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<https://www.wsj.com/business/media/streaming-prices-are-soaringand-consumers-are-still-paying-1bb7dbae>

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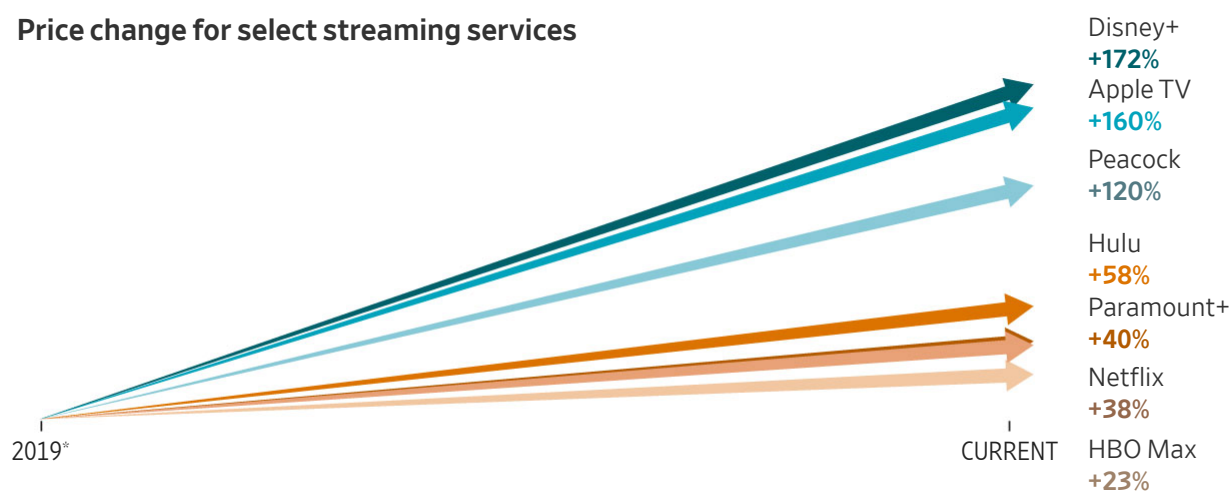
Streaming Prices Are Soaring—and Consumers Are Still Paying

Viewers stick to subscriptions as options, including bundles, flood the market

By [Melissa Korn](#) [Follow](#) | Graphics by [Elizaveta Galkina](#) [Follow](#) and [Stephanie Stamm](#) [Follow](#)

Nov. 12, 2025 12:45 pm ET

Price change for select streaming services



*HBO Max and Peacock as of 2020, Paramount+ as of 2021

Note: Monthly price for basic ad-free option, when multiple tiers available.

