

A paid-only hub would take free games away from 1,102,100 households in the Jazz market.

By Blake Kahler · Model v0.3 · data through Oct 6, 2026

A case study of the Utah Jazz and three ways to distribute their local games, built from Census household counts, FCC coverage records and reporting on the league's streaming hub.

What a hub would take away

Every local Jazz game airs free on KJZZ 14. The station and its 43 translators reach 23 of the 60 counties I count as the Jazz market, and 1,102,100 of the market's 1,725,100 households live in those counties. Under a league streaming hub with no over-the-air games, every one of them would have to pay to watch.

D FCC service contours for KJZZ-TV and 43 other stations D ACS 2020–2024 5-year, tables B11001 and B25007

How many would pay is an assumption, so I kept it out of the headline. My default is that 6% of the households with home broadband and no free games sign up. At that rate the hub reaches 96,300 households, against 1,136,500 today. Among households headed by someone under 35, the hub reaches 22,800 if 6% sign up, compared with 287,200 today.

S Jazz+, Padres and RSN-era anchors

To match today's reach, 70.8% of the market's households with home broadband would have to pay for the hub. By the team's own count, only 39% of Utah households could get Jazz games before the move to KJZZ. So in this market, I think the hub is mostly a question about free TV.

D Jazz statement via KJZZ, Jan 2024

What the Jazz do today

The Jazz put their local games on free TV and sell the same games as a stream, Jazz+, for \$19.99 a month or \$124.99 a year. The last count the team made public, during the stream's first season, was more than 20,000 subscriptions, or about 1.8% of Utah households.

D SEG+ support center, Aug 3, 2026 D Next TV, Mar 11, 2024

A home with an antenna inside KJZZ's signal gets 80 of the 82 games free. The 37 counties KJZZ does not reach have 623,000 households, and 573,300 of those have home broadband and can buy Jazz+. If 6% of them sign up, that is about 34,400 paying households. With the 1,102,100 who get the games free, today's reach comes to 1,136,500.

What has been reported about the hub

The league's streaming hub for local games is reported to start in 2027-28. Most of what is public about its money comes from Sports Business Journal, which I read through other outlets' summaries, not the original stories. According to MarketScale's summary, SBJ reported on Aug 17, 2026, that the league would seek about \$1.2B a year for about 29 teams and that an offer could land near \$850M for 25 or fewer, with the money paid out to teams by market value. Neither is a signed deal.

D SBJ via MarketScale, Aug 17, 2026

Nothing I have read settles the hub's price, the counties it would be sold in, how market value is calculated, or whether a team could keep games on a local station. I have not found a public statement from the Jazz either, and nothing here is a guess about what they will do.

I filled each of those gaps with an assumption and labeled it. In the model the hub charges what Jazz+ charges today, \$124.99 a season, and is sold in the same counties. It has no free games, except in the hybrid, which keeps some on KJZZ.

S Same as Jazz+ today

Where the free games are

The map draws one circle per county, sized by its households. Today the circles are solid in the 23 counties KJZZ reaches. Salt Lake County is the largest, with 426,200 households. Add Utah, Davis and Weber counties along the Wasatch Front and the total is 839,300, or 48.7% of the market. Under a paid-only hub all 23 circles go hollow, each with a dot for the households that would pay. In Salt Lake County that dot stands for about 24,000 households if 6% sign up.

D ACS 2020–2024 5-year, tables B11001 and B25007

Ada County, Idaho, where Boise is, looks the same on all three maps. It is the third-largest county in the market, with 202,500 households, and KJZZ's signal does not reach it, so a home there has to pay for Jazz games today and would under a hub. The same is true of every Idaho county except Bear Lake and Caribou and of all nine Wyoming counties. Of the 1,102,100 households that would lose free games, 1,097,400 are in Utah.

D FCC service contours for KJZZ-TV and 43 other stations D ACS 2020–2024 5-year, tables B11001 and B25007

The translators are why Washington County, where St. George is, counts as free today. It sits outside the main station's signal, and a translator carries KJZZ to its 69,800 households.

D FCC service contours for KJZZ-TV and 43 other stations D ACS 2020–2024 5-year, tables B11001 and B25007

The map also counts households with no way to watch, which means no antenna signal and no broadband subscription at home. There are 49,700 of them today and 120,700 under a paid-only hub, because a home inside KJZZ's signal without broadband goes from free games to none.

What the hub would pay the Jazz

I assumed the hub has 25 teams, so the pool they split is \$850M. The reporting points to 22, the former Main Street teams, NBC's regional network teams and the independents. I took the other three alphabetically from the teams with no reported position. SBJ's reporting says the money is split by market value and does not say how, so I ran both ends. If market value means market size, the Jazz's share among those 25 is about 1.2%, because the Salt Lake City metro area has 450,200 households, the second fewest of the 29 U.S. teams. If the pool is split equally, each team gets 4%. For the Jazz that works out to \$9.8M to \$34M a year.

☐ SBJ via MarketScale, Aug 17, 2026 ☐ ACS 2020–2024 5-year, metro areas ☐ Countyline method

Metro households also undercount the Jazz, whose games are sold across a market of 1,725,100 households. A formula that counted the whole territory would give a different share, and I have no basis for saying what.

