

# Linear broadcasting's share of screen time shrinks as SA tunes into free and paid digital video

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[GfK](#) launches its annual ViewScape study in Africa, showing how the rise of digital platforms is transforming consumers' viewing habits



Some 20% of South Africans who sign up for a subscription video on demand (SVOD) service such as Netflix or Showmax do so with the intention of cancelling their pay television subscription. That's according to [GfK](#)'s international ViewScape survey\*, which this year covers Africa (South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria) for the first time.

The study — which surveyed 1,250 people representative of urban South African adults with Internet access—shows that 90% of the country's online adults today use at least one online video service and that just over half are paying to view digital online content. The average user spends around seven hours and two minutes a day consuming video content, with broadcast television accounting for just 42% of the time South Africans spend in front of a screen.

Consumers in South Africa spend nearly as much of their daily viewing time – 39% of the total – watching free digital video sources such as YouTube and Facebook as they do on linear television. People aged 18 to 24 years spend more than eight hours a day watching video content as they tend to spend more time with free digital video than people above their age.

Says Benjamin Ballensiefen, managing director for sub-Saharan Africa at GfK: "The media industry is experiencing a revolution as digital platforms transform viewers' video consumption behaviour. The GfK ViewScape study is one of the first to not only examine broadcast television consumption in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa, but also to quantify how linear and online forms of content distribution fit together in the dynamic world of video consumption."

The study finds that just over a third of South African adults are using streaming video on demand (SVOD) services, with only 16% of SVOD users subscribing to multiple services. Around 23% use per-pay-view platforms such as DSTV Box

Office, while about 10% download pirated content from the Internet. Around 82% still sometimes watch content on disc-based media.

“Linear and non-linear television both play significant roles in South Africa’s video landscape, though disruption from digital players poses a growing threat to the incumbents,” says Molemo Moahloli, general manager for media research and regional business development at GfK Sub-Saharan Africa. “Among most demographics, usage of paid online content is incremental to consumption of linear television, but there are signs that younger consumers are beginning to substitute SVOD for pay-television subscriptions.”

*\*GfK’s annual ViewScape study is run in 19 countries: Australia, Brazil, Belgium, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Netherlands, Nigeria, Mexico, Poland, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, UK and US. Full country reports are available for purchase.*

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