

# DirectTV users lose Comedy Central, MTV in fee dispute

By Mark Glover, Sacramento Bee

Sacramento-area DirectTV customers missing programs this week on Nickelodeon, MTV, Comedy Central and more than a dozen other Viacom cable channels can at least take solace in the fact that they're not alone.

Nationwide, 20 million viewers are in the same boat.

Channels owned by Viacom went black on Wednesday, the byproduct of yet another dispute with DirectTV over so-called carriage fees – money paid for the right to retransmit content.

Both sides are blaming each other amid failed talks for a new carriage contract. The existing contract recently expired.

Denise Denson, Viacom's executive vice president of content distribution and marketing, said "the last proposal DirectTV had made was lower than anyone else pays in the industry, and a deal we said we would not do out of fairness to other distributors.

"DirectTV also refused to engage with us on any issues related to the deal beyond the rate increase. We are ready to talk at any time."

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