

Netflix's cultural influence on global culture

 maxxor.com/blog/netflix-cultural-influence-global-culture/

The story behind Netflix

Netflix was founded in 1997 in Scotts Valley, California by Marc Randolph and Reed Hastings. Randolph wanted to sell something over the Internet but was not quite sure what. Hastings then came up with the idea of renting out videos online after he was charged \$40 in overdue fines for returning a copy of Apollo 13 late.



The Netflix website officially launched in 1998. At that time they had about 30 employees and about 925 items available to rent. The idea was that customers were sent DVDs via mail on a pay-per-rental basis where late and postal fees applied. In 1999 Netflix introduced the monthly subscription format that they still use today where you pay a flat-fee each month and get unlimited rentals. They now had no due dates to return rentals, no late fees, and no shipping and handling fees.

In 2000 Netflix introduced their movie recommendation service. By using their subscribers' ratings, they can accurately predict which movies a subscriber would enjoy watching next. This was a huge feat for Netflix and caused their rentals (and subscribers) to increase. By 2005 Netflix accumulated 4.2 million members, and in 2007 it delivered its billionth DVD by mail.

Also in 2007, the company introduced video on demand (streaming) to its subscribers. For the first time members could watch television shows and movies instantly on their PC's and laptops. This marked the beginning of streaming media as we've come to know. In the following years they partnered with electronics companies to allow streaming on the Xbox 360, Blu-ray disc players and smart TVs. In 2010 Netflix became available on Apple's iPad and iPhones, Nintendo Wii, and other Internet connected devices.

Hereafter, Netflix set its sights on branching out and made services available in Canada (2010), Latin American countries and the Caribbean (2011). By 2012 the service became available to subscribers in the United Kingdom and several Nordic countries.

2013 marked a big year for Netflix with the release of its first big original series called "House of Cards". They managed to become the first Internet TV network to be nominated for the Emmy awards, and received a staggering 31 nominations for its hugely popular shows including "House of Cards", "Orange is the New Black", and "The Square".

In 2014 the company continued their global expansion and reached most countries in Europe. They also scooped seven creative Emmy awards for "House of Cards" and "Orange

is the New Black". Its membership grew globally to 50 million subscribers which brings us to 2016's worldwide service announcement.

The effect of Netflix and streaming media on culture globally

Since the adoption of its streaming media service, Netflix has had a huge impact on culture and the way in which people view television today. On the positive side, it has allowed consumers to become more empowered. People now have a choice in what they watch and when they watch it. Traditional media, like television networks, has infamously been seen as entities who dictate what we watch with no input from the viewers. With Netflix's revolutionary recommendation system (and other similar streaming services), subscribers can now receive content based on their individual and unique interests. Simply put, subscribers have the freedom to choose what they watch and when they want to watch it.

Furthermore, there is the concern that streaming media creates a culture where people want things immediately and don't do well with having to wait. Gaining access to streaming media requires far less patience than watching regular television. The worry amongst some is that this will eventually create a society full of entitled people who will never learn the value of patience, required in everyday life.

The full impact of services such as Netflix on traditional media is yet to be seen, but there is no doubt that it has become a part of worldwide culture, and changed the way we receive and create content. While television viewing remains popular, and on the increase, people want to have the flexibility to watch their series or movies on whatever device they choose. Streaming media is not signalling the end of television, but it has definitely changed the way in which we view it across the world. It has also succeeded in making viewing more accessible globally, and in doing so created a more cohesive global audience.