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# Marketing strategies of OTT platform: An analysis of Indian OTT marketing

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### Abstract

In India after agriculture, the entertainment industry stands as a prominent source of income for the major population. It may be any entertainment industry like drama, film, TV, radio, social media etc. Due to drastic advancement in technology and telecommunication, internet-based entertainment industries started getting more attention from the users. As a result, entertainment industry people started looking towards OTT platforms to satisfy the needs of entertainment users. Eventually COVID-19 Pandemic and key features of OTT such as multi user, multi-screen low subscription plans helped to poise its popularity. Currently half of the world is using the internet and according to DATAREPORTAL, as of April 2022, 47% of the Indian total population uses the internet, which shows the brighter future for online content.

Publicity plays a significant role in any kind of product's success. OTT also needs publicity to reach its desired goal in order to gain its revenue. In this background, the present study aims to analyze the strategies followed by the various OTT platforms, to know whether those strategies have reached the public and its impacts. To examine the above objectives, the researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Under the qualitative method observation method is used. Under quantitative method surveys with structured questionnaires were distributed among active TV and social media users in and around Bangalore urban. OTT platforms would benefit from this study's understanding of the effectiveness and scope of their efforts.

**Keywords:** OTT, marketing, strategies, revenue, promotion

### Introduction

Every business must reconsider their digital marketing tactics in light of shifting consumer behaviour. A dramatic change in human interaction has resulted from the emergence of online social networks. Virtual social connections made possible by the rapid growth of Web-based platforms has significantly changed the nature of human endeavours, settings, and communication. In the contemporary era, technology and the telecommunications sector has changed the landscape of the entertainment industry in the twenty-first century. Because of these advancements, the concept of television has gradually evolved into smart TV, and applications are being updated for its use. Many internet-based entertainment platforms, such as YouTube and other OTT platforms, have taken advantage of these opportunities and have entered the television market to entertain viewers. According to a FICCI-EY analysis, television is predicted to remain the largest segment in the M&E sector, growing at a 7% CAGR to Rs. 847 billion (US\$ 12.01 billion) by 2023. This implies that the smart TV concept has increased in popularity, and as a result, many OTT platforms are developing applications similar to smart TV or setup-boxes, as well as streaming boxes such as Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, and others.

The OTT platforms saw a rise in popularity as a result of the pandemic. OTT was the only entertainment platform available when the entertainment businesses closed down and people were confined to their homes as a result of COVID-19. Many upcoming movies were able to reach their audience through OTT platforms. Subscriptions to the OTT platforms increase as a result of this trend. In addition to movies, OTT content such as children's shows, web

series, reality shows, and rebroadcasts of well-known shows also assisted in drawing in more viewers. Additionally, the ability of OTT platforms to work with different devices allowed them to reach a wider audience.

The most recent Bollywood films are regularly available on Amazon Prime Video, along with some of their own productions; Alt Balaji is a proponent of providing global material; ErosNow provides Bollywood-only releases in addition to music; YouTube targets certain material in the form of web series by using its enormous database; Netflix offers licensed content in addition to its high-budget original films and television series; Along with sports, Hotstar streams licensed US TV series alongside their Indian premieres on the same day. It's also noteworthy to note that, while Amazon Prime Video offers a huge selection of US movies and TV series with regional subtitles and trivia, Netflix has been adding to its regional library quickly and acquiring independent regional films to target a very specific demographic.

In India, one of the most popular channels for consuming content is video streaming. Even the smaller OTT sites are influencing the industry significantly and obtaining funding from foreign investors. The penetration of cable TV in India would be harmed by the development of OTT. As a result, traditional TV stations need to get ready for OTT platforms to cause a paradigm shift. More importantly, they ought to strive for producing content of a calibre that can rival that of the OTT offerings (Shin & Lee, n.d).

One benefit of over-the-top (OTT) platforms is the variety of material that is offered in local languages. Numerous platforms provide movies and TV series with exclusive content that isn't available anywhere else. OTT providers are now more competitive than ever, with each platform vying for users' attention by providing exclusive services and content. Additionally, OTT channels have upended the conventional TV advertising paradigm. Many over-the-top (OTT) services make money through subscription fees as opposed to relying solely on advertising income to support their operations. Because of this, marketers have been compelled to change and come up with new strategies for connecting with customers, such product placement or tailored advertising.

