

# Following rivals, AT&T says DirecTV won't need a dish or box

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Like other cable and satellite companies, AT&T is trying to win new customers by making it a little easier to sign up for and watch TV.

It said Tuesday that DirecTV packages that run on apps and don't need a dish or TV set-top box are coming in the fourth quarter. You don't have to be an AT&T phone customer to sign up.

But it's hard to gauge how appealing these deals will be. AT&T, which bought DirecTV last year, isn't providing details about prices, which channels or [video](#) will be available, or whether there will be any content blackouts on mobile devices or computers when you step outside your house.

Other Internet TV efforts haven't been successful. While an Apple TV streaming service hasn't gotten off the ground, having reportedly hit roadblocks in negotiations with channels, AT&T has a "number of programmers on board and we're continuing discussions with others," said AT&T executive Tony Goncalves, adding that it will be a "programmer-friendly approach" because it doesn't limit the video that consumers can get to specific channels.

Dish Network's Sling TV, on the other hand, has a base price of \$20 a month for 23 channels and has focused on that price point.

Asked if ESPN channels were going to be included in the new AT&T packages, spokeswoman Amy Phillips said ESPN was "having

productive conversations, but we have nothing to announce at this time." Messages left with CBS, AMC and NBCUniversal were not immediately returned.

The industry shift to ditch equipment that adds to the cost of TV service comes as a growing number of people cancel their traditional TV subscriptions. Young people are considered especially unlikely to pay for a bundle.

Over the past year, rival cable and satellite companies have introduced TV-watching apps aimed at millennials. Dish Network's Sling TV has channels that work whether you're in the house or not, but some programs have been blacked out. Offerings from [cable](#) companies have rights issues that make some channels unavailable when you leave your house and for now are available only in a few regions. Comcast's Stream also doesn't work on TV.

Competition is increasing as phone companies want to be video hubs, too. T-Mobile lets you watch video from dozens of providers, including HBO Now, Netflix and Hulu, without using up data on your plan. Verizon exempts its own video app, which has some full-length TV episodes.

Dallas-based AT&T Inc. said it is planning packages that have "much of what is available from DirecTV today" as well as a more limited service that only works on phones and a free offering with ads.

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