

Consumers Union Cable TV Issues Survey

May 25, 2004

Methodology

- ◆ A total of 1,221 online surveys were conducted among a random sample of U.S. adults. The margin of error at a 95% confidence level is +/- 3 percentage points.
- ◆ Interviewing took place over May 12-17.
- ◆ Respondents were screened for subscription to cable service. 70% subscribe; the balance were filtered out.
- ◆ Figures cited in the analysis are top-two box (*strongly agree or agree*).
- ◆ Regional definitions
 - Northeast: CT, MA, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT
 - Midwest: IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI
 - South: AK, AL, DC, DE, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV
 - West: AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY

Introduction

Respondent Introduction

Your cable television company decides what channels to offer you and sets the price without any regulation or oversight. Concerns are growing in Congress about escalating cable rates and the fact that consumers are forced to buy programming they may find unsuitable. This is because the industry does not give customers the option of purchasing only those channels they want to watch, but rather offers only bundles of channels.

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree):

- ◆ I should have the option to pick only those cable channels that I want to watch or have included in my service plan.
- ◆ I should have the option to pay only for those channels I select.
- ◆ I would choose fewer channels than currently are offered in my cable package.
- ◆ If I pick fewer channels, my cable bill should be lower.
- ◆ I would choose fewer channels even if my cable bill did not decline proportionately.

Results and Analysis

Base: 70% With Cable TV Service

- ◆ Cable TV subscribers show broad agreement on issues related to offerings and price.
 - Two-thirds agree that they should have the option to select the channels in their plan.
 - Two thirds want to pay only for selected channels.
 - Nearly 60% would pick fewer channels.
 - Two thirds would like to pay less if fewer channels are chosen.
 - About 3 in 10 would pick fewer channels even without proportionate savings.

- ◆ Agreement was strongest among those with highest incomes and residents of the Northeast.

Top-Two Box: Agreement With Cable TV Questions [4 boxes]

Filter: Have Cable TV

	Total %	Gender		Age			Income			Region			
		Men %	Women %	18-44 %	45-64 %	65+ %	<\$60K %	\$60-99K %	\$100K+ %	NE %	MW %	SO %	WE %
I should have the option to pick only those cable channels that I want to watch or have included in my service plan.	66	66	67	67	66	67	63	70	77	78	63	65	64
I should have the option to pay only for those channels I select.	67	67	67	67	67	66	64	70	78	79	64	66	63
I would choose fewer channels than currently are offered in my cable package.	59	58	60	59	60	59	56	62	76	72	55	58	57
If I pick fewer channels, my cable bill should be lower.	67	66	67	68	66	64	64	69	80	79	62	67	64
I would choose fewer channels even if my cable bill did not decline proportionately.	29	30	28	26	32	34	27	30	39	34	22	31	32