OTT allows for disintermediation by eschewing platforms that frequently act as controllers or distributors, such as cable, broadcast, satellite television, and others. When it came to traditional media, there was only one way to get in front of viewers: via multiple system operators (MSOs), television networks, movie distributors, or theatre operators. With over-the-top (OTT) media, content producers can communicate directly with their viewers via a website or mobile application. Watching movies and other entertainment whenever and wherever it's most convenient is made possible by this (José & Fernanda, 2014) [4].

The internet streaming that was once considered a luxury is becoming more and more popular among Indians as opposed to cable TV. The video on demand (VoD) industry is still in its infancy, according to the data, but the fact that almost 40 VoD companies have entered the market in just three years is testament to the huge potential of this sector. According to New18.com (2019), four out of every five smartphone owners in India watch content via at least one over-the-top (OTT) app. The most downloaded app category is now over-the-top (OTT) apps, surpassing messaging apps like WhatsApp, social networking apps like Facebook, and

e-commerce apps like Amazon and Flipkart. With a 46% market share, the streaming sector is expected to be the main driver of the total growth of the Indian entertainment and media business from 2017 to 2022.

A survey released by IMAI and Kantra Research projects that, by 2025, there will be 900 million internet users in India, up from 622 million in 2020., indicating a more promising future for over-the-top (OTT) services.

### Literature Review

The author of the article "Top 5 OTT Strategies To Improve Your Video Business" identifies content, audience, distribution, marketing, and monetization as the essential OTT platform success methods. OTT platforms could employ revenue models such as subscription video on demand, transactional video on demand, advertising video on demand, and hybrid models in addition to social media promos and advertisements to reach a wider audience with a variety of preferences (Amirtham, 2024) [1].

In the research article "Impact of Marketing Mix on Consumers Satisfaction-A Study of Consumers of OTT Platforms in India," the author concluded that in the event of a pandemic, over-the-top (OTT) entertainment is the best option. While the OTT platforms' varied age audiences are satisfied with the quality of the content they offer, regional channels and content producers ought to enhance the concepts and images they use (Parihar & Kamal, n.d).

Real-time broadcasting is prioritised by viewers over terrestrial television service providers, according to the author of the research paper "Strategic management of over-the-top services: Focusing on Korean consumer adoption behaviour." Additionally, the author found that Internet service providers can provide a wider range of content. Over-the-top (OTT) providers can engage with users and meet their demands by leveraging the video-on-demand idea (Jungwoo *et al.*, 2016) [5].

According to reports, television is expected to hold 40% of the Indian media business by 2024. This would be followed by digital advertising at 13%, print media at 13%, cinema at 9%, and the OTT and gaming sectors at 8%. It has been demonstrated that OTT platforms have grown significantly inorganically by capturing market share from other platforms (Rai Patnaik and others, 2021) [9]. The predominant method of revenue generation on over-the-top (OTT) platforms is advertising, which is widely regarded as a successful model based on its substantial subscriber base and revenue (Jirakasem & Mitomo, 2019) [3].

The five independent variables of digital media marketing are found to have a favourable influence on customers' purchasing decisions, according to a research article titled "Relationship between Digital Marketing, Customer Engagement, and Purchase Intention via OTT Platforms." Of the five DMM components, consumer brand ties and personal privacy are the most crucial factors in OTT purchasing decisions made by consumers (Sufyan *et al.*, 2022) [11].

In today's marketing environment, gaining customers and adjusting corporate goals to align with customer demands and wants require more than just advertising. Thanks to developments in data analytics, businesses can now collect user data and build strategies to tailor experiences to specific users or groups of users. Furthermore, OTT players will be able to analyse data and provide insights into customer viewing patterns in the future thanks to

developments in artificial intelligence and machine learning. Other considerations including social trends and ease of use impact the decision to select internet streaming over cable TV (Lee *et al.*, n.d).

### Statement of the problem

The entertainment industry's future and new tools are OTT platforms. The bulk of viewers are reliant on this platform, and it is expanding quickly. The competition has already commenced. Numerous domestic and global over-the-top (OTT) platforms serve the needs of users. There are numerous solutions available to consumers. The consumer requires the product's details in order to make an informed decision. Consequently, the researcher tried to get a response to the following query: "What are the different OTT platforms' marketing tactics to reach consumers? What impact does the audience's perception have?"

