just unrepairable."

Graff says to keep their prices so low, off brands like TruTech won't provide shops with either parts or instructions!

"Along with the cheap price comes no support," he says.

## Disposable HDTV's?

The website "HD Guru" has a name for TV's like this: "Disposable HDTVs."

It says when many cheap TV brands break out of warranty, your only option is shipping it to the company. But you have to pay 100 to 200 dollars in shipping charges... before any repairs.

HD Guru, meantime, lists TV's that have a repair network ....and be can fixed locally.

## Brands with Repair Network and Support

Supported brands include Panasonic, Sony, Samsung, LG, Sanyo, Toshiba, Hitachi, Philips, and Sharp, according to HD Guru.

As for Melissa, we contacted Target, where a spokeswoman told us most TruTech products last for years without trouble. But she said the store would try to help her.

Until it does, Melissa will be watching her big tube American-made RCA, that has never broken in 20 years.

She says "this is my TV I got in 1987. And it works? It works!"

## Target's Suggestion

Check HD Guru for details about and repair policies of various brands. Click the link above.

Also, when shopping ask the store what happens if your TV breaks after the warranty period. Target tells me it suggests cusotmers buy their extended warranty, which will cover breakdowns for several more years. Of course, that will raise your price.

Don't just buy based on price alone...So you don't waste your money.

