Understanding The Streaming Ecosystem

By: Shreya, Sahiti Reddy, Anh Tuyet To, Eli Young

Focus: Subscription Video on Demand (SVOD)

We focus specifically on subscription-based video-on-demand (SVOD) platforms, narrowing our analysis to major players such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney+, Hulu Plus, Peacock, HBO Max, Apple TV+, and YouTube Premium *(~19.7% of all data -Figure 1)*. These platforms represent the core of the paid streaming ecosystem and consistently rank among the [top SVOD services in US](#).
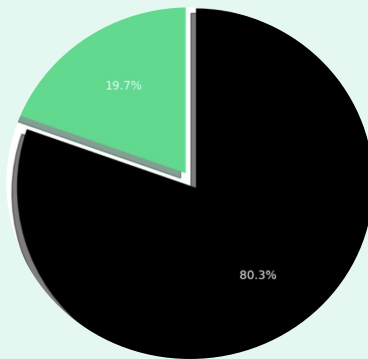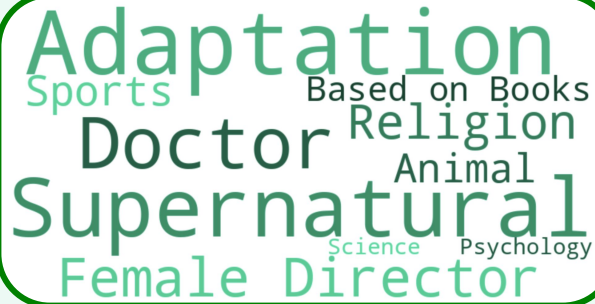

Figure 1: Contribution of SVOD
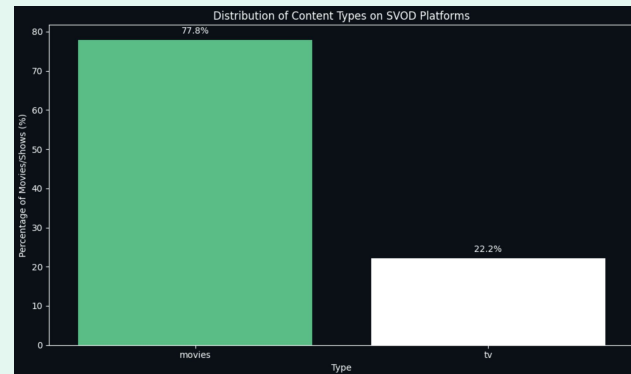
Figure 2: Distribution of of Content Type in SVOD

Methodology:

- To standardize content segmentation by target audience, we grouped individual age ratings into broader age categories as follows: '7+' → Kids |'13+' → Teens '|16+' → Older Teens |''18+' → Adults |'all' → All Ages '| Non-Rated' → Unrated. This mapping allowed for consistent age-group analysis across titles with varying rating formats.

- Defining a Gap: For each service, we calculated the percentage of its catalog targeted at each age group. If an age group represented less than 10% of a platform's total content offerings, we flagged this as a content gap for that age-group.

Content Types Favored by Streaming Platforms

Streaming platforms favor content that blends emotional resonance with broad audience appeal, often prioritizing themes like love, family, and friendship alongside popular genres such as drama, comedy, and documentary. These elements consistently drive viewer engagement and high IMDb ratings.

Figure 3: Top 10 most popular tags

Figure 4: Top 10 most popular Genres

Figure 5: Top 10 Most Frequent Keywords Linked to High IMDb Ratings (IMDb >7)
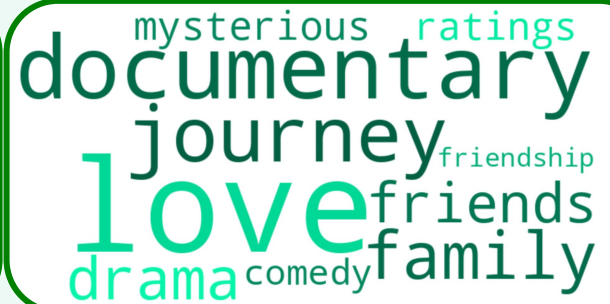
Streaming platforms tend to prioritize content that features strong narrative hooks and familiar tropes, such as *Adaptation*, *Supernatural*, and *Doctor*, which are among the most frequently tagged themes.

