

January 16, 2025



# Optimum Demands MSG Networks Refund Customers Upwards of \$125 Million

***Optimum Continues to Help Fans Watch Their Favorite Teams AND Continue to Offer New, Affordable Video Options to Non-Sports Fans***

***Is MSG Networks Trying to Tank this Deal to Get Customers to Pay Three Times More Through Gotham and Drive Up the Share Price of the Sphere (which he also owns)?***

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- For weeks, Optimum and MSG Networks have been negotiating continued carriage on Optimum systems. Over the last two weeks, Optimum hosted MSG Networks' executives in its offices twice and hosted multiple calls trying to find a solution that would bring MSG Networks' content to fans and prevent non-viewers from having to pay for what they do not watch. MSG Networks has refused all offers. Perhaps MSG Networks is purposely trying to tank the deal to get customers to pay three times more for their own app AND save the Sphere by bankrupting MSG Networks?

As MSG Networks continues to deflect responsibility for its ongoing blackout of Knicks, Rangers, Islanders, and Devils games, today, Optimum has called on the programmer to refund customers upwards of \$125 million — representing the estimated \$10 per month per subscriber MSG Networks announced its sports programming is worth.

Optimum issues the following statement:

"MSG Networks continues to play games with our customers while refusing to engage in meaningful negotiations. MSG Networks needs to take responsibility and issue refunds to subscribers for the programming they did not watch but were forced to pay for in 2024.

MSG Networks has habitually overcharged consumers, first for cable distributed content and now for Gotham Sports, taking what they say is a \$10 product and tripling that fee to \$30 for Gotham Sports users to access the exact same content on its app (one of the most expensive apps in the ecosystem). In light of its impending bankruptcy, MSG Networks continues to try and extort consumers for their hard-earned dollars while charging die-hard fans triple the costs, despite airing less games due to a \$76 billion NBA deal that MSG and its owners will benefit from.

At Optimum, our attention is on our customers – we will continue to make sure they have ways to watch MSG Networks' content, including getting fans signed up for Gotham Sports, driving profits to MSG Networks' business. If Gotham Sports isn't of interest, we have other streaming service solutions for customers.

And non-sports fans can call us to talk about our new video [offerings](#) that provide choice, flexibility and affordability, and are designed to ensure customers pay for the content they care about.

At the heart of this dispute is MSG Networks, a company prioritizing profits over people. In fact, their owner publicly acknowledged how outdated and unviable their own business model is due to the fragmentation of viewing now that customers have options to get their sports content from various sources. MSG needs to address their core issue: their continued insistence on inflated, mandatory fees that penalize most subscribers to offset their dying business model.

The truth is, sports should unite us, not divide us – we love our local sports teams and will continue to support and cheer them on.”

#### **Additional Information:**

- **MSG Networks Viewership on Optimum:** Nearly 50% of customers with access to MSG Networks didn't even turn on the channel in 2024 – forcing them to pay is unfair, especially when there are so many ways for fans to get their content.
- **Optimum Loves its New York and New Jersey Sports Teams:** Optimum is a huge fan of the Knicks, Rangers, Devils and Islanders and we will continue to support them and cheer on our local teams. This dispute has nothing to do with the teams — it has everything to do with MSG Networks forcing non-fans to pay for content that they do not watch.
- **MSG Has Admitted to Overcharging Gotham Sports Customers:** MSG Networks has publicly acknowledged that they believe their content is worth \$10 per month yet charges its Gotham Sports users triple at \$30 per month for the same exact content – that's \$360 per year for a few months of live content. From day one, Optimum has offered solutions for those that want to access MSG Networks' content, including offsetting and defraying the costs of the Gotham Sports app, and Optimum will continue to provide affordable customer-friendly options for subscribers. It's time for MSG Networks to do the same.
- **The RSN Model Is Broken:** For years, Optimum served as the middleman, paying MSG Networks to ensure access to local sports programming in the New York tri-state area. With so many other ways to get the same content, Optimum is taking a stand on behalf of customers.

Voices in the sports industry have weighed in on the fragile and outdated RSN model given fragmentation, including MSG Networks' Executive Chairman, who [stated](#), *“The increased number of exclusive and non-exclusive games [under the new deal] means that national partners would have the ability to air nearly half of the regular season and all postseason games. This reduction in available games for RSNs risks rendering the entire RSN model unviable.”*

- **Optimum is evolving to meet customer needs and has great options for non-sports fans, too:** At Optimum, we believe customers should have choice, flexibility and value. We are committed to addressing this complex issue and taking a leadership role in the industry.

We know that consumer viewing habits have changed dramatically over the last few years, and content is not one size fits all, so we are tailoring our offerings to meet customer needs individually.

We ask customers to please call us directly — so we can understand what's important to them and continue to support their viewing and entertainment interests accordingly. Specifically, for non-sports fans, we have new video solutions starting at just \$30 per month, providing great savings, choice, and flexibility. Our team is ready to help

customers find the best packages for them.  
Visit [www.optimum.com/MSG](http://www.optimum.com/MSG) to learn more.

## **About Optimum**

Optimum is a brand of Altice USA, one of the largest broadband communications and video services providers in the United States, delivering broadband, video, mobile, proprietary content and advertising services to approximately 4.6 million residential and business customers across 21 states. The company operates Optimum Media, an advanced advertising and data business, which provides audience-based, multiscreen advertising solutions to local, regional and national businesses and advertising clients. Altice USA also offers hyper-local news through its News 12 networks.

View source version on businesswire.com:  
<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20250116438839/en/>

Media:  
Stephen Stokes  
(917) 553-0667  
[stephen.stokes@optimum.com](mailto:stephen.stokes@optimum.com)

Source: Altice USA