Comcast TV Rate Hikes Outpace All Other Major TV Competitors

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A new report by consumer advocacy outfit Free Press notes that Comcast raised rates for the company's basic cable package by 68% over the last four years. Comcast also raised the cost of their top-tier premium TV package some 21% as well. Interestingly, the report found that Time Warner Cable was the only cable company to actually reduce their advertised price for their basic cable package (by 2.5%).

"Comcast's rate increases far outstripped those of its competitors in recent years," laments the group. "And the very company it's intent on gobbling up actually lowered basic cable prices in the period studied."

Granted as we've long illustrated and many of you know from first-hand experience, advertised prices may not give you an accurate idea of what you'll actually wind up paying.

This industry has tacked on a wide variety of below-the-line fees to bills for years, a practice that allows them to hit users with rate hikes while leaving the advertised rate the same. The industry's new Broadcast TV fee is only the latest example. Tack those on, and it's likely these statistics look even worse.

While cable operators will blame programmers for these rate hikes (even though Comcast owns NBC), cable operators are perfectly happy to sock consumers with higher prices as well, whether it's the price to rent a modem, or the cost to rent a DVR set top box. It's something that will continue to happen, regardless of the merger, until more consumers start voting with their wallets.

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