

Apple's new TV app lets users download this season's 'Game of Thrones' episodes

May 13 2019, by Wendy Lee, Los Angeles Times

Furthering its push into the burgeoning streaming TV industry, Apple launched a new app that it hopes will help consumers navigate an increasingly cluttered world of direct-to-consumer platforms.

Apple on Monday launched its new TV app, with new features including access to [premium channels](#) that allows users to download full episodes of popular series including HBO's "Game of Thrones."

The push comes as the Cupertino, Calif., tech giant expands its presence in entertainment, with plans to launch its own original shows and films under its new service Apple TV+ later this year.

Apple's TV app will be available in more than 100 countries, with content recommendations from more than 150 video apps and streaming services, including Amazon Prime and Hulu. Users can connect to their cable services and sign up for paid channels like HBO, Starz, Showtime and eventually CBS All Access through the app. They can also browse more 100,000 movies and shows on iTunes.

The new app is a shift in Apple's previous strategy of selling hardware that connects to television sets. Since 2017, Apple has kept its roughly 13 percent market share among U.S.-connected TV users, while other competitors like Roku are expected to climb to 37 percent this year, according to research firm eMarketer.

Part of that has to do with the cost of the devices. Roku's cheapest

device starts at \$29.99, while Apple TV HD starts at \$149. Analysts also said Apple could have brought more innovation to its device.

"They changed the world in mobile ... they defined personal computing, but they have been slow to evolve in the [living room](#)," said Gene Munster, a managing partner at venture capital firm Loup Ventures.

A free app installed on Apple devices that works with providers could help Apple increase its presence in the home and further its strategy to increase its revenue in services from \$37 billion in fiscal 2018 to roughly \$50 billion in 2020.

The company's biggest money-maker continues to be the iPhone and Apple has faced pressure to increase its revenue in other areas as sales of the flagship smartphones have been in decline.

The effort is part of "a broader focus for [Apple CEO Tim] Cook on the services and ecosystem outside of the iPhone," said Daniel Ives, a managing editor of equity research for Wedbush Securities.

The app will work with Amazon's Fire TV and on Roku, as well as 2019 Samsung smart TVs and some 2018 models. Users can also mirror the content on their iPhones and other Apple devices to certain smart TVs using a feature called AirPlay 2.

It's unclear whether partners and consumers will have enough incentive to join the app.

Many of the channels will charge the same price on Apple's TV app as they would if consumers signed up on their websites. By sharing their revenue, partners will get access to Apple's large audience, but will collect less data from those subscribers than if they had signed up directly from their own apps. For example, they won't receive

information, such as a viewer's location, if a user subscribes through Apple's TV app.

Benefits customers receive through the app include Apple's recommendations based on consumers' viewing habits. Apple editors will also suggest titles to watch.

Viewers can also select through the app which [sports teams](#) they would like to follow and Apple editors may send notifications letting TV app users know when the game is going into overtime or if someone is about to break a record.

The app also has content for children broken down by age and will send a message to parents asking for their permission if youngsters want to buy a show or movie.

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