

Streaming, binge-watching gain in US: survey

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American consumers are increasingly streaming television instead of viewing live broadcasts, often using services like Netflix for binge-watching, a survey showed Wednesday.

In the survey by research firm Deloitte, 56 percent of consumers said

they streamed movies at least once a month and 53 percent said they did so for television programs.

The survey found that live television accounted for 45 percent of viewing time for all of those surveyed—but only 28 percent for the 14-25 age group and 35 percent for those age 26-31.

"The notion of consumers sitting in their living rooms to watch television shows at programmed times, especially among younger generations, is quickly giving way to a market of viewers using multiple devices inside and outside the home to consume content when and where they choose to watch," the study authors said.

"In 2014, there was a shift away from appointment TV to a large number of consumers binge-watching on their own schedules."

A total of 68 percent of those surveyed said they had binge-watched, or viewed at least three episodes of a program in a single sitting, and 31 percent said they did this once a week.

"Today, binge-watching, and the ability to watch what we want, when we want, and where we want, is an exciting cultural phenomenon that is shifting consumer behaviors and attitudes towards curating an individual experience," said Gerald Belson, Deloitte vice chairman.

The trend toward online viewership was especially notable among younger consumers.

In the 14-25 age category, more than 70 percent said they preferred streaming television over other options, and 80 percent said they engaged in binge-watching.

The survey also suggests troubles ahead for traditional pay TV such as

cable or satellite. Three percent said they had canceled their pay TV subscription in 2014 and seven percent said they were considering this. Another 13 percent said they had not subscribed in the past year.

Some 42 percent of those surveyed said they subscribed to streaming services, but a higher percentage used streaming, which can be done on free sites without subscriptions, according to Deloitte.

Netflix this month reported an unprecedented jump in subscribers in the first quarter of the year, pushing the streaming television service membership above 60 million, including 40 million in the United States.

Consumers may also subscribe to stream from Amazon, Hulu and HBO, or stream free from broadcaster websites and other services.

In the survey, 90 percent said they engaged in "multitasking" while watching television.

That included Internet browsing, reading, texting or other activities—with only one-fourth of the activities related to the program being watched.

The report was based on a survey of 2,076 Americans age 14 or older between November 3 and 19. No margin of error was provided.

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