

Understanding of Regional OTT Platform: BS Value, Nakkalites

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Abstract

Over-the-top (OTT) platform is basically working with the use of internet services with all communication electronic gadgets such as smart phones, tablets, smart TV, and desktop. The Digital online streaming Platform OTT (Over-the-top) providing television and film content in different languages over the internet extensively which is available across the globe today at the request.

OTT platform such as Netflix, Amazon prime video, Disney plus, and HBO are famous in foreign countries nearly two decade ago, but in India it got popularise during the COVID-19 pandemic. The total lockdown of cinema theatres/halls during the covid pandemic paved way to develop the indigenous OTT platforms such as Sun nxt, hoichoi, aha, koode, stage, cityshor, chaupal, planet marathi, olly plus Manorama max, VOOT, SonyLIV, and Disney+ Hotstar, etc., which are acquiring films and video contents in different Indian languages including four southern languages in order to attract customers from tier-two and tier-three areas. Due to the non-accessibility of theatres and lack of entertainment, people totally turn towards the video contents of OTT platforms during COVID period. Theatrical pictures attracted crowds in almost all cities, towns and villages became binge users of OTT.

Basically the different vernacular language OTT content is to suit the requirements of the individual consumer. According to the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) recent analysis, in 2020 the regional languages OTT (over-the-top) video content is 27% will be expected to double in 2024. All OTT platforms have realised that in order to remain relevant across India, they must both purchase and generate unique content for regional audiences. Now most platforms have been looking to grow their audience by purchasing and developing content in several regional languages.

As a result, OTT platforms now are expanded to small YouTube producers or content creators to form their video content libraries in order to grow their subscriber base. *Nakkalites* is one of the leading Indian Tamil YouTube media channel that operates in the space along with *Black Sheep* (BS Value) and formed first independent OTT Platform by end of 2020

exclusively for Tamil language, which provides Tamil classic films, web series and has about one million subscribers.

The preferences of OTT contents are determined by the preferences of an individual in which the OTT platforms are unique. Binge-watching is a relatively a new behaviour pattern in recent time. The study focuses on the understanding of content strategy and challenges of the content creators. The qualitative study is used to collect data through an in-depth interview method.

Keywords: Regional platforms, OTT video application, content strategy, global

Introduction

India's pattern of digital consumption has undergone a significant shift over time. Pandemic altered consumer behaviour patterns more quickly than any other media businesses could have anticipated. The new way of watching videos was starting to gain popularity among audience. The apex of the in-home entertainment market occurred during the lockdown. Global firms like Netflix and Amazon Prime are attempting to get into the huge emerging market. Several Bollywood and regional films that were slated for theatrical premieres were instead released on OTT channels. More new shows have been produced throughout this time to appeal to more viewers. (Bhattacharya, 2020).

OTT video service acceptance is largely influenced by variables including convenience, mobility, content, and subscription models. The most important of these factors is content. (Dasgupta & Grover, 2019). The audience is initially drawn to content because of its narrative style and storytelling. Since these streaming services offer diverse narrative styles and International and regional content, people have changed their consumption patterns. With the use of subtitles, OTT platforms transmit foreign content across multiple locations, enabling the viewer to become familiar with diverse cultures and aesthetics. The globalised contents of this new platform have the potential to influence and pave the way for the spread of regional areas. It is likely that over time, the new media could contribute to cultural uniformity and could lessen to some extent multicultural identity.

The paradigm challenges the notion of cultural domination by offering new geo-linguistic flow patterns for audio-visual information around the world (Lievrouw & Livingstone, 2007). Paradoxical behaviour is constantly present in the new media spectrum. Although technology causes people to become isolated from the outside world, it also stimulates societal arguments on social media. Similar to how the OTT platform demanded the simultaneous development and spread of regional and multinational content.

"[Localization] is] the linguistic and cultural adaptation of digital material to the requirements and locality of a foreign market, and the supply of services and technologies for the management of multilingualism throughout the digital global information flow," says Schaler (Schaler & Anastasiou, 2010). It's not a novel commercial approach to make a product region-specific. Global corporations customise products as needed for different regions. Now that local audiences may easily access global content through online channels,

there is a greater need for personalised, localised content. Subtitling and video dubbing are not only a small part localization of content. Localization, internationalisation, and globalisation are terms used by Anastasiou and Schaler in their paper Translating Vital Information. Locale is a term used to describe the combination of language and culture used in localised digital content.

