

# How OTT platforms changed entertainment for good

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The Covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdowns saw public entertainment across Bangladesh grind to a standstill. With cinema halls, music concerts, plays, and other events closed – and new releases and productions put on hold – audiences flocked to over-the-top (OTT) platforms. Investors are seeing the potential in these services, as the market is growing rapidly.

OTT platforms in the country are in their transition period, and so, the need of the hour is for key investors to think about new ways to make promoting them more profitable, as streaming becomes more common and cheaper for everyone with subscriptions.

Many streaming services were dropped from the Bangladeshi market with time. Only a few have survived because of their smart, forward-thinking strategies.

Hoichoi widened their territories in Bangladesh in the last five years. They have produced “Taqdeer” and “Mohanagar”, two of the most widely acclaimed Bangladeshi web series of recent times.

“Hoichoi has always been keen on producing good content, and with time, we have improved the quality of our productions,” says the company’s Business Lead, Sakib R Khan. “Nowadays, people are genuinely interested in good content, but streaming service providers in Bangladesh have to face the challenge that piracy will occur, and audiences will take time to get into the habit of subscribing.”

Initially, to play on the safe side, local platforms tried to follow international streaming services, especially those in

India. Over time, investors observed that thriller films and series are more appealing to the audience than other types of content.

But, although thrillers are trending in the country, there has been an overflow of this genre in recent times on OTT



ILLUSTRATION:  
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platforms, and the storytelling of such films and series have become rather monotonous.

It is worth mentioning that there were a few failed attempts by Bangladeshi platforms to create ‘sensational’ content, leading to much controversy.

That being said, some directors have gone against the tide, and proved that productions on local OTT platforms can be original and well-made.

Chorki started out in July 2021. Every month, the platform releases a new film and two originals, including premium content. They have produced some of the most talked about web projects of last year.

Mizanur Rahman Aryan’s romantic drama, “Networker Baire”, and Adnan Al Rajeev’s dark comedy, “YouTumor”, both released on Chorki, were widely appreciated films.

“Since ‘Networker Baire’ was initially going to be my first silver screen project, I was not very concerned about a particular genre,” says Aryan. “When we planned it as a web film, I was not focused on following any trends. OTT platforms are not yet the most popular medium of entertainment, and so, there is room for experimentation.”

Similarly, Adnan went with a dark comedy film for his debut web project, as he simply did not want to follow the trend of thrillers. He asserts that variety in storytelling is important. “An engaging story can be told in any genre – the key is to keep the audiences hooked till the end,” he says. According to Adnan, local OTT platforms need more careful marketing and content curation to flourish.

Renowned filmmaker Redoan Rony, also the Chief Operating Officer of Chorki, shares his insights on curating content for the platform. “While developing Chorki, first and foremost, we evaluated what our audiences were interested in,” he says.

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– Mizanur Rahman Aryan



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