Source: the companies

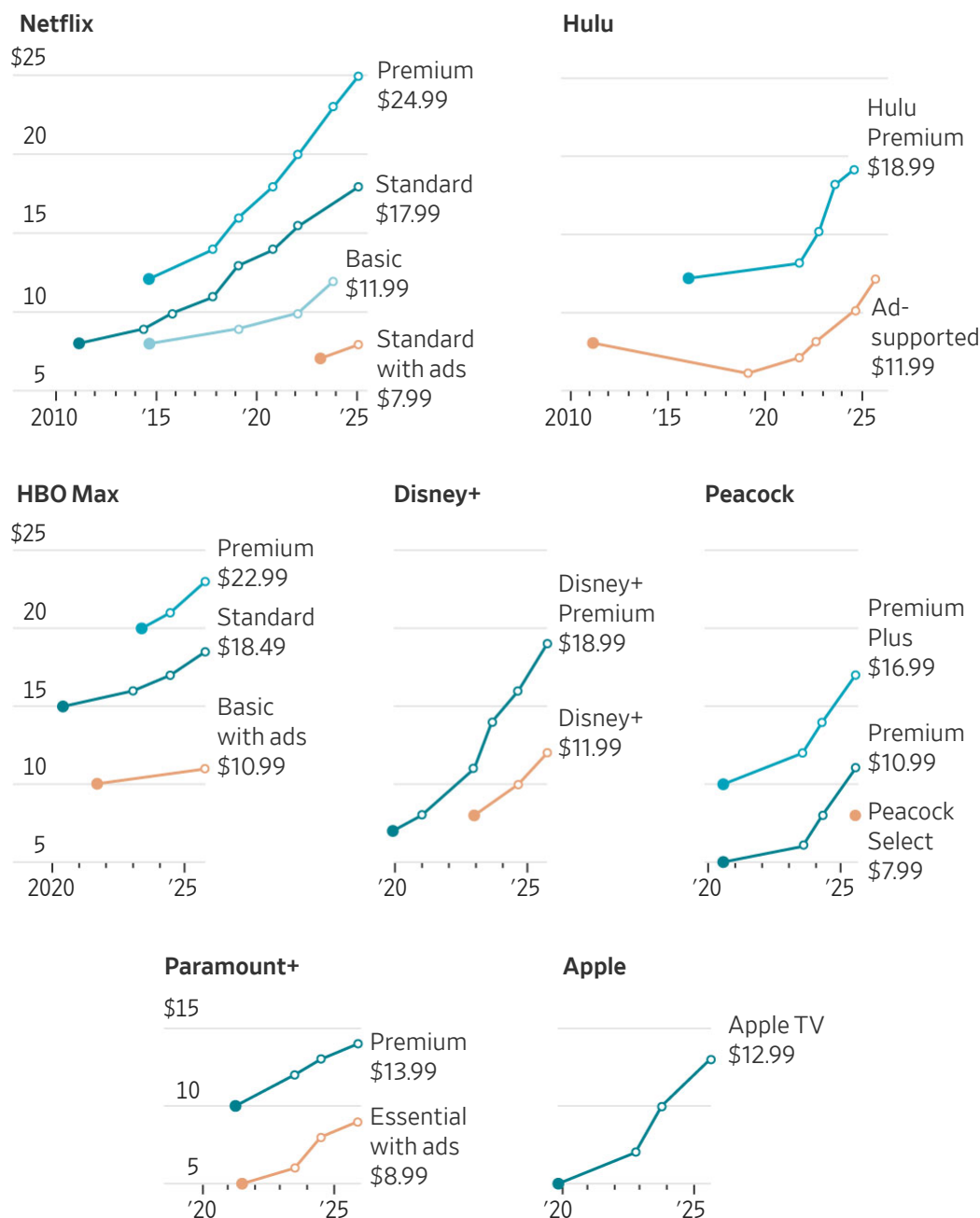
The menu of options for how to [watch shows and movies](#) without cable continues to grow—as do their price tags.

In recent weeks, the streaming platforms HBO Max, Hulu and Disney+ all hiked prices for at least some of their services. [Netflix](#) did so in January, Peacock unveiled increases in July, and Apple TV detailed its latest bump in August. Paramount said Monday it would raise the price of Paramount+ early next year.

It's the newest [wave of streamflation](#).

Evolution of streaming service monthly prices

● Launch ○ Price change



Note: Price change reflects date of announcement. Netflix Basic tier was phased out in 2024; Disney+ includes ads; Peacock Select offers a limited content library, with ads.
Source: the companies

Consumer costs continue to rise in part because some media companies have [bulked up their sports programming](#), paying big money to secure rights to the National Football League, the Ultimate Fighting Championship, Major League Baseball and other popular games and matches.

