

The Evolution of Film Technology in the Streaming Media Era: A Comparative Analysis of Traditional Movies and Internet TV Series

Jingqi Shao^{1,a,*}

¹*College of Communications, Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts, 02215, United States
a. jingqishao89@gmail.com*

**corresponding author*

Abstract: With the rise of streaming platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, and others, there has been a profound transformation in the landscape of visual storytelling. The emergence of streaming media has ushered in a transformative era for the film and television industry. This essay conducts a comparative analysis of traditional cinema and internet television series, unveiling the evolution of film technology and its impact in the era of streaming media. This study examines the distinctions between the traditional film production process and the innovative approaches adopted by Internet TV series. Traditional film production is characterized by its reliance on theatrical releases and linear narrative. It also investigates the role of advanced digital tools and technologies, as well as the impact of streaming algorithms on content recommendations and audience engagement. Furthermore, this essay is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the ever-evolving landscape of film technology in the era of streaming media. It underscores the creative autonomy and adaptability offered by internet television series, as well as the challenges and opportunities they encounter.

Keywords: Movies, TV series, Netflix, Hulu, film and television

1. Introduction

In the history of film and television production, the emergence of streaming platforms marked a watershed moment that dramatically changed storytelling as well as the way people consume entertainment. Platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Hulu have not only challenged the traditional moviegoing experience but have redefined it, bringing about a paradigm shift from the silver screen to digital streaming[1]. This paper will provide a comparative analysis of traditional movies and online TV series, charting the trajectory of this change and assessing the resulting nuances. The shift from traditional cinema to digital streaming represents a huge shift in how we consume and understand visual narratives. It's not just about changing reels for the convenience of instant access; this change touches the heart of the filmmaking process, from the initial spark of an idea to how it reaches our screens[2]. Gone are the days when movies were limited to opening weekends to draw audiences in brick-and-mortar theaters. Old-school, disposable narratives—carefully crafted to deliver a complete package in two hours—are being challenged by the rise of the internet[3]. Beyond the technical details, the story outlines the broader impact of streaming on the creative process. Online

TV series have become pioneers of creative autonomy, providing content creators with a degree of flexibility and adaptability that is not possible in the traditional film industry. This freedom has paved the way for more diverse and complex storytelling, allowing for a proliferation of content that challenges traditional genres and formats[4]. However, this new era is not without its challenges. This paper also explores the obstacles and prospects facing online TV series in a rapidly transforming digital environment. As these platforms continue to evolve, they face issues related to market saturation, content quality, and the sustainability of production models.

2. User experience

The realm of user experience in visual media consumption has changed profoundly with the proliferation of streaming services. Traditional cinema has been synonymous with the collective experience—a shared journey in a quiet, darkened theater where shared reactions amplify emotional resonance. This collective experience was crafted around the anticipation of a scheduled screening, the grandeur of the film's visuals, and the envelopment of surround sound - all elements designed to transport the viewer from the humdrum of everyday life into spectacle[5].

In contrast, online TV series offers a completely different model that is closely tied to the convenience and personalization offered by technology. Streaming platforms have redefined the user experience, giving viewers unprecedented control over what, when, and how they watch[6]. The freedom to watch an entire series in one sitting or enjoy it episode by episode brings a new rhythm to content consumption, one that aligns with individual lifestyles and preferences.

Furthermore, the literature on emotional fulfillment in entertainment experiences illuminates the range of emotional rewards that viewers receive from their media consumption[6]. Streaming services cater to these needs by using sophisticated algorithms to recommend content, creating customized feeds that resonate with viewers' past behavior and predicted preferences. This personalization extends to emotional engagement with characters and stories, fostering a sense of intimacy and engagement that is unique to the streaming experience[1].

However, this shift to personalized media also brings with it a loss of the collective experience that characterizes traditional viewing. While streaming may offer a variety of options based on individual tastes, it often comes at the expense of the shared cultural moments that result from large numbers of simultaneous viewings. The fragmentation of audiences creates challenges for content creators, who must now navigate an environment where metrics of success are no longer tied solely to box office numbers but rather to engagement and retention in the digital space, as shown in figure 1[7].

