

Netflix is in the early stages of exploring livestreams

Article

The news: Netflix is continuing to branch out into other video categories following its [tough Q1 earnings report](#). The streaming service is now in the 'initial stages' of launching livestreams for standup comedy specials and unscripted shows, [per](#) Deadline.

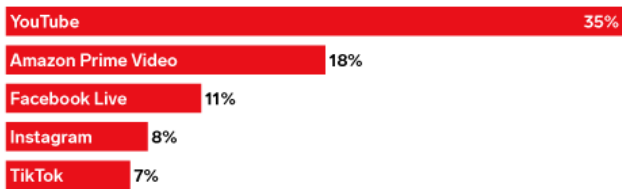
More on this: Like some other recently announced Netflix features, livestreaming on the platform is [still a distant reality](#). And though it will initially be used to augment existing content

on the platform, it opens up a wide range of possibilities for the streamer down the line.

- Live video can add interactivity to Netflix's suite of popular unscripted reality shows by allowing audience interaction. Audience members can vote on contestants in shows like the upcoming "Dance 100" competition—something **Disney+** is also looking to do now that it's moved "Dancing With The Stars" exclusively to its streaming platform.
- The new feature also opens the door to sports broadcasting. Sports content is having a moment on Netflix: The platform's Formula One documentary series "**Drive to Survive**" is frequently cited as contributing to the sport's newfound popularity in the US, and cycling documentary "**Icarus**" (2017) won the Academy Award for best documentary.
- Livestreaming features have been a great success for video platforms like **YouTube**, **Facebook**, and more, creating opportunities for social commerce and boosting watch time—an area in which Netflix is already ahead. A recent **Nielsen** report found Netflix led daily watch time across streaming and TV at **1.13 trillion minutes**.

Where Do US Viewers Watch Livestream Videos?

% of respondents, March 2021



Note: ages 13+

Source: CivicScience as cited in company blog, April 5, 2021

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The challenge: Netflix long distinguished itself from other streaming services by its lack of features like advertising and livestreams, but now it's quickly having to enter battlefields where its younger competitors have a significant lead.

- Other streaming rivals like **Amazon Prime**, **Apple TV+**, and **Disney+** already have existing livestreaming capabilities and have even put them into broad commercial use. Amazon and Apple have both streamed Major League Baseball games from the current season, and Disney+ aired a livestream of the Academy Awards.
- If Netflix does have its sights set on sports broadcasting, it may find slim pickings left over from the ongoing streaming bidding wars for rights to broadcast various sports from cricket, to baseball, to soccer.

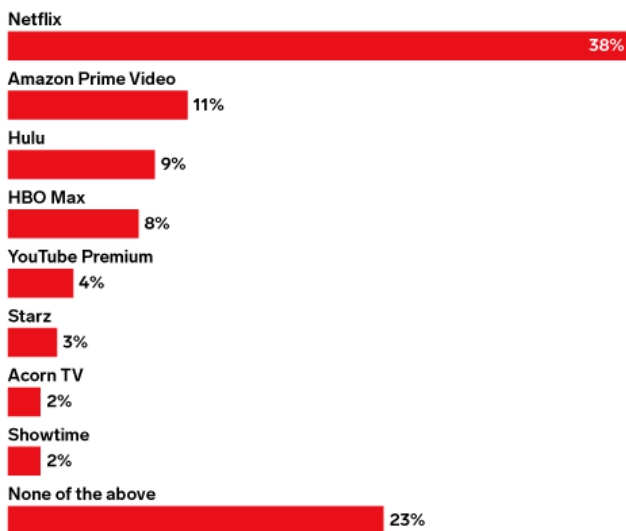
- Netflix could leverage the success of “Drive to Survive” to secure some exclusive rights to Formula One broadcasting, but the sport’s fast-growing popularity could set a bidding war ablaze before Netflix is even ready to launch its livestreaming capabilities.

The big takeaway: While features like livestreams and advertising will undoubtedly help Netflix’s watch time and bottom line, its sudden acceptance of these features means it is now racing to catch up with the capabilities of competitors.

- Netflix will have to do more than be yet another streaming service fracturing sports and offering livestreams in order to build out a compelling live content offering.

Which Streaming Service Offers the Best Selection of Original Content According to US Adults?

% of respondents, Jan 2022



Note: n=3,557 ages 18+

Source: CivicScience as cited in company blog, Jan 26, 2022

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