

Quote by Charu Malhotra, Co-Founder & Managing Director, Primus Partners

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Netflix's Hollywood edge heats up India OTT rivalry

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With Netflix recently striking a deal to stream all films produced by Sony Pictures Entertainment globally after their theatrical release—and potentially moving to acquire the massive Warner Bros library—the niche, urban, English-language OTT space in India is bracing for a significant shake-up.

As global catalogues consolidate under fewer platforms, industry experts believe these international shifts will fundamentally alter consumer choices in India, forcing rivals like Prime Video and JioHotstar to rethink their strategies for targeting up-market, premium users. The clustering of global libraries reduces friction for consumers tired of navigating multiple subscriptions.

While Netflix moves toward a dominant position, Prime is fighting back with an "add-on" strategy. It recently onboarded Moviesphere+, a subscription-based platform from Lionsgate that offers heavyweights like *The Hunger Games*; *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*; *Mad Men*; *Borderlands*; *P.S. I Love You*; *The Princess Bride* and *Jackie Brown*.

"English OTT content has demand, but Indian market doesn't yet have a single, unified leader in that niche. Netflix is the closest, but it shares space with Prime Video, HBO (via Discovery and Warner ties that stream on JioHotstar) and others like MUBI," said Charu Malhotra, co-founder and MD, Primus Partners, a management consultancy firm.

"Many consumers pick and



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mix based on price, a few must watch shows or trial periods. If global catalogues get consolidated under fewer platforms, it reduces friction for consumers who want one home for the shows they love," she added.

Malhotra said such consolidation may alter how Indian rights deals are structured. "It may also change how deals are struck for Indian rights, if Netflix has first dibs globally, that puts pressure on free or low-price licensing models."

"So yes, a structural change is possible. But it will probably be gradual. Even if one platform gets stronger catalogue control, others will fight on price, bundles (telco ties) and specialized content," she added.

Industry experts argue that leadership in the English OTT space will depend not just on catalogue size but clarity of positioning.

A platform that becomes the obvious "home for Hollywood, plus global hits" could capture urban subscriptions, forcing rivals to double down on differentiation—whether through exclusives, regional depth, pricing strategies or curated experiences.

Berjesh Chawla, managing director and lead (communications, media & technology), Accenture in India, said the English OTT category functions differently from mass-language streaming.

"Consumption is concentrated in urban markets and driven by long-running franchisees, making it a depth-driven category rather than a reach-driven one," he said. "Platforms that can own, organize and consistently serve these franchisees in one place are best positioned to lead the English OTT space."

For consumers, the most visible impact may come through packaging and pricing. A platform that establishes itself as the "home of Hollywood" could justify premium pricing or higher subscription tiers. However, competitive pressures are likely to keep prices in check.

Prime Video and JioHotstar could respond with bundled offerings or discounts, particularly through telecom partnerships. This could include flexible pricing options or combinations of verticals—such as sports paired with English films, or premium global catalogues bundled with television subscriptions.

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