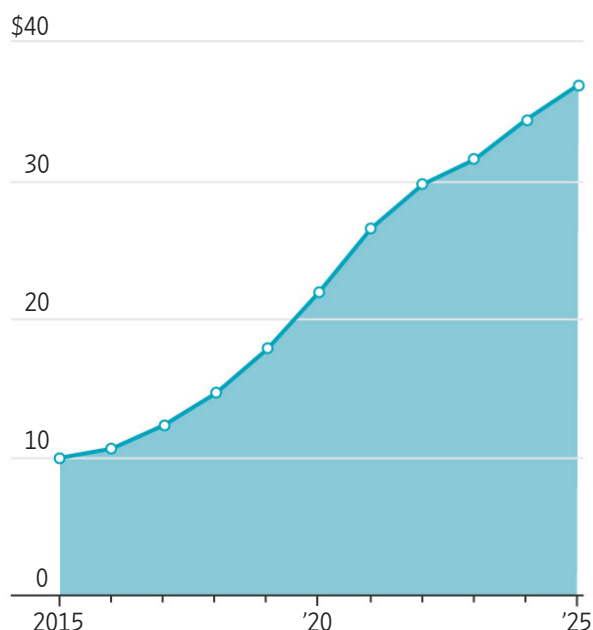
In some cases, critics say, consumers are paying more despite losing access to some high-profile programming. [Warner Bros. Discovery](#)'s HBO Max, whose least expensive option is now \$10.99 a month, up by a dollar from the prior rate, lost its National Basketball Association games package this season. And it is eliminating CNN's live news stream later this month, as that network launches a new, stand-alone streaming service.

The company said it has added other sports, including Nascar, Big 12 football and basketball and more College Football Playoff action.

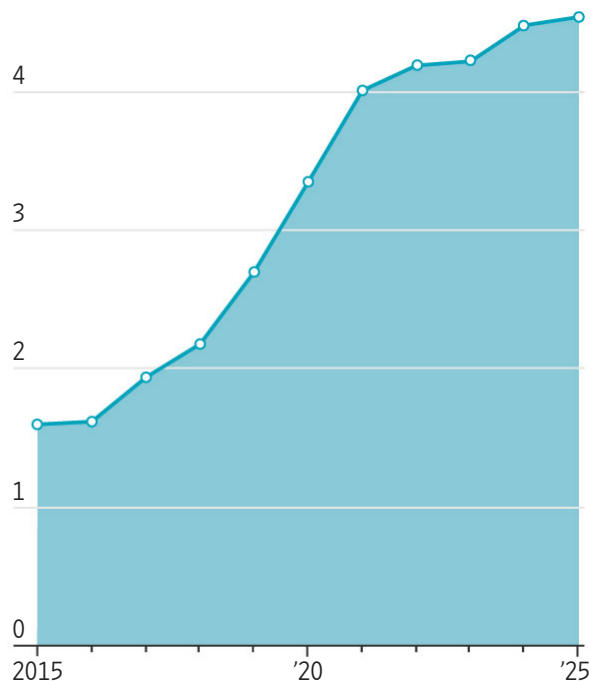
Despite the price hikes, households aren't significantly recalibrating their subscription habits.

Average among U.S. households

Monthly streaming subscription revenue generated



Number of streaming services used



Note: Among households that subscribe to at least one streaming service.

Source: S&P Global Market Intelligence

If there were price-hike fatigue, cancellation rates would be the first place to spot them, says MoffettNathanson analyst Robert Fishman. But those rates are fairly steady for many streamers.

