

Dish Network 4Q profit falls, gains subscribers

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(AP) -- Dish Network's aggressive advertising blitz grabbed more subscribers for the third straight quarter, the company reported Monday, though that cut into profits during the final three months of the year.

Its [earnings](#) slipped 18 percent to \$179 million, or 40 cents per share, but still topped the 32 cents-per-share estimate of analysts polled by Thomson Reuters. These estimates usually remove one-time items.

Dish reported a profit of \$217 million, or 48 cents per share, a year earlier.

Earlier this month rival DirecTV Inc. - the country's biggest satellite [TV operator](#) - posted a fourth-quarter loss after absorbing a hefty buyout charge.

The two companies are fighting to win over new customers, with Dish saying its ads - which claim DirecTV service is more expensive - are bringing in customers.

DirecTV is suing Dish for false advertising.

Dish's ads have helped to attract and retain subscribers, but it's also hurt margins and ultimately, the bottom line. Still, shares rose in premarket trading with the company beating most Wall Street expectations.

Revenue for the period ended Dec. 31 climbed 1 percent to \$2.96 billion

from \$2.92 billion, surpassing Wall Street's \$2.94 billion.

Dish gained about 249,000 net subscribers in the quarter.

Full-year earnings declined 30 percent to \$636 million, or \$1.42 per share, compared with \$903 million, or \$1.98 per share, in the previous year.

Annual revenue edged up slightly to \$11.66 billion from \$11.62 billion.

Dish, based in Englewood, Colo., had approximately 14.1 million subscribers at year's end after gaining about 422,000 subscribers during 2009.

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