

Pandora takes on Spotify, Apple with new streaming services

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In this Oct. 23, 2015 file photo, Pandora is displayed above a post where it trades on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Pandora is getting ready to take on rivals Spotify, Apple Music and others, offering a monthly \$10 streaming music service, but also a cheaper option. On Tuesday, Sept. 13, 2016, the company signed licensing deals with Sony Music, Universal Music Group and several independent record labels. (AP Photo/Richard Drew, File)

Pandora will soon take on Spotify, Apple Music and others in an

extremely competitive field with its own, \$10 monthly streaming music service, and a cheaper version as well.

The Internet radio company did not release details about the actual cost for the lower-priced service Tuesday, saying only that it would be "mid-priced." The new services will launch before the end of the year, the company said.

The new subscription service will give users control over which songs they want to hear. Currently, Pandora users can't select which songs or albums they want to listen to on demand. Instead, users choose artists or songs they like and Pandora puts together a playlist. An ad-free subscription service, called Pandora One, costs \$5 a month.

Pandora is stepping into a fiercely contested environment. Spotify already has 30 million paying subscribers. And Apple Inc.'s music service, which launched last year, has 17 million. About 4 million subscribers pay for Pandora's ad-free service. Its total listeners have fallen, down nearly 2 percent to 78.1 million in the second quarter, compared with the prior year before.

Ahead of the launch of the new subscription service, Pandora on Tuesday announced licensing deals with Sony Music, Universal Music Group and several independent record labels. It is still in talks with Warner Music Group and hopes to reach an agreement with the major label by the time the new services launch, it said.

Pandora declined to say Tuesday during a conference call how the on-demand subscriptions will work or how they will stand out from what is already offered by rivals.

Shares of Pandora Media Inc., based in Oakland, California, fell 18 cents, or 1.3 percent, to \$14.11 in morning trading Tuesday.

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