# Roku Channel now lets users sign up for new streaming services with one click

## reader comments

8 with 7 posters participating

## Share this story

Roku’s latest update to The Roku Channel makes it easier for users to now find and subscribe to streaming services. The new feature (dubbed “Premium Subscriptions”) adds a carousel of subscription partners to The Roku Channel, all of which allow users to sign up for their services directly through Roku’s on-screen interface.

It works like this: let’s say you want to start watching Starz’s *Outlander*, but you don’t subscribe to Starz’s streaming service. If you have a Roku device or a Roku TV, you can head into The Roku Channel and find Starz in the new Premium Subscriptions carousel. Select *Outlander* as the show you want to watch, and information about Starz’s streaming service will pop up. With the credit card you have on file with Roku, you can click to subscribe to Starz and start digging into *Outlander* immediately after.

Premium Subscriptions will have 25 partners when it debuts, including Starz, Showtime, Epix, and others. If you subscribe to many of them through The Roku Channel, you’ll get one bill from Roku each month for the total amount you owe for all services to which you subscribe. Roku will offer at least a

seven-day free trial for all partner programs, so you can try out these streaming services before you actually pay for them.

The Roku Channel debuted in 2017 as an ad-supported channel that comes on all Roku streaming devices. The company licenses a bunch of content and provides it free to all Roku device users through The Roku Channel—the only catch being the ads that run throughout that content. Last April, Roku partnered with ABC, Cheddar, and others to bring live news to The Roku Channel, increasing the ad-supported content available for free to all users. Later last year, the company took the big step of bringing The Roku Channel to its mobile app and website, giving anyone—even those without Roku hardware—access to its free, ad-supported content.

## So many streams

Premium Subscriptions introduces another element to The Roku Channel and has become an increasingly big priority for Roku. The company isn't in the original-content arms race next to Netflix, Amazon, Apple, and others. Rather, it has focused on bringing more free content to Roku customers and making it easier for those users to find content they want to watch. The "Featured Free" section combines these two initiatives, putting popular content that's available for free front and center on The Roku Channel.

With the plethora of streaming subscription services available now, figuring out where the shows that you want to watch live can be difficult. Once you figure that out, signing up for all the "necessary" services can mean multiple trips to different websites, numerous authentication emails, and other hassles. Roku hopes that giving users a quick-and-easy interface that removes the troubles of signing up for services will encourage people to sign up for more.

Undoubtedly, partners like Starz are hoping for the same thing. While this adds another revenue stream to The Roku

Channel, Roku claims that users will pay the same monthly fee for each service when they sign up using the channel as they would signing up through the partner directly.

Premium Subscription content will be streamable on Roku devices, Roku TVs, and through the Roku mobile app. Debuting along with Premium Subscriptions will be a new playback feature in the Roku mobile app that allows users to watch both free and subscription content on the go. However, you can’t sign up for Premium Subscriptions in the mobile app—that must be done via Roku’s on-screen interface.

Premium Subscriptions in The Roku Channel will debut in late January.

https://arstechnica.com/?p=1431601