

Comcast online video trial grows to 23 networks

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(AP) -- CBS Corp. and 17 cable networks said Tuesday they are joining an online video trial by Comcast Corp., a move that tacitly acknowledges advertising isn't enough to support shows streamed over the Internet.

The networks join a growing roster of content providers - including HBO, Cinemax, TBS, TNT and Starz - that have agreed to participate in Comcast's test, bringing the total to 23 programmers since the initiative was announced in June.

In coming weeks, Philadelphia-based [Comcast](#) will be testing the service, which gives 5,000 subscriber households access to [cable TV](#) shows online without an extra fee. The trial will let these subscribers watch hundreds of movies and TV shows that previously could not be streamed over the Internet legally.

No other cable company has tried such a project yet. The test is meant to address a dilemma faced by cable programmers, which increasingly believe ads aren't lucrative enough to support online video - the model that sites like Hulu.com are trying for broadcast shows.

Instead the cable networks in Comcast's pilot hope that by offering online video only to paying subscribers, the networks can maintain the fees they get from pay TV operators while still meeting consumers' demands for shows on the Internet.

The 17 [cable networks](#) that agreed to join Tuesday are A&E, AMC,

BBC America, DIY Network, Fine Living Network, Food Network, Hallmark Channel, HGTV, History, IFC, MGM Impact, Sundance Channel, WE tv, E! Entertainment, The Style Network, G4 and Fearnert. Fearnert is owned by Comcast.

Comcast subscribers will be asked to log in to Comcast.net and Fancast.com to view the online shows and movies. It will be streamed online to computers for now, with downloads to mobile devices possible in the future.

Shares of Comcast gained 2 cents to \$13.54 in afternoon trading.

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