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A scene from HBO Max's 'The Gilded Age.' MAX/ AP HBO

Americans Are Fed Up With Cost of Streaming

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Americans are tired of spending ever more on streaming services.

Netflix , Disney+, HBO Max and other premium streaming services have steadily hiked prices for years, even bumping up the monthly price tag of lower-priced ad-supported tiers. Now, viewers are increasingly tuning into cheaper and free options.brend The cost of Disney+ without ads has more than tripled since its 2019 launch, while Netflix's comparable price has grown more than 50% over the same period of time. Overall inflation during that period has been about 32%.

The moves have helped stoke revenue growth, pleasing investors who stopped reward-

ing subscriber growth at all costs and started scrutinizing the profitability of the services.

But with prices soaring, more consumers are gravitating toward cheaper ad-supported tiers, and an ever-growing share of premium streaming subscriptions are now from ad-supported plans.

In addition to increasing prices, the growing availability of live sports on streaming services and the plethora of content to keep up with is driving the shift to ad-supported streaming, said Brendan Brady, vice president of strategy for data firm Antenna. "There's so much TV out there that, in an effort to potentially stack services, users may opt for those lower priced offers," Brady said.

But some services generate less money per user on average from ad-based subscription versions, compared with premium tiers, according to industry analysts. Streamers are trying to increase the money they collect from advertising to make up the difference.

And customers who opt for cheaper plans tend to be less loyal, according to Antenna data.

That means streamers continue to spend marketing dollars to recruit new subscribers or woo back people who left. In recent years, media companies have increasingly relied on bundles to keep cancellation rates in check.

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