

Who Killed the Great American Cable-TV Bundle? | Bloomberg

By Gerry Smith

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Bloomberg interviewed approximately 20 current and former media executives and analysts to “understand why traditional television has started losing its foothold in America’s living rooms.” In Gerry Smith’s analysis, there are several likely culprits for the decline of the old cable bundle, from Netflix to ESPN. He suggests that what this indicates is that all of us, from consumers to providers, are responsible for television’s erosion and consolidation.

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In hindsight, some TV executives believe the industry would be much healthier now if everyone—programmers and distributors—had agreed to make all episodes of shows available to cable subscribers on any device. That was the dream behind TV Everywhere, an idea hatched in 2009 by Comcast CEO Brian Roberts and Time Warner CEO Jeff Bewkes. But in those crucial early days, TV Everywhere struggled to get off the ground.

Executives couldn’t agree on how long to make old episodes available for subscribers. Some gave viewers only a day to catch up on a show they missed because the broadcasters had sold the reruns to another service. Others made past series available to subscribers for a month. Consumers became confused about where to go and how long they had to binge-watch a show. Some TV networks were slow to make their channels available online.

In the end, the cable industry’s failure to protect the bundle came down largely to greed, Moffett said. Media executives wanted to charge more for certain rights, like making every old episode available to cable subscribers, or granting the rights to watch a show on an iPad outside the home, instead of giving them away for the good of the industry.

Source: [Who Killed the Great American Cable-TV Bundle? | Bloomberg](#)