

By CLAIRE ATKINSON

Netflix, Amazon and Hulu Plus are no longer just nibbling away at the fringes of the pay-TV business — they're eating its lunch.

Americans sick of watching ads or tired of ever-increasing pay-TV costs, the traditional cord-cutters, are beating an ever-larger path toward streaming services, an annual survey of TV viewing habits revealed on Wednesday.

Netflix — in no surprise to many media-savvy families — is now in 36 percent of US households, the Nielsen survey found, as pressure mounts on the \$80 billion cable, satellite and telecom pay-TV industry.

The streaming darling also is forcing Madison Avenue to rethink how it allocates the \$65 billion it spends on TV ads each year.

What's more, those dollars are going to be increasingly up for grabs as other video-streaming services, like HBO Now and Sony's PlayStation Vue, become available.

Nielsen's survey also found:

- The amount of time US viewers spend watching live TV has plummeted by 20 minutes a day since 2013;

- Homes with subscription streaming services are watching 50 minutes of TV a day more than those without;

- Subscription video services are now in 40.3 percent of households;

- Thirteen percent of homes have multiple subscription video services;

- Using a smartphone app is the third-most popular activity of 18- to 24-year-olds.

"It's pretty obvious the consumer loves to stream and people love to stream without commercials," BTIG analyst Rich Greenfield said

COMING FOR CABLE

Like the White Walkers in HBO's "Game of Thrones," subscription video-on-demand is killing all in its path in the pay-TV business.

HOMES USING TV (Q4)

	Broadcast only	Broadband only	Cable
2014	12.3M	2.9M	53M
2012	11.2M	1.3M*	57.8M
Change	+9.8%	+123%	-8.3%

* Total is for Q4 2013; figure wasn't tracked in 2012 Source: Nielsen

Streamers upend \$65B TV ad game

after reviewing the survey.

"More people are cutting the cord and living in a broadband-only streaming world and those that [have both streaming and traditional pay-TV] are spending more time streaming."

✱ The number of households going without pay-TV but receiving broadcast signals increased 9.8 percent to 12.3 million in the fourth quarter from 11.2 million a year earlier, the survey found.

Those receiving nothing but broadband more than doubled to 2.9 million from 1.3 million a year earlier.

Meanwhile, over the past two years, operators have lost some 4.8 million homes while adding broadband customers.

"The biggest swing factor is subscription video services and I think they've really provided a unique opportunity for consumers to access content," Dounia Turrill, the sur-

vey's author, told The Post.

Earlier this week, Time Warner's HBO did an end run around its pay-TV partners, giving Apple the opportunity to help launch HBO Now, its first standalone product.

Cable-TV programmers appear to be paying the steepest price, while reaping some rewards of syndication cash from streamers.

In a note titled "Cable's Ratings Collapse," MoffettNathanson analyst Michael Na-

thanson said 18- to 49 year-old's impressions (or viewing across all categories) declined 9 percent last year, while ad revenue rose just 1 percent instead of an expected 6 percent jump.

"The consumer is really benefiting from the ability to get content in different ways," added Turrill. "It's all a matter of the lens and the ability to move your business model to meet the consumer."

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