Methodology

In-depth interviews both In-person and Telephonic modes have been carried out in order to investigate and understand the regional and localization strategy of content creators *Nakkalites* and *BS Value*. In order to gather the necessary information for the study, a variety of texts -- research journals, online articles, news reports, interviews and annual reports were reviewed. Qualitative method of approach is employed here.

Brief Note on Samples

BS Value: BS Value is the first independent Tamil OTT platform in India, Where you can enjoy unlimited original Tamil web series, Original Tamil Movies, Short films, etc. Founded in the year 2020 BS Value tends to be the pioneer for the Tamil regional OTTs.

Nakkalites: Nakkalites is one the leading South Indian YouTube media channel founded in the year 2017, which has recently launched its OTT platform namely Nakkalites Life in collaboration with BS Value. The main theme of their contents are comedy, political and social satire based sitcom series and individual videos.

Binge-Watching - An OTT Phenomenon

A relatively recent behavioural trend known as binge-watching which is when two to six episodes of a TV show are watched all at once. The more episodes someone watched, the more troublesome their behaviour became. Scientists counted the number of binge-watching sessions people participated in each day, week, and month to determine frequency. In addition, 72% of those asked said they regularly binge-watch TV shows. According to numerous research, younger adults (18–39) are more likely than older adults to binge watch television.

According to Rubenking and Bracken, binge-watching has taken root among the group of college students. The majority of the research employs Uses and Gratification Theory, which describes how people utilize media like social media, television, and the internet to satisfy their needs. People binge watch for a variety of reasons. The simplest justification speaks of hedonistic requirements for amusement, involvement, and relaxation as well as immediate fulfilment. Additionally, some people have a cognitive incentive for self-improvement and are motivated to learn things by watching TV shows.

The desire to socialise is yet another reason for binge-watching. People binge watch to form new friendships, fit in with the group or fandom, and experience peer acceptance. The main reasons for wanting to spend more time binge-watching, according to Panda and Pandey, are social engagement, escape, the influence of advertising, and accessibility. Surprisingly, the researchers found that individuals are more likely to engage in binge-

watching for longer periods of time and develop a greater dependence on it, if they feel anxious or uncomfortable. High impulsivity, which is the leading factor that raises the risk of behavioural addiction, is linked to unintentional binge-watching, as Riddle has emphasised. According to the study done by Castro, Rigby, Cabral, and Nisi, people report feeling more depressed after binge-watching, which could be a result of them having just engaged in a really pleasurable and engaging activity and then having to return to reality.

Challenges of Content Creators Regional OTTs

The data collected from the in-depth interviews and a survey of literature envisions the trajectory of challenges faced by the content creators of Regional OTTs. On a close survey of the two OTT platforms selected as samples, we end up in two major spheres of challenges, namely, Economic Challenges and Content Challenges.

Economic Challenges

Economic Challenges is quite a common challenge faced by almost all the regional OTTs. Through the In-depth interviews conducted with the Founder and creative head of the sample OTTs, the common economic challenges faced by the regional OTT could be depicted.

The foremost Economic Challenge faced by the regional OTT is the Payoff issue. The surveys let us know that the payment of revenue for the regional OTTs is being delayed. They say that the mainstream OTTs can survive delayed Payoffs. As they are well established and are economically strong, they could manage crisis during the delay in their payoffs. OTTs like Amazon and Netflix are financially equipped enough to produce original contents worth of 200 million US dollars. Whereas the Regional OTTs, being small-scale start-ups find themselves in a critical position to survive these payoff delays. They say that they consider this crisis as a challenge to survive. During the payoff crisis, they have to sort out timely alternative sources of revenue.

Content Challenges

The challenges faced by the regional OTTs in content making is quite common and similar to that of other content creators. The regional OTT Content creators should keep their Timeline so engaged that they produce and sell contents on a very regular interval. Keeping the audience engaged is the main challenge faced by these regional OTTs.

