

Streaming services are rapidly branching out and bundling up

Article

The news: Facing a congested landscape, streaming services are branching out widely to get themselves in front of increasingly sparse users. Streamers are breaking into new markets and features including [live sports](#), ad-supported subscription tiers, and bundles that resemble the cable packages of old.

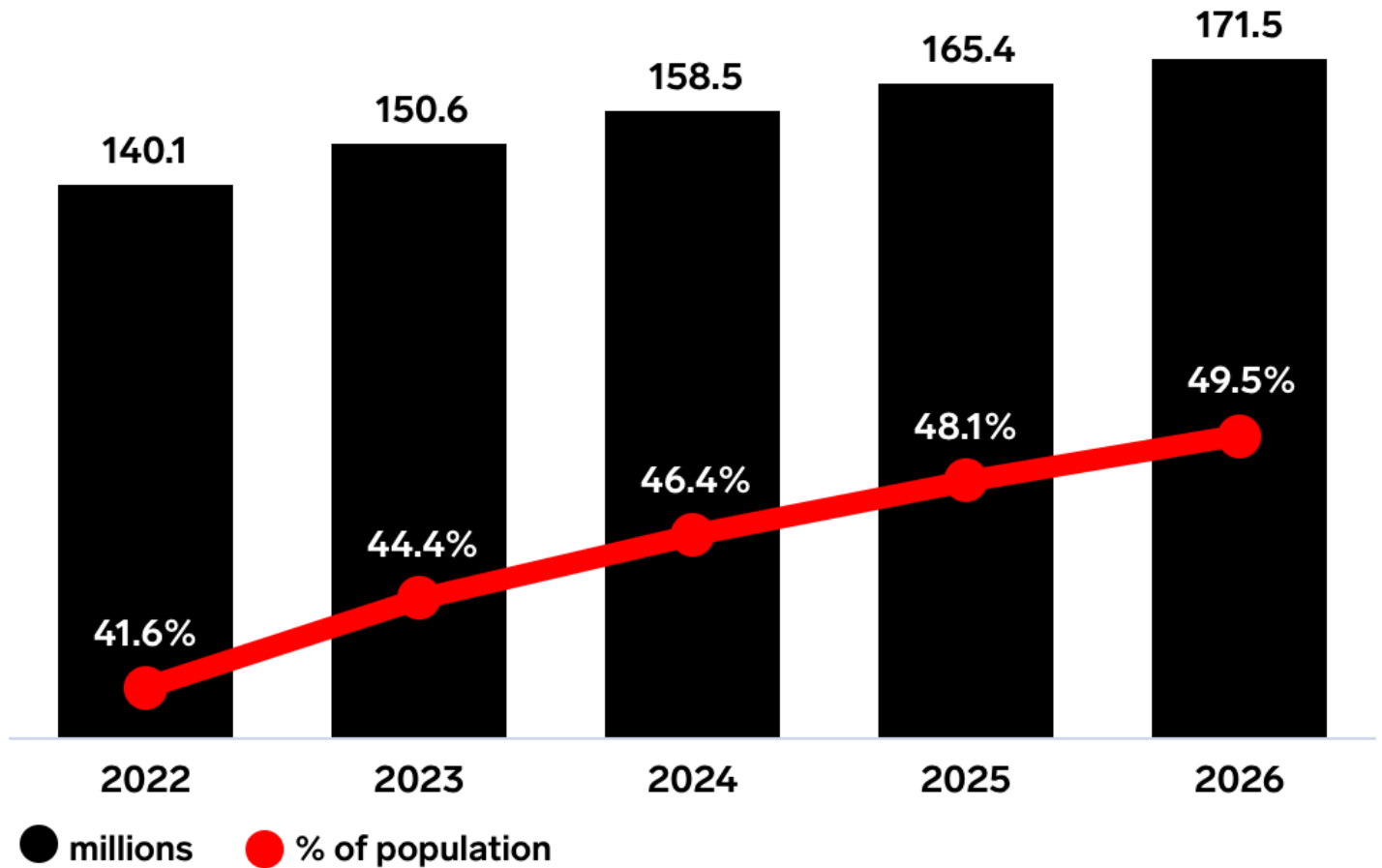
- **Disney** is reportedly considering a cheaper, ad-supported subscription tier for **Disney+**, [per](#) The Information.
- **Verizon** is also launching **Plus Play**, a free platform that bundles various services including **Netflix**, **Disney+**, **Peloton**, and more into a hub where users can keep track of, manage, and be alerted to new deals for subscription services, [per](#) The Verge.

How we got here: Things were bound to arrive here eventually. The number of major streaming competitors has exploded in recent years, and along with that increased volume has come a [slowdown in subscribers](#) and [hesitancy](#) to sign up for other services.

- This is what's leading the push for streamers to diversify their businesses and pursue deals to get them in front of as many potential customers as possible.
- Yet with the increasing number of exclusivity deals that are seeing major sports leagues, popular intellectual properties, and blockbuster films get locked behind closed doors, caving in and subscribing to yet another service can feel like an inevitability for consumers—especially as streaming services increasingly become the [dominant players](#) in the entertainment industry.
- To reach these consumers, services like Disney+, **Peacock**, and others have invested in ad-supported video channels (some locked behind subscriptions and others available for free), which are [rising in popularity](#) among American viewers. Few viewers are loyal to just one streaming service: In 2021, Ampere Analysis found that a quarter of US internet users use a mix of advertising-based and subscription-based video-on-demand services.

AVOD Viewers

US, 2022-2026



Source: eMarketer, February 2022

eMarketer | InsiderIntelligence.com

More on this: You'd be right to note that Plus Play resembles the cable packages of old, but the distinction is that Verizon isn't charging for access to Plus Play—at least for now.

- What it is doing is using Plus Play not only as a convenient subscription service management platform for customers, but also as a way to promote deals it has with streaming services like Disney+.
- That's the angle for streaming services: Plus Play and other products like it may not give them de facto subscribers from the customer bases of companies they partner with, but it does put

them in front of more eyeballs and give them an opportunity to show off new, customer-friendly offerings like cheaper or free viewing channels, as well as major content releases.

Looking forward: Streaming services are battling competition on multiple fronts, and ad-supported tiers with a softer entry price are yet another option that allows competitors to appeal to both cost-conscious consumers and advertisers looking to reach audiences inside walled gardens.