Streaming platforms tend to favor universally appealing genres such as *Drama*, *Comedy*, and *Action & Adventure*, which consistently drive engagement.
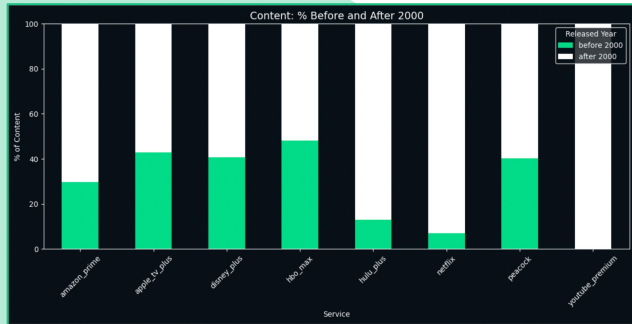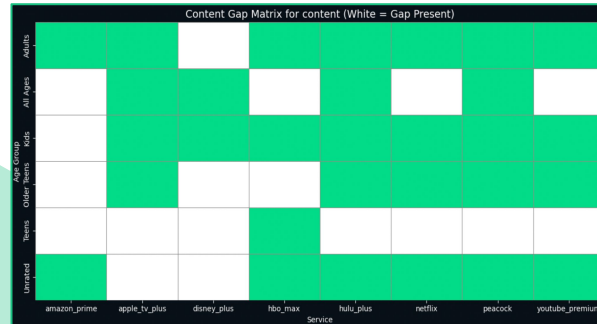
Streaming platforms tend to prioritize emotionally resonant and story-rich content, with keywords like *love*, *documentary*, and *journey* frequently appearing in high-rated titles.
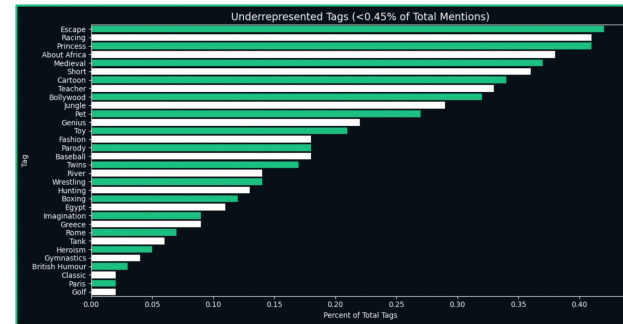
Streaming's Blind Spot: Who's Being Left Out?

Figure 6: Underserved Demand for Classics

Figure 7: Age-Based Gaps in SVOD Catalogs

Figure 8: Untapped Storytelling Potential

Over 80% of SVOD content is post-2000, with platforms like Netflix and Hulu offering minimal pre-2000 titles. This reveals a significant gap in classic film and TV offerings—potentially alienating older viewers and nostalgia-driven audiences

Gaps in content for teens, kids, and older adults are common across platforms—Netflix lacks offerings for all-ages, YouTube Premium misses older teens entirely, and Disney+ shows limited teen-focused content. Platforms risk missing key audience segments without tailored programming.

Underrepresented themes like Escape, Classic, and Racing offer whitespace to diversify content portfolios and re-engage overlooked audiences. Platforms should prioritize licensing or producing titles in these areas to boost differentiation and long-tail viewership

What Makes a TV Show Successful on Streaming Platforms?

Defining Success
- *IMDb ≥ 8.5* indicates strong audience and critic reception
- Analysis focuses on SVOD platforms and high-performing titles by genre and licensing

Top Performing Genres
- *Figure 9* shows *Crime, Drama*, and *Documentary* leading in success rate
- *HBO* dominates with curated, story-rich titles in these genres

Licensing Insight
- *Figure 10* reveals non-exclusive shows outperform exclusives across most genres.
- Broader platform access can drive discoverability and audience reach

