

**“There is no such thing as a skinny bundle with a regional sports network that costs \$10.”**

— David Zaslav, Discovery Inc. CEO, at the Goldman Sachs Communacopia conference on Sept. 17, adding that he hopes pricey RSNs get “puked out” of content packages aimed at cost-conscious consumers.



VOICES: ITERATIONS

The Top 5 OTT Startups Still on the M&A Market



Daniel Frankel

A DECADE AGO, OVER-THE-TOP DISTRIBUTION was a startup’s game, dominated by the Slingboxes and Aereos of the world, not to mention the wave of YouTube multichannel networks like AwesomenessTV.

Heck, it wasn’t that long ago that Roku, which went public as recently as 2017 and will be a billion-dollar revenue company this year, was considered a startup. In fact, Netflix was once a startup, too, although it went public in 2002, long before it began streaming video.

These days, of course, OTT video is dominated by huge Silicon Valley giants, which have — somewhat ironically — put the major media conglomerates and telecoms in the role of insurgents, with The Walt Disney Co., AT&T-WarnerMedia and Comcast-NBCUniversal about to launch new streaming services to try to disrupt the strongholds of Netflix, Amazon Prime Video and YouTube. Even Apple is playing the role of disruptor, with Apple TV+.

Indeed, streaming is now a big company’s game, with the next wave of disruption driven by some of the biggest corporations in the world. But there are a few scrappy streaming startups still out there, waiting to get bought.

Of course, OTT startups very infrequently say outright they want to get purchased. But it’s so obviously the plan! With that in mind, here are five notable independent OTT companies which seem to be seeking a lot of attention these days. Note that we’re focusing on streaming startups here, and not ad-tech companies.

Find out who the top 5 startups are, and learn more about them, at [broadcastingcable.com/Sept23](http://broadcastingcable.com/Sept23).

NUMBER

**45%**

The share of U.S. cord-cutters who use the Roku over-the-top ecosystem, according to the company.

VIDEOPHILE

Gross SVOD Subs Up 38% in 2018, Says Researcher

DISMISSING THE NOTION that the subscription streaming business has become saturated, at least at the global level, Digital TV Research said gross SVOD subscriptions increased by 139 million in 2018 to 508 million, a 38% uptick.

According to the research company, the net subscriber count — the customers left after churn is considered — was up by 31%, or 83 million consumers.

The average SVOD subscriber paid for 1.43 SVOD subscriptions at the end of 2018, up from 1.05 in 2010, Digital TV Research said.

More than one-fifth of the world’s TV households had at least one SVOD subscription as of the end of last year

“China and the U.S. together accounted for 63% of the global total in 2018,” Simon Murray, principal analyst at Digital TV Research, said in a statement. “China overtook the U.S. in 2018 to become the gross SVOD subscription leader. China added nearly 60 million subscriptions in 2018 alone, with the U.S. up by 27 million (despite its relative maturity). India nearly doubled its subscription base.” — Daniel Frankel