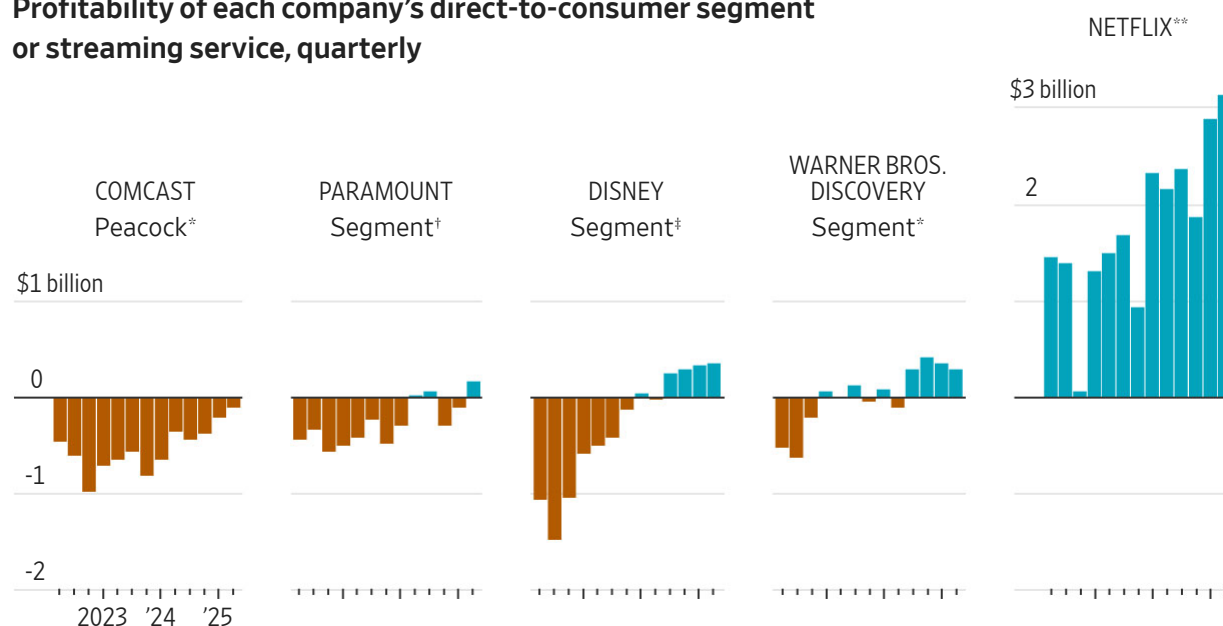
[Disney](#)-owned Disney+ and Hulu had [higher levels of defections for September](#), according to data firm Antenna—after the temporary suspension of ABC late-night host Jimmy Kimmel for his comments about the death of Charlie Kirk. But Antenna found new sign-ups for both services were strong in September.

Netflix subscribers are particularly loyal, with cancellation rates flat at 2% during all but one month since May 2023, Antenna figures show. (The least expensive ad-free tier then cost \$9.99 a month. It's now \$11.99, with other options charging up to \$24.99. One with ads runs \$7.99 a month.)

“Netflix has really cracked the code in terms of pricing,” Fishman said. Its strategy of offering the least expensive ad-supported product, as well as premium-priced options for other customers, is paying off.

Other streamers are also reporting profits, or at least paring losses, after plowing hundreds of millions of dollars into launching, expanding and advertising their platforms.

Profitability of each company's direct-to-consumer segment or streaming service, quarterly



*Adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization †Adjusted operating income before depreciation and amortization ‡Operating income for the Entertainment direct-to-consumer segment. As a result of the restructuring of Disney Media and Entertainment Distribution, starting with the fourth quarter of its 2023 fiscal year, Disney changed how it reported its financials for that business. **Net income for the whole company

Note: Each company reports direct-to-consumer profitability differently. Data are for calendar quarters. Disney fiscal year ends in September.

Source: the companies

Rather than ditch a service entirely, consumers now have more options to switch to lower-cost ad-supported tiers, said Mike Proulx, vice president and research director at market research company [Forrester](#).

Nearly half of Netflix viewing hours come via its ad-supported tier in the U.S., up from about one-third in August 2024, according to Comscore's State of Streaming report, published last month.