Strategic Implication
- Studios should invest in high-quality content within proven genres
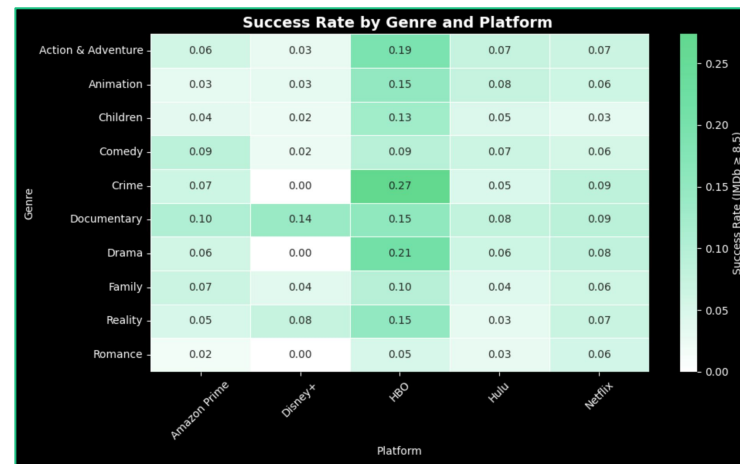- Flexible, non-exclusive licensing models can expand impact across platforms

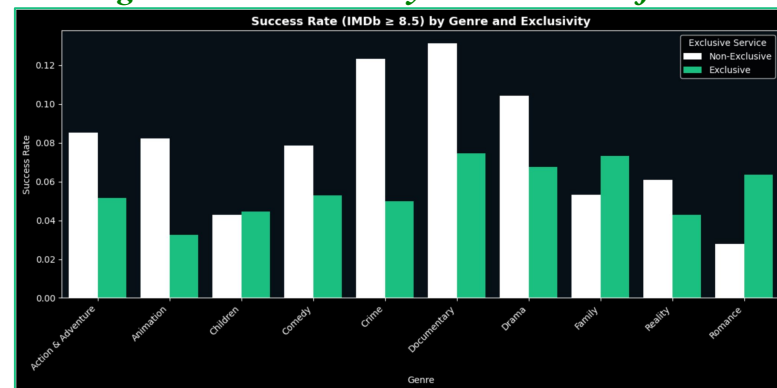*Figure 9: Success Rate by Genre and Platform*

Figure 10: Success Rate by Exclusivity and Genre

Which TV Shows Are Successful?
Longevity & Top Performers

Success Criteria

- *IMDb ≥ 8.5 and ≥ 6 seasons* used to define long-term, high-quality shows.
- Threshold based on average season count among top-rated titles.

Top Performers

- Titles like *Game of Thrones, The Sopranos, Friends* meet both quality and longevity benchmarks.
- These shows span *Drama, Crime,* and *Romance* across HBO, Netflix, and Prime.

Strategic Insight

- High-rated, long-running shows offer franchise potential and audience retention.
- Longevity boosts licensing value and content stickiness.

Recommendation

- Studios should develop *high-quality, long-form* series with broad appeal to optimize both critical acclaim and long-term monetization.

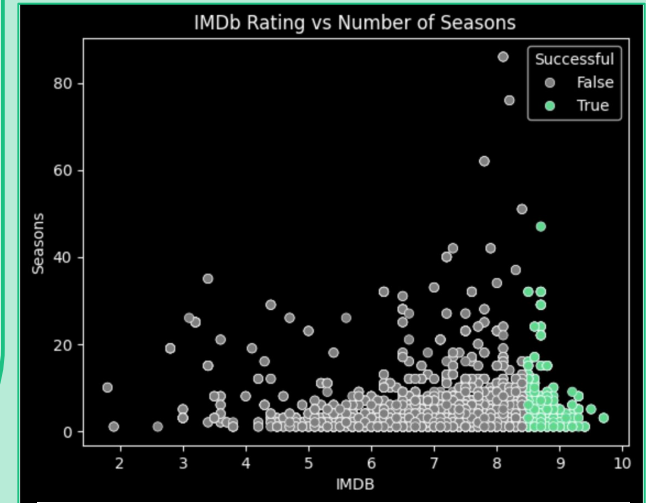|	Title	imdb	Season	Platform
1	Game of Thrones	9.3	8	HBO
2	Horsepower TV	9.2	9	Amazon Prime
3	The Sopranos	9.2	6	HBO
4	Friends	8.9	10	HBO
5	How the Universe Works	8.9	8	Amazon Prime
6	Last week tonight with John	8.9	7	HBO
7	VICE	8.9	7	HBO
8	Hunter x Hunter	8.9	6	Netflix

Figure 11: Top IMDb-Rated Long-Running Shows

Figure 12 : IMDb Rating vs. Number of Seasons