

Subject: Big Changes Coming to TheTVDB

Our v4 API launch timeline, upcoming features, and new ways to access the API

Hello,

There are some big changes coming for TheTVDB that will affect both developers and our end users, most notably our brand new API (“v4”). With the launch of this new API fast approaching, we wanted to give an overview of all of these changes.

Two Models for API Access

There are now two ways to access TheTVDB API. Each company, platform, or project will have the ability to select their preferred method of access. This decision will ultimately be up to the developers of the projects themselves, so if you are an *end user*, you'll need to wait for the platform/software you use to announce any changes regarding your access.

Licensed

This is the way things work now. Companies and projects enter into a contract with us and are given an API key. License fees are based primarily on usage, company size, and how the data is used.

Example: Mobile apps & websites

User-Supported

This is new. Some companies can't or don't want to license API access directly, and have requested that we pass along any cost to end users. We have determined an approach that will keep this affordable and accessible for all, detailed below.

Example: Synology Video Station

A note for Plex users: TheTVDB is in ongoing active discussions with Plex. Please stay tuned for more information if you are an end user of Plex.

User Subscriptions

User subscriptions are global, and not tied to a specific API key. This means that if, as an end user, you use three projects that make use of TheTVDB API, your subscription will grant access for any of them that choose the user-supported model.

Important Notes

- A subscription is required **ONLY** if the project/software you're using has indicated so — although we'd love for you to support the site anyway.

- Subscribing will grant you a unique PIN, which will be entered into the software you use.
- User subscriptions will be \$11.99/year.
- Subscriptions will also include an ad-free site experience, a warm fuzzy feeling in your heart, and future incentives that we're planning.

While we believe this to be a reasonable subscription fee, we understand that some of you may prefer another approach. With that in mind, we'll also allow users to earn a free annual subscription by contributing quality data to the site, like missing IDs, translations, and artwork. We'll provide additional details concerning this model in the coming months.

[Learn more about user subscriptions](#)

v4 API Launch

Our relaunch of the site last October included a completely restructured database, and we've been adding features and functionality to it ever since. Our current and previous APIs are based on the old version of the database, and as a result are not only costly to operate, but don't expose most of the new features. The v4 API fixes that and gives access to everything.

Important Notes

- The v4 API will launch the week of 11/9.
- All previous API versions will be deprecated approximately 6 months later, at the end of March 2021. This will allow projects time to convert.
- Later in 2021, we'll be adding writable interfaces to the API, allowing projects to push data back into the site.
- Developers will need to create a new key for v4, which can be done from your TheTVDB dashboard under API Keys.
- *The v4 API is NOT backwards compatible.*

New Features and Functionality

While some of these features have been available on the site since last October, they haven't been available in our API until now.

Tagging & Taxonomy

Our new flexible tagging system includes a hierarchy of data that is more useful than free-form tagging, and currently includes information like time era, series structure, social issues, character professions, and more. Tags can be recommended by users on the site so this offering will quickly expand.

Expanded Search Functionality

Flexible Seasons

Supporting DVD and absolute orders as we've always done, but also supporting multiple official popular orders (for example, Money Heist being completely recut for Netflix).

Awards

We're now tracking popular awards for both series and movies, including both nominees and winners.

Lists and Franchises

Fully translatable and sorted, allowing access to official franchises like MCU and Arrowverse.

Expanded Company Support

Companies will be expanded from studio, production company, and network to also include other relevant info like special effects studio. Plus company relationships, rebrands, and the ability to store co-productions on series and movies.

Expanded Content Ratings

Content ratings, previously displayed as parental guidelines, are now expanded from the US rating systems to all official international systems.

Also...

Many more features have been added and will be available in the v4 API. We've launched a [new ticketing system](#) in an effort to deprecate our forums. This will streamline responses from our moderators, prevent requests from being overlooked or handled incorrectly, and give better insight into potential improvements on the site itself. The ticketing system also holds our comprehensive [Knowledgebase](#), which will be referenced throughout the site. Additionally, we have implemented [UserReport](#), a software where you can upvote and make improvement suggestions to the site.

Next Steps for You

Project Developers

Start taking a look at which data licensing model works for your project moving forward — directly licensed or user-supported. Once you've decided, you'll need to register for a new v4 API key (your old key will continue to work until the old APIs are turned off at the end of March 2021).

You can register for a new key on your dashboard by navigating to TheTVDB, selecting Dashboard from the dropdown in the upper right, and then clicking on API Keys.

The v4 API is accessible at <https://api4.thetvdb.com/v4/>, with documentation [here](#). You can also view a current list of known issues [here](#), and we'll be updating this list throughout the launch of the API.

End Users

Stay tuned to your respective projects to find out whether you'll need to sign up for an individual subscription or not. If you want to support our project regardless of what your programs do, or just want to remove ads on the site right away, we'd love for you to subscribe.