☐ ACS 2020–2024 5-year, tables B11001 and B25007

Today's side of the comparison is blank. What the Jazz make now from local games is Jazz+ subscriptions plus the advertising they sell around the games on KJZZ. For the subscriptions I assumed 20,000 to 60,000 at \$124.99 a year, less 15% to 30% for platform costs, which comes to \$1.7M to \$6.4M. The advertising has no public figure. One outside estimate of the Jazz's first season on KJZZ exists, and I left it out because building today's number on someone else's estimate would make the whole comparison a guess. So the model does not say whether a hub would pay the Jazz more or less than they make now. Anyone who knows the advertising number can enter it, and today's side fills in.

☐ SEG+ support center, Aug 3, 2026 ☐ Based on the last public Jazz+ count ☐ Assumption

☐ No public figure. Blank until entered

What it takes to watch every game

A Salt Lake City home with an antenna can watch all 82 games today for \$46.98. It gets 80 free, and the other two are exclusive to ESPN and Prime Video, so it buys a month of each. Under a paid-only hub the same home pays \$171.97, because the hub pass replaces the antenna for 76 games. The model's friction score for that home, which adds up services, dollars, set-up steps and games that are not on its main service, goes from 47 to 93.

☐ Amazon Prime page, Oct 5, 2026 ☐ ESPN support center, Oct 5, 2026

A Boise home sees no change. It already pays \$171.97, with Jazz+ where the hub pass would be, and it scores 93 either way. That is my price assumption showing through, and a different hub price would move Boise's bill with it.

Keeping some games free

The hybrid puts every local game on the hub and keeps some on KJZZ as well. Nothing public says how that would work, so every part of it is my assumption. I set it at 41 of the 82 games, spread evenly through the season, and assumed the team gives up 15% of its hub money in exchange. The model lets that cut run from 0% to 30%.

☐ Assumption ☒ No public deal discloses one

On those 41 nights the same 1,102,100 households keep their free games, and reach matches today's 1,136,500. On the other nights it is the hub's 96,300. The model's season figure, 616,400, is the average of those nights, not a count of households. Counting the four NBC games an antenna already picks up, a Salt Lake City home would get 45 games free. It would still need the hub pass for the rest, so the hybrid gives fans free games back without making the full season any cheaper than the hub's \$171.97.

In the hybrid the hub money comes to \$8.3M to \$29M, so at the 15% I assumed, the team gives up \$1.5M to \$5.1M a year for 41 free nights. Neither figure counts the advertising sold around those games, which is blank for the same reason today's is. The real price of a simulcast is the number I would most like to see reported.

The answer changes with the team

I ran the same model for four more teams, and the Jazz result does not carry over to all of them. The Suns look like the Jazz at a larger scale. Arizona's Family carries their games free, and a paid-only hub would take free games away from 2,758,700 households. KARE 11 airs only 15 Timberwolves games free, so for them a hybrid with 41 on the station would mean more free nights, not fewer. The Celtics and the Knicks have no free local games, so a hub takes none away. The model shows their reach unchanged, but it counts today's outlets as streams at the same sign-up rate and leaves out homes that get the games with cable.

☐ Timberwolves release, Oct 2, 2026

The money runs the other way for a big market. An equal split is the top of the Jazz's range and the bottom of the Knicks', which runs from \$34M to \$76M if they are among the 25.

What this model does not know

The sign-up rate is the weakest number here, because there is no hub yet to measure. My 6% default is about what the Padres' stream was reported to have, 70,000 subscriptions in a county of 1,171,300 households. Jazz+ at 1.8% is a floor, since its games are also free with an antenna,

and the 39% who could get the old regional sports network is a ceiling, since that came bundled with cable. The slider runs from 2% to 40%.

D SBJ via Sports Media Watch D ACS 2020–2024 5-year, B11001 D Jazz statement via KJZZ, Jan 2024

The 60 counties are a working list. No published source names the counties where Jazz+ is sold, so I used all 29 Utah counties, 22 in southern Idaho and nine in Wyoming. I left out the parts of Montana, Oregon and Washington that SEG Media announced for Jazz+ on Oct 27, 2025.

I SEG Media release via Utah Business, Oct 27, 2025

Coverage is counted by county, and a county is covered when its center of population sits inside the FCC contour of KJZZ or one of its translators. That means a household could pick up the signal, not that it owns an antenna. Some rural translators may carry KJZZ without being credited to it, so real coverage in Utah is somewhere between my 97.6% and the whole state.

D FCC service contours for KJZZ-TV and 43 other stations

The figures for young households assume they sign up at the same rate as everyone else, because the fan survey that would test that has not run. The 80 free games include two on NBA TV that I assumed KJZZ also carries and two the league has not scheduled yet. The schedule and prices are from 2026-27, standing in for 2027-28. Every hub dollar figure traces back to a single relayed report.

S Fan survey, pending

How to check it

The small labels under a paragraph name the sources behind it, and the letter on each says whether the number is documented (D), inferred (I) or speculative (S). Every other number is a model output at the default assumptions, from Model v0.3 with data through Oct 6, 2026.

Open [the Jazz map](#) and move the assumptions. The sign-up rate, the number of teams, the hub's price, the games kept on KJZZ and the pay cut all have sliders, and the link saves whatever you change, so you can send someone the exact view you disagree with. [The one-page memo](#) has the same numbers in a form that is easier to forward. [The methods page](#) lists every assumption with its range, its source and what is weak about it.

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