

Apple revamps TV app for direct subscriptions to channels

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Apple users will be able to subscribe to HBO, Showtime and a handful of other channels directly through Apple's new TV app, bypassing the need to download or launch a separate app.

The new capabilities available Monday come ahead of Apple's plan to

offer its own original shows, including ones from Oprah Winfrey and Steven Spielberg. Those shows will be part of an Apple TV Plus subscription coming later this year for a yet-to-be disclosed price.

Hulu and Amazon already offer premium channels as add-ons to their regular subscriptions, and both have original shows. Apple is trying to catch up on streaming video to make up for a slowdown in iPhone sales.

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