### Scope of the study

OTT platforms have emerged as a potent entertainment medium within the COVID-19 pandemic and have also functioned as a conduit between moviegoers and filmmakers. Many films in India made money when they were launched on over-the-top (OTT) platforms. The current study will help the over-the-top (OTT) industry assess the effectiveness of its promotional efforts and how they draw viewers to its platforms.

### Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- To analyse the marketing strategies followed by various OTT platforms
- To know whether the perception of viewers on marketing strategies
- To find its impact on viewers.

### Methodology

Both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were used in this study. The observation method is employed under the qualitative method. Data was gathered via a structured questionnaire in a survey as part of the quantitative technique. The researcher observed marketing strategies of OTT platforms, including TV and digital media advertisements, DTH and mobile recharge packs, new device purchase centres like TV and DTH for a month, and studied the promotional methods and messages, with the goal of analysing the marketing strategies employed by various OTT platforms. In order to gather data for the second and third objectives, the researchers gave questionnaires to eighty Bengaluru Urban TV and digital media users.

### Data Analysis

Certainly, Over-the-top (OTT) platforms are becoming popular for streaming video content, and their marketing methods are critical to attracting and retaining users. During his observations, the researcher discovered certain efficient methods used by OTT platforms. When examining TV and digital media commercials, DTH and mobile recharge packs, and new device purchase centres such as TV and DTH, the study discovered the following promotional actions carried out by OTT platforms. They are:

- **Promotional strategies through online platforms:** OTT service providers effectively used digital media

for their promotional activities. Facebook, YouTube and Instagram are the most popular platforms for any industry to promote their ideas and products. OTT has made use of this trend.

- **Promotional activities using Facebook Page:** All the OTT platforms have their social media pages to communicate with their audience. They are sending not only updates to attract viewers but also, they do collages of characters of particular programs, creating troll kinds of posters and keep posting on social media. Apart from having social media pages they usually do some active promotional strategies. For example, at the end of the teaser of a program, they add the OTT platform's logo and request the audience to download the app to watch the full video or missing episodes.
- **Advertisement on viewers content consumption:** Sending notifications or popup advertisements to viewers based on their search/content consumption on social media pages and while watching videos on YouTube. OTT sends notifications about their search content; through this they are marketing their content to the audience.
- **Email Notifications:** Sending Emails, to bring back their past users and also send new content messages to existing customers.
- **User-friendly website and mobile applications:** Most of the OTT platforms have designed their websites and mobile applications easily driven to users' choice and help them to explore more content to their taste. Personalising the content for existing customers is the key aspect of holding their subscribers.

**OTT Promotional Activities on Smart TV:** Smart TVs are the major development in television sets, which made the OTT way easy to enter into households.

- a) Cover advertisement on the home page of Smart TV
- b) Displaying the logo of the OTT platform on film, film teasers and trailers in association with OTT as media partners.
- c) Anchors of television reality shows, inform their audience about the availability of the show and unseen footage on specific OTT Platforms.

- **Advertisements for a general audience:** Playing advertisements on a particular program on a particular television channel. For example, JioCinema gives advertisements about the Big Boss reality show on the Colours Kannada channel, because Viacom 18 Pvt. Ltd. is the proprietor of both Colors Kannada and JioCinema. In the same way, Hotstar advertises on Star Suvarna, and Sundirect promotes on the Udaya TV channel. Advertisements are also given about the new web series, newly released films and OTT offers.

- **Advertisement on key features of OTT platforms on their websites:** They are promoting the key features of OTT channels on their respective websites. Multi-user or multi-screen is the more attractive offer for the users to gain subscriptions and promote their OTT platform. One can subscribe to the OTT and share it with friends or family members. Another important feature is multi-platform compatibility; users can watch anywhere using available devices whether it is mobile, Tablet, laptop or TV. To attract domestic viewers, OTT platforms encourage regional language content and also add

regional cinemas into their libraries. The rental video concept is also one of the options to pull the viewers slowly or make them addicted to the OTT.

- **Value-added service along with recharge plans of DTH and Mobile:** when customers recharge their DTH or mobile through recharge centres or online, they will come across a few promotional advertisements of related OTT platforms. While purchasing new TVs or set-top boxes, service providers also give one or three months of free subscriptions for the selected OTT platforms.
- **Categorising the Content:** OTT platforms offer several categories so that users can quickly locate the content they want. They also offer time-saving segments of reality show content.

