**OTT PLATFORM**

Over-the-top (OTT) platforms deliver media services explicitly to viewers via the [Internet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet). OTT provides easy access to films and television contents using cables or satellite providers. OTT content can be accessed directly via using a computer, television, and/or mobile phones. OTT platforms are increasingly popular these days. With OTT videographic technology, people can enjoy their favorite shows, movies, and sports available at their fingertips. It is a fast-growing, profitable, and popular method of content delivery among younger audiences, and has a wide range of competition. Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Hotstar are famous OTT platforms.

MODES OF ACCESS

Consumers can avail OTT content through [phones](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smartphones), [smart TVs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smart_TV), [set-top boxes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Set-top_box), [gaming consoles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaming_consoles), [tablets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tablet_computer), and desktop and laptop computers by connecting them to the Internet. 2019 statistics show that more than 45% of the total OTT content streaming audience view through [Android](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Android_(operating_system)) and [iOS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IOS), while 39% of the audience use the web to access OTT content.

DIFFERENT FORMS OF OTT PLATFORMS

There are various kinds of OTT platforms available to the masses, such as:

* OTT Television
* OTT Messaging
* OTT Voice Calling
* OTT television provides video streaming services. All of the content broadcasted via televisions can be viewed through OTT television platforms as well. OTT television platforms can be accessed via televisions, phones, laptops, or tablets with the help of the Internet. Examples for OTT television services include Netflix, Hulu, Prime Video, BBC, Apple TV, Disney+, Crunchyroll, HBO (Max, Go, Now), Pluto TV, and so on.
* OTT Messaging is an [instant messaging](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Instant_messaging) service or [online chat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_chat) service which is a better alternative to  [text messaging](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Text_messaging) services provided by [mobile network operator](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mobile_network_operator)s. Examples for OTT Messaging services are WhatsApp, WeChat, Snapchat, Skype, Kik Messenger, Facebook Messenger, iMessage, [Telegram](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telegram_(software)), and [Google Allo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Allo).
* OTT Voice Calling is used to provide online voice calling services. This replaces conventional voice calling services offered by mobile phone operators. Examples for the OTT Voice Calling are [Skype](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skype), [WeChat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WeChat), [Viber](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viber), and [WhatsApp](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WhatsApp).

ADVANTAGES OF OTT

* Easy to access through mobile phones, computers, television, tablet, etc.
* OTT is customized for the viewers based on geography, topical and behavioral targeting, and personal demographic information. These pieces of information help to provide a better and more personalized yet customisable service.
* In some OTT platforms, viewers can ignore advertisements by purchasing various kinds of premium plans that they offer. Thereby, viewers can enjoy break-free movies and shows.
* Marketing via OTT is the best alternative for business people. Advertising in OTT may cost less than advertising on television.
* One subscription can be streamed on multiple devices. Hence, it is cost effective.
* The ability to stream on multiple devices increases the amount of time individuals spend on OTT platforms watching their favorites. This also increases exposure to advertisements.
* OTT platforms provide creative video franchises to fascinate their customers, and to compete with the other OTT platforms.

DISADVANTAGES OF OTT

* In some OTT platforms, subscription cost is high
* Frequent advertisements in some free OTT platforms may annoy the viewers.
* Unfortunately, many OTT platforms lack the functionality that comes with browsers. Many streaming services have severe flaws/bugs that may not provide access to some video content.
* The creation of OTT applications has led to major conflicts between companies that offer similar services.
* The new trend of releasing new movies via OTT platforms are a severe threat to the future of movie theaters.

WHAT IS VOD ?

Video On Demand (VOD) is a broad video media distribution system.

Video On Demand (VOD) is classified into two types as

1. Cable supported VOD
2. Over The Top (OTT)

**TOP OTT PLATFORMS IN INDIA**

1. **Hotstar:**

Hotstar is the most popular Indian OTT platform. Star Network launched Hotstar in the month of February 2015. Within a short span, it expanded to become one of the largest OTT platforms in the country. Hotstar streams TV shows, movie premieres, live sports, and events. The live telecast of IPL cricket matches and other on-demand sports made Hotstar very popular. Hotstar also has partnerships with three top-tier global film studios: HBO, Fox, and Disney. Its premium service is available at a subscription rate of INR199 per month. However, the best movies, shows, and serials are available for free in Hotstar. As of March 2020, Hotstar has a minimum of 300 million visiting users around the world.

1. **Amazon Prime Video:**

Amazon Prime Video was launched on 7th September 2006 in the USA. Amazon Prime Video is a globally popular OTT platform, and launched its very first original show in 2013 - they are available exclusively to Prime members. The Director of Content at Amazon Prime Video India has said that India accounted for the highest number of Prime members during their debut year, and is the fastest growing among the 16 countries that the platform is present on. The low priced subscription fee gives the users a great value for money and also fascinates others to subscribe. Amazon has also committed $300 million for original Indian content, investing in big Bollywood movies. Amazon’s Prime Video subscription fee is INR 129 per month.

1. **ZEE5:**

Zee Entertainment Enterprises Limited (ZEEL) has launched an OTT platform called ZEE5. ZEE5 has video content on 12 languages, including English, Hindi, Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Marathi, Odia, Bhojpuri, Gujarati and Punjabi. Apart from Indian languages, ZEE5 also offers video content in other languages like Turkish, Korean and Spanish shows dubbed in Hindi. The video contents can be streamed in HD quality. The subscription fee for ZEE5 is as low as INR99 per month.

1. **Netflix:**

In 2007, Netflix began to stream movies and shows for its subscribers. However, the company ventured into India in 2015. It is a US-based video streaming OTT platform that is available in India. The subscription fee ranges from INR199 to INR799 per month. Most of the OTT service platforms have advertisements (which can get annoying when it pops in between an interesting movie or a show) , but Netflix is free of advertisements. Netflix is streamed in over 190 countries and the USA has the highest Netflix users. Netflix became the most successful OTT platform in the past seven years. There are 4.1 million Netflix subscribers and growing in India now.

1. **Sony LIV:**

Sony LIV is an OTT platform for provision of video streaming services, and was developed by Multi-Screen Media. Sony LIV was launched in 2013. The OTT streaming platform is available for free, but paid users are given access to premium content. The video contents streamed in Sony LIV can be viewed through mobile phones by downloading the Sony LIV app. It has a partnership with SPI International to showcase seven more international television channels. Premium content in Sony LIV is available at a subscription cost of INT99 per month. It offers viewers shows from Sony network channels like SONY, SAB and MAX. Sony LIV is not successful in South India as it does not stream shows available in any of the South Indian languages. However, it has an enormous network of viewers and subscribers in North India.

1. **Eros Now:**

Eros Now is an Indian OTT platform launched in 2015. It was founded by Eros International. Eros now provides video content streams in many Indian languages like Punjabi, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali, Marathi, Kannada, Malayalam, and Bhojpuri. Eros Now has more than 18 million paid subscribers. The most popular video content on Eros Now platform is Bollywood movies. Eros Now has endless entertainment of over 10,000 films, as well as premium television shows, music videos and audio tracks of HD quality. Eros Now is speculated to have a great future as an Indian OTT platform.

FUTURE OF OTT PLATFORMS

It is obvious that most of the people nowadays are dependent on OTT platforms for quality entertainment. The future of OTT is bright as it fascinates customers by providing satisfying video content at their fingertips. The competition among various OTT platforms pushes them to provide creative content continuously. This consequent creative video content attracts viewers towards OTT platforms.Given the robust infrastructure of the business model and the flexibility of the platform from the user’s perspective, OTT platforms are on the rise; they are the inevitable future of entertainment.