(Approx. 594 words)

Streaming Surpasses Cable TV as the Way Most People Watch Television

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Streaming Is Now King

**More people are streaming TV shows and movies for the first time** rather than watching cable TV programs. In fact, the total time spent viewing streaming services in July soared nearly 23% over one year ago.

**This is a major change in the way most of us watch TV.** Nielsen has even confirmed it: Streaming is in. Cable is out. Streaming surpassed broadcast TV viewing in the past, but this is the first time the number of Americans streaming has topped those watching cable TV programming.

Streaming’s share of TV viewing hit 34.8% this past July, while cable fell to 34.4%. Broadcast TV stood at 21.6%.

Nielsen monitors monthly TV consumption and says more than one-third of all TV viewing is via streaming.

These figures are for people two years of age and over and tracks monthly viewership between September 2021 and July 2022.

Note that these figures only include streaming programming viewed on a television set.

**Folks who stream using a web browser on a PC or Mac computer** or an app on an iPad, iPhone, or Android phone or tablet are not included in the Nielsen count. Experts say that’s a sizable number of individuals not counted by Nielsen.

Cable TV, combined with traditional over-the-air TV with a UHF or VHF antenna, still has the most viewers overall.

But both are dropping, and experts predict streaming will replace that type of viewing over the next few years. Sports viewing on cable TV slid 15.4% from June and 34% from one year earlier when the 2020 Summer Olympics started.

Cable subscriptions have dropped for many years – with increasing prices cited as the number one reason. **Zippia writes that adults between 18 and 29 are the largest group with no cable in their homes. More than one-third of them have no cable TV or satellite TV subscriptions. Many don’t watch TV at all.**

According to Zippia, 69% of those surveyed say “cable and satellite subscriptions simply cost too much, and 45% say they don’t watch TV very often in general.”

**Other Streaming Tidbits:**

Most of us now subscribe to a streaming service (69%), while the number of people worldwide subscribing to cable TV has fallen below 50%, and the number of cable subscribers continues to fall.

CordCutters News reports the biggest cable TV providers lost about 825,000 video subscribers in the first three months of 2022. That compares to a loss of about 780,000 subscribers in the first quarter of 2021. These figures are from the Leichtman Research Group, which tracks video subscription trends.

While many Americans grew up with TV, 44% of all adults alive today have never had a cable or satellite TV subscription. Furthermore, 61% of those are between 18 and 29. Zippia writes, “Not only is cable TV actively losing subscribers, but it also isn’t gaining young new subscribers who are moving out on their own and separating from their parents’ subscriptions.”

**Well, then, who is watching cable TV?** Not younger people. Adults in the U.S. who are 65 and older make up the largest percentage of cable and satellite TV subscribers.

While streaming services are growing in popularity among all age groups, Zippia reports that Disney+ is the fastest-growing streamer, luring more than 100 million subscribers since it launched in November 2019.

Zippia Cord Cutting Statistics

Pew Research: Cable and Satellite TV Use Has Dropped Dramatically in the U.S. Since 2015