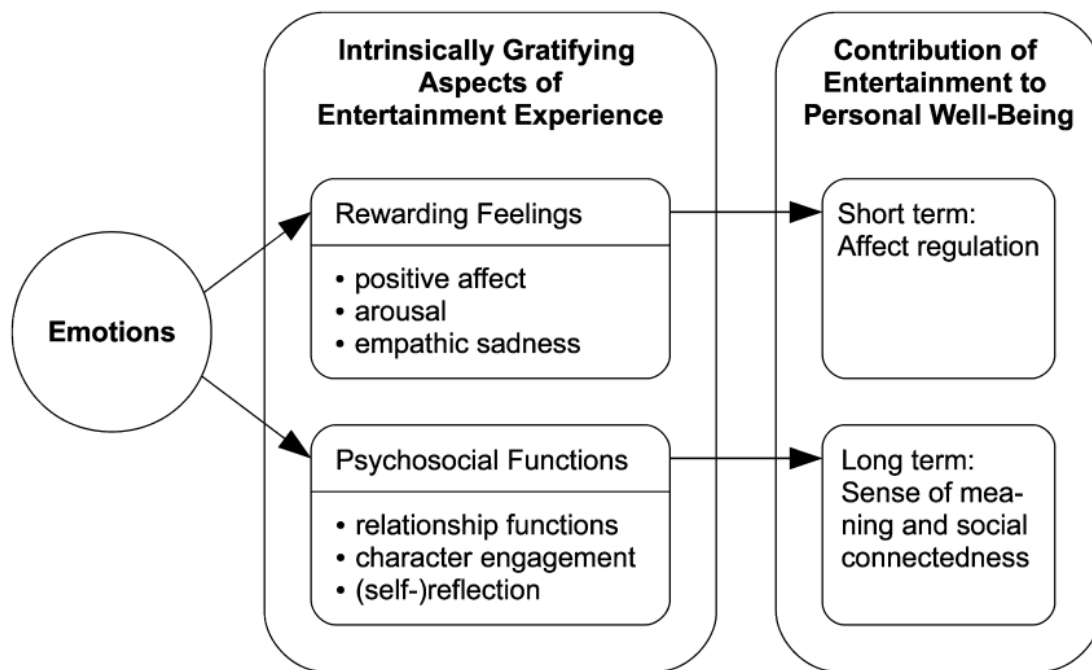


Figure 1: A preliminary two-level model of emotional gratification in entertainment experience

In short, the user experience of watching traditional movies and online TV shows is marked by a trade-off between the collective emotional journey of the former and the personalized, technology-driven engagement of the latter. As viewers continue to navigate between these two experiences, the entertainment industry is tasked with evolving to meet viewer expectations, emotional fulfillment, and the constant influence of technology on viewer habits.

3. Economics

The economics of moviegoing and streaming services are based on different pricing models that reflect their respective delivery methods and consumer engagement strategies. Traditional moviegoing is typically characterized by a per-admission model, where consumers pay separately for each viewing. This per-admission approach is consistent with the event-based nature of movie distribution, where box office sales are the primary source of revenue for the movie industry. Economically, this model relies heavily on the theatrical window, the time when a film is only released in theaters[7].

In the burgeoning landscape of Subscription Video-on-demand (SVOD) services, titans like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video are pioneering a business model that hinges on a flat-fee subscription structure[1]. This model stands in stark contrast to traditional pay-per-view or cable services, offering a cornucopia of streaming content in exchange for a recurring fee. Through this model, these SVOD platforms tap into the consumer's perceived value of unlimited access and diversity, framing the subscription cost as an investment in an ever-ready trove of entertainment[4].

An analysis of the SVOD market shows that the strengths of this model are convenience, diversity, and personalized content management through algorithms. However, challenges to this model include market saturation and constant updating of content to maintain user interest.

On the other hand, recent literature on the economics of cinema suggests that traditional models are being challenged by the rise of digital distribution, which has shortened the theatrical window and introduced new revenue streams from online rentals and sales. While this broadens the economic base

of movie revenues, it also poses the risk of cannibalizing box office revenues and eroding the exclusivity that has historically supported premium pricing.

These paradigm evolutions reflect a broader industry shift toward digital consumption. Streaming services have gradually transformed themselves from simply platforms for older content to significant producers of original content in direct competition with traditional movie studios. This shift has disrupted the traditional economic structure and forced the film industry to adapt, with some studios shortening their theatrical runs and even distributing films directly on digital platforms[6].

4. Conclusion

This article embarks on a comparative journey through the dynamic topographies of traditional cinema and online TV series, unraveling their evolution and explaining, among other things, the user experience and economic model. We have seen how streaming platforms have revolutionized the landscape of visual narratives, offering personalized on-demand content that contrasts with the collective and event-driven nature of traditional moviegoing. The emergence of streaming services has dramatically changed the user's media consumption experience. These platforms cater to individual preferences and offer unprecedented convenience and autonomy. While this shift has opened up new avenues for content creation and consumption, it has also led to a fragmentation of the moviegoing experience and challenged the public nature of the traditional theater. Economically, the shift from a per-ticket revenue model for theaters to a subscription model for streaming services has redefined the value proposition within the industry. While theaters rely on the scarcity and immediacy of content to drive sales, streaming platforms capitalize on the richness of their libraries and the ease of access. This evolution has prompted the movie industry to reassess its strategy in the face of digital competition.

The streaming market is evolving at a rapid pace, which means that some of the data and trends discussed may have changed as new players emerge and consumer behavior adapts to the latest technological advances. Furthermore, the scope of this paper, while comprehensive, does not cover the full scope of the global market, focusing primarily on major players such as Netflix and Amazon Prime Video. There are also a myriad of independent streaming services and niche movie experiences that contribute to the diversity of the industry, but these are not explored in detail in this paper. Furthermore, while this paper covers the economic and experiential dimensions of movies and streaming, it does not delve into the regulatory, environmental, or socio-political factors that affect these media. These aspects are crucial to a full understanding of the industry and are areas for further research.

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