Content is the key to success for any OTT platform, as the researcher observed promotional activities of OTT platforms, content was the primary element they adopt in all the promotional activities. Another important one is offers and economical plans for new users. Later they make users addicted to OTT and approach them to get premier memberships.

### Survey Data interpretation

To know the audience perception and promotional activity's impact survey was conducted. Structured questionnaires were distributed among respondents who are active Internet users. The researcher received 80 responses and among them, 60% were male respondents and 40% were female respondents.

Among respondents, 45% were from between 18 - 27 age group, 32.5% of the respondents were of the 28 - 37 age group and only 22.5% were from the 38 - 47 age group. This shows that youth are prominent among respondents. All respondents are active users of the internet and all of them have observed the OTT promotional advertisements.

For the question on which platform they observe the OTT promotional advertisements, 65% of them said they observed promotional advertisements on social media. 50% of them said they observed the OTT logo while watching a film/promo/trailer, 47.5% observed it on television, 32.5% of them observed it on a smart TV home screen or in the info bar, 25%, 10% and 12.5% said they observed promotional advertisement respectively on radio, print and SMS/email notifications. Many of them observed OTT promotional advertisements on multiple platforms and among that social media is mostly used by OTT platforms.

When it asked what kinds of promotional advertisements respondents observed, 90% of respondents watched the promotion of a new film released on OTT, 77.5% of respondents said web series promotional advertisements and 52.5% of respondents replied subscription-related advertisements. 45%, 42.5% and 27.5% reacted when they watched reality shows, key features and other kinds of promotional advertisements respectively. It proves that content is the king and most of the OTTs used new films released on their platforms to promote their platform.

72.5% of respondents said they knew about OTT before the promotional advertisements. 20% said maybe and only 8.5% said no. This result shows that the majority of the respondents knew about OTT before the promotional advertisements.

The question was asked whether they had downloaded or

visited the OTT platform after watching those advertisements, and 47.5% of respondents said yes. 32.5% said not sure and 20% said no. This clearly shows that most of them are impressed by promotional advertisements and have downloaded or visited OTT platforms.

For the question of whether they subscribed to OTT platforms after watching the promotional ads, 72.5% of them replied they had subscribed to OTT platforms after being inspired by the promotional advertisements. 28.5% said they did not subscribe. Among those who have subscribed for various reasons. 100% of them said to watch movies, 55.5% replied to watch web series, 33.5% answered to watch live TV channels and old programs/films, and 22.5% said to watch reality shows. Watching movies is the majority of people's reason to subscribe to the OTT platform.

The question was asked to know the impact of these advertisements, 45.5% said advertisements have a considerable impact on them, 27.5% said maybe and 28% said not enough. The majority of the respondents said promotional advertisements of OTT have some kind of impact on them.

For the question of which OTT platform they have subscribed to, 63% said Amazon Prime videos, 22% answered Disney Hotstar, 20.5% were in favour of Sony Liv, 20% subscribed to Zee5 and Netflix. 5% of them preferred other OTT platforms. Therefore, it is found that among OTT platforms Amazon Prime Video is the popular platform and many of them subscribed to multiple OTT platforms. The majority of the respondents (42%) have subscribed to an annual plan. 22% subscribed to the monthly plan, and 18% subscribed to the mobile edition. 10% and 8% said they subscribed to OTT during DTH and mobile recharge respectively.

### Conclusion

To sum up, the examination of Indian OTT marketing strategies highlights the critical function that digital marketing strategies play in improving customer interaction and encouraging good purchase intentions for OTT platforms. People's habits of consuming entertainment have changed as a result of OTT services' ubiquitous accessibility, which allows users to access content "anywhere, anytime." People are increasingly choosing OTT platforms over traditional media outlets. The report also highlights how widely digital media is used for promotional purposes on all OTT platforms, with most respondents noticing commercials and promotional videos right away. The study also emphasises how well-liked Amazon Prime Video is among consumers and how OTT advertisements tend to favour movie content. Partnership methods are a noteworthy way to attract viewers; OTT platforms collaborate with TV shows, film studios, web series, DTH providers, and telecommunications service providers to market their content. The dynamic nature of Indian OTT marketing is highlighted by this study, as are the strategic needs for ongoing innovation and adaptation in a cutthroat digital market.

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