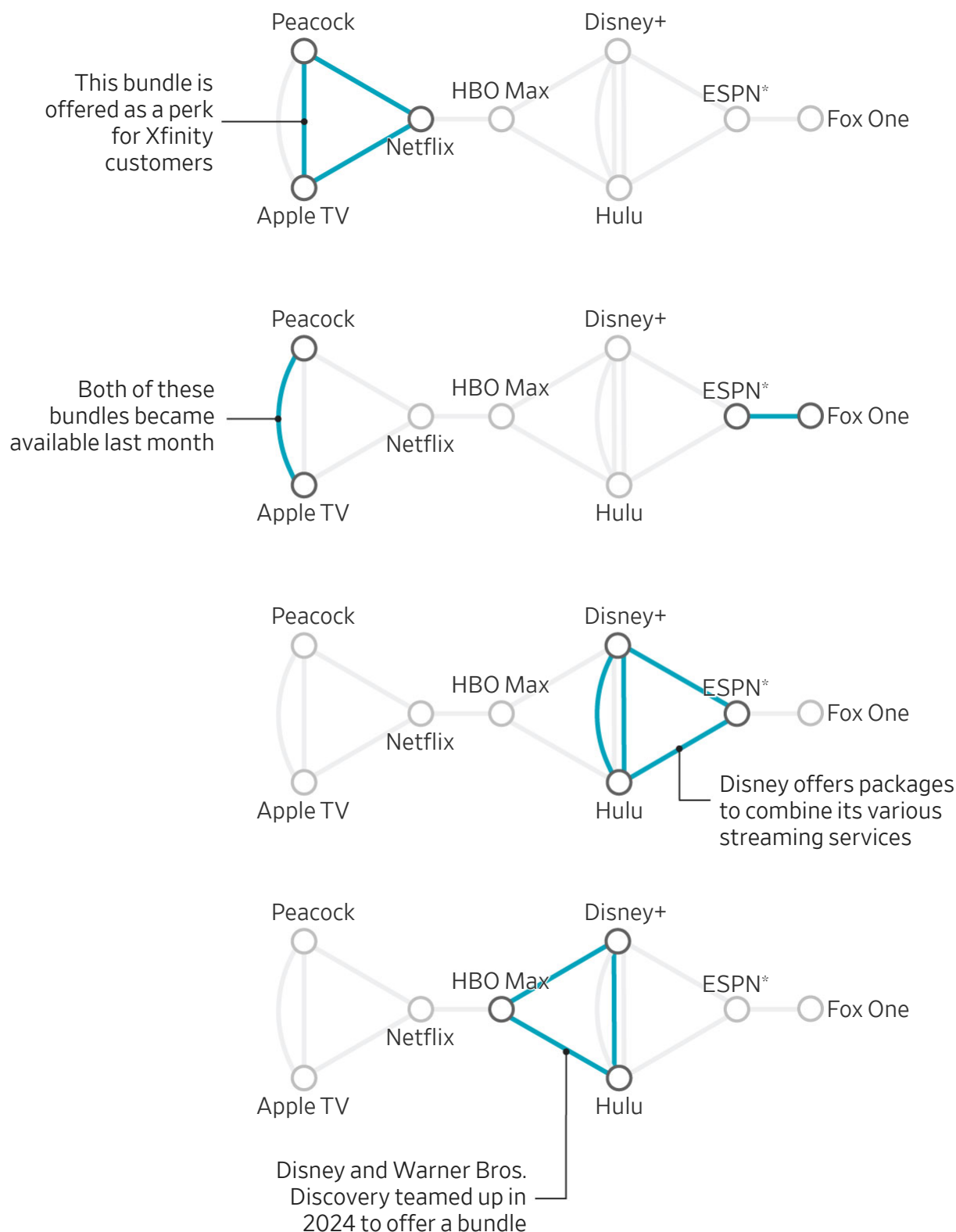
Streamers are looking for creative ways to stoke growth, and to prove to advertisers they have a critical mass of eyeballs worth pitching products to. It's led to a somewhat [baffling proliferation of bundled products](#).

Peacock and Apple TV launched a paired offering in October costing \$14.99 a month with ads (or \$19.99 monthly without), compared with \$23.98 or \$29.98 a month if each service were purchased separately. And ESPN and Fox One, both rolled out over the summer, are charging \$39.99 for a package deal.

[Fox](#) Corp. and The Wall Street Journal's parent company, [News Corp](#), share common ownership.

In addition to [teaming up with one another](#), many streamers have long joined with other types of services—including Instacart delivery, [Amex](#) credit cards and [Verizon](#)—to offer discounted access.

Bundled services



*Different bundles can include ESPN Unlimited or ESPN Select

Source: the companies

“The best I can say about bundles is déjà vu,” Proulx said. “This is akin to what life was like in the legacy pay-TV days.” In other words, consumers have access to a plethora of content and only