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Viacom is on the outside looking in at two of the latest virtual MVPDs (vMVPDs), YouTube TV and Hulu's upcoming live TV service. But it's unclear if this is a problem for the programmer or part of the plan.

Last week, *Bloomberg* [outed](#) the news that Viacom would not be a part of Hulu's linear TV service after the two companies were unable to come to terms for an agreement. Around the same time, Hulu announced that it had signed a distribution agreement with A+E Networks that would place six of the programmer's channels on Hulu live, making it more difficult for other programmers like AMC, Discovery and Scripps to still hammer out carriage deals with Hulu.

Last month when Google officially [announced](#) YouTube TV, it was quickly evident that many programmers including A+E, Discovery, Scripps, Time Warner and Viacom didn't make the cut. YouTube instead opted to limit the deal to the four major broadcasters and their affiliated cable networks including ESPN, Showtime, FX and USA Network. Viacom, like other nonbroadcast-affiliated programmers not included, is still in discussions with YouTube.

So Viacom's perceived shutout by both YouTube and Hulu is a sting other programmers are feeling as well. And while Viacom is absent from those services—at least for the time being—the company still has networks on other established vMVPDs including Sling TV and DirecTV Now, though Viacom channels have been [dropped](#) by PlayStation Vue. "We currently have distribution with the largest virtual MVPDs, and are engaged in ongoing conversations with a spectrum of new, emerging digital distributors as we execute against our recently announced strategy," said Viacom in a statement.

Alan Wolk, an independent media analyst, said that YouTube TV and Hulu live will likely only represent a small size tier of the market, so financially Viacom shouldn't be too impacted. "But the optics aren't great given everything that's been going on with [Viacom]," said Wolk, adding that advertisers will particularly take note that Viacom is not being included in the new services targeting cord-nevers and cord-cutting millennials. Of course, while Viacom's exclusion from new vMVPDs might not be an appealing look for some, traditional pay-TV operators could see it as an upside.

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As the Bloomberg report points out, Viacom CEO Bob Bakish is pushing to restore his company's relationship with MVPDs by taking down Viacom programming like "The Daily Show" from SVOD services like Hulu and Amazon that might lure viewers away from linear TV. Though Viacom is likely not done licensing programming to SVODs, it's possible that it won't be doing it to the extent demanded by a service like Hulu, which touts its large on-demand library along with its linear service.

An advertisement for Cablefax Daily. On the right, a woman in a dark blazer and light blue shirt is smiling while talking on a black corded telephone. The background is a light blue gradient with a white diagonal line. On the left, the text reads: "ESSENTIAL READING for INDUSTRY EXECS" in large blue letters. Below that, in smaller black text: "Cablefax Daily: THE vital business tool for MSOs, programming execs, telco/satellite distributors, tech vendors and more. Get the news that matters to you--free for 3 weeks." At the bottom, it says "Go to <http://www.cablefax.com/3wktrial>."

As Wolk pointed out, it's worth noting that the vMVPDs Viacom still has deals with are affiliated with more traditional MVPDs (DirecTV and Dish Network) instead of functioning as outliers like PlayStation and Hulu. But it's possible that Viacom's recent absences from emerging vMVPDs are the latest manifestations of a once-mighty programmer that's fallen on hard times since it split with CBS. If Viacom had been able to stay married to CBS, its networks logically would have been included in YouTube TV and it would have retained ties to CBS' broadcast TV content and live sports that would have made Viacom harder to shut out of skinny bundles.

Viacom being left out of YouTube TV and Hulu might merely be a side effect of the programmer's long-term revitalization plans or a case of the chickens coming home to roost after years of decline. Time will tell. – *Fierce Cable*

President Trump is proposing to eliminate funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which provides federal support for public broadcasting, as part of a budget package that makes massive cuts across government agencies while increasing defense spending by \$54 billion. The White House will unveil details of a budget outline on Thursday morning, but officials briefed reporters on the plans earlier on Wednesday.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, with an appropriation that has hovered around \$445 million in recent years, provides funding for NPR and PBS, but the bulk of its grants go to individual stations. Advocates for public broadcasting say that stations in smaller- and medium-sized markets are especially dependent on the money for their operations.

Trump's proposed cuts also include eliminating funding for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, as *Variety* [reported](#) earlier on Wednesday. The cuts had been expected, as groups like America's Public Television Stations, an advocacy organization for federal funding for public broadcasting, have been lobbying lawmakers on Capitol Hill for weeks. Reports surfaced in January that Trump's administration was eyeing such cuts. Mick Mulvaney, director of the Office of Management and Budget, told reporters that the budget will "shrink the role of government."

Advocates for public broadcasting believe that the severe cuts to public broadcasting and the arts will be reversed on Capitol Hill. They point to past instances where the White House has proposed eliminating public broadcasting funding, only to see it restored as Congress came up with budget legislation. Meanwhile, arts advocates are planning to lobby lawmakers on Capitol Hill early next week. Ovation TV, the arts channel, announced a new campaign called Stand for the Arts to press for lawmakers to retain funding. Among the groups aligned with the effort are the Alvin Alley Dance Theater, Americans for the Arts, Film Independent, and American Ballet Theatre. – *Variety*

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127 State Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101
717.214.2000 • bcapa.com

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