Sony slashes PlayStation Now streaming prices ahead of Google Stadia launch

reader comments

60 with 41 posters participating, including story author

Share this story

With Google prepping its Stadia streaming service for launch next month, and Microsoft rolling out a Project xCloud steaming test this month, you'd be forgiven for forgetting that Sony has been streaming hundreds of PlayStation games through its PlayStation Now service for years. Sony is doing its best to remind you of that fact, though, announcing today that it is slashing the all-you-can-stream subscription price for PlayStation Now to $9.99 a month (down from $19.99), $24.99 a quarter (down from $49.99), or $59.99 a year (down from $99.99). Current subscribers will see the reduced price on their next billing cycle.

A PlayStation Now subscription includes streaming access to over 800 games from across the PS2, PS3, and PS4 libraries on a PS4 or PC (but not mobile phones or previously supported Smart TVs). PS4 users can also download over 300 PS4 games with their subscription, and today, those streaming and downloadable libraries are expanding to include *Grand Theft Auto V*, *God of War* (2018), *Uncharted 4*, and *Infamous: Second Son*.

PlayStation Now launched in 2014 with a ridiculous a la carte

rental pricing plan, but the service quickly pivoted to an all-you-can-play subscription model a few months later. Back then, the lowest price available for that subscription was $15 a month, three times the current monthly rate for an annual subscription, and the service only included access to 100 PS3 games. The service works pretty well if you have a decent Internet connection, thanks in large part to Sony's 2012 acquisition of streaming platform Gaikai.

The reduction to $60 a year makes PlayStation Now currently much more economical than Google's Stadia, which will require a $10/month subscription and hardware investment at launch (though Google says a free tier is planned for next year). Stadia users also have to pay a la carte for the vast majority of games on the service, aside from monthly freebies offered with the subscription.

The new lower cost is also cheaper than Microsoft's Xbox Game Pass, which starts at $9.99 a month for downloadable access to just over 200 Xbox One and Xbox 360 games. Microsoft hasn't announced pricing or catalog availability for its upcoming Project xCloud streaming service.

Back in May, Sony revealed that it had attracted 700,000 subscribers for PlayStation Now. That's a somewhat uninspiring result for a subscription service approaching its sixth year on the market, especially when you consider that over 100 million PS4s have sold worldwide. But that hasn't stopped Sony Interactive Entertainment President and CEO Jim Ryan from saying, "we believe the streaming era is upon us and is about to begin a period of rapid growth." https://arstechnica.com/?p=1577921