



Potential cord cutters sharpen the knife

By: Jordan Pinto

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The number of Canadians that don't see the need for a TV subscription continues to grow, with 16% (6% off-air, 10% tuned-out) now without a traditional TV service, says new research from Media Technology Monitor.

According to the report, 5% of Canadians have cut the cord in the past three years, and a growing number say they are considering doing the same. Among current TV subscribers, one in five say they are thinking about cutting the cord, while one in three "cord shavers" have taken measures such as reducing the number of channels on their subscription.

This is an increasing trend: between 2013 and 2014 the percentage of people who said they were either somewhat or very likely to cut the cord on a paid TV service rose from 16% to 21%.

The report echoes the results of another recent cord cutting study, which claimed 10% of people say they would never cut the cord. Limelight Networks' global research cited an increasingly "tenuous" link between broadcaster and TV subscriber, and this weakening connection is reinforced by MTM's research.

Among those without a paid TV service, MTM reported 34% said it was either too expensive or not worth it (compared with 38% in the Limelight Networks' study), while one in seven said they could get all the content they needed via online, Netflix, antenna and other means.

The survey revealed that those between the ages of 35 to 64, those with post-secondary education and people that have cut their landline phone cord were the most likely to be cord-cutters.

Unsurprisingly, the Netflix migration has a bearing on the results of the study, with tuned-out Canadians being 40% more likely than TV subscription holders to have a Netflix subscription. Elsewhere, 7% of those polled said they were "cord-nevers."

Interestingly, the study showed the appeal of cord cutting is far less prevalent in French-speaking Canada – Anglophones are 64% more likely to consider cutting the cord than their Francophone counterparts. The results however may be accounted for by French programming being less accessible online and allowing for more customizable TV packages.

MTM carried out the research via telephone in fall 2014, polling 8,000 people across Canada.