The next challenge faced by them is competition. The competitors of these OTTs are a bit unusual. Apart from professional OTT creators, they face even the amateur content creators in a critical way. Amateur content creators without any professional approach easily influence and invade the audience, which triggers these professional OTT content makers to concentrate more on their content.

The next one is the content creator shortage. There is a demand for innovative content creators now. The creative heads of the regional OTTs confess that there is a huge pool of opportunities awaiting for young and aspiring content creators. Anyone with an innovative content that could invade a mass audience, has a bright opportunity in the arena.

Heterogeneity of OTT

Similar to the main stream platforms the regional OTTs also have heterogeneity in their content varieties. The content creation team strive hard to attain this large range of varied content. The teams pursue an in-depth research to spot out the suitable genres for the audience time and again.

The content heads of the regional OTTs say that Nostalgia themed contents and comedy dramas are the hot selling cakes now and they are concentrating on both.

Discussion and Debate

OTT platforms have an important place in the contemporary period. It is also considered a well existing democratic empowerment for the OTT users. By the influence of content creators, many individual channels and groups are developing through the OTT platforms, which also stand and create new revenue in the industrialisation. OTT platform is one of an integrated parts of democracy and it stimulates industrialisation for the future generation.

The mainstream media creates a strong revolution in OTT platforms. The developed OTT platforms like Amazon, Netflix and other online streaming media encouraging the high budget movies commercial, and hero worshipping movies to occupy their OTT platforms. The traditional way of theatre movies are celebrating the festive times and also give importance to the hero worshipping movies. In future the OTT also will follow in creating the chances for the individuals content creators streaming their ideas under the economic bases.

The following threats are changing the online streaming. The Regional OTT platforms help the individual content creators by encouraging their new contents. Meanwhile, the need of local OTT platforms is giving contents uplifting particular ethnic groups and their culture to our society. The regional plat formers also understand the nature of particular people's feelings and emotion based on their environmental factors. The media can find new young talents through the local OTT platforms. The idea of local streaming media encourages the media openings in easy ways, and it is very much comfortable for the local content creators. This creates a big passion of individual person and make revolution in the digital world.

For instance, the Malayalam movie **The Great Indian Kitchen** was first rejected by the mainstream media houses for its controversial content regarding the Sabarimala Tradition. Later NeeStream regional OTT came forward to stream the movie on their OTT, which later attracted other OTTs like Amazon and Netflix towards it. Now the Regional OTTs have become an ice breaker for the content creators.

Conclusion

OTT undoubtedly symbolizes the future of media, whether you're following up and finding new platforms or binge-watching the latest Netflix Original series. OTT technology has enormous potential to gain leverage, especially in entertainment sectors, added to worldwide adoption. Cinema directly influences the society and the community where it becomes the pivot of entertainment after the pandemic days. During the period of COVID-19

drastically surges the ratio of movies consumption audience across the world and it also subjects more youngsters to binge-watch for more hours of time that starts the way to the rise of OTT Platforms. In today's scenario, OTT plays a prominent role in world cinema. Experts also says it is the future of cinema industry. Certainly, theatre consumption audience is slightly getting low in number, rather they prefer the OTT platforms in which it is more convenience and easily portable in all content. OTT is a relatively new phenomenon, there is a huge amount of growth potential. Lots of companies are entering the OTT space, leading to a wide variety of options for consumers, and increasing quantities of ad inventory for marketers. This new trendsetter of OTT platform streaming is particularly popular among teenagers due to the availability of new web series, tv shows, and play stations.

OTT gives huge opportunity to newcomers who aspire to shine in film industry. Creating regional OTT platforms can improve better Socio-culture in the society and it also attract the native audiences and it also provides a space to young talents to showcase their expertise and create nepotism free in film industry. OTT has also opened up the biggest possibility for showcasing ad-free content, with subscription services powering digital campaigns, targeted video advertising & inclusive of direct sponsorships.

Finally, when it comes to surviving in this fast tide of rapid moderation, digital streaming infrastructure has served as a boon to construct a native platform which can produce huge benefit to native film-makers and content creators. Certainly, it saves us from Media centralisation.

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