Marketing Strategies of OTT Platforms for Regional Odia Content: A Case Study of AAO NXT and Industry Analysis

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Abstract - This study provides an in-depth case study-based analysis of marketing strategies implemented by OTT platforms for promoting regional Odia content in India, focusing on AAO NXT, Odisha's premier independent OTT platform, alongside insights from national players integrating Odia content. With the OTT industry projected to grow significantly in India owing to rising internet penetration and demand for regional content, this paper explores how localised marketing, digital media, influencer collaborations, and content specialisation have driven consumption in Odisha. Combining both qualitative observations and quantitative survey data, the study examines audience perceptions and platform responses amid an evolving competitive environment dominated by larger national and global players. Findings reveal that digital-first marketing, strong community engagement, targeted campaigns on social media, and culturally authentic content from key pillars of success for regional OTT platforms. The study highlights challenges such as infrastructure limitations and the "free content" mindset, while also highlighting growth projections. The article concludes with strategic recommendations for regional OTT platforms aiming to expand their subscriber base and sustain growth by leveraging data-driven personalisation and community connections. This research contributes to understanding the regional OTT ecosystems' dynamics and offers practical insights to marketers and content creators in Odisha and similar emerging markets.

Keywords - OTT platforms, marketing strategies, regional Odia content, digital media marketing, AAO NXT.

I. Introduction

The fast growth of Over-the-Top (OTT) streaming platforms has completely changed the digital media environment in India. The way that people receive news, entertainment, and educational content has been completely transformed by over-the-top (OTT) platforms, which transmit audio, video, and other digital content straight over the internet. OTT services are very appealing to a diverse and technologically savvy populace because they provide on-demand access, personalized suggestions, and multi-device compatibility, which sets them apart from traditional broadcast and cable television (Das & S., 2025; Bose, 2022). With a 2025 valuation of about INR 155 billion, the Indian over-the-top (OTT) industry is expected to continue expanding due to rising internet penetration, reasonably priced data plans, and an increase in smartphone usage (Ken Research, 2025).

The growing need for localized programming has been a major factor in this expansion. With more than 22 officially recognized languages and hundreds of dialects, India's linguistic and cultural variety has made it a favorable environment for the growth of regional OTT platforms. In addition to satisfying viewers' linguistic preferences, regional content also strikes a deep chord with their socioeconomic realities, cultural identities, and customs (Das & S., 2025; India Brand Equity Foundation, 2021). Beyond the first specialized offers, regional language material on OTT platforms has opened the road for mass-market acceptance and is now a common occurrence (Sundaravel & Elangovan, 2020; Farooqui, 2021).

With more than 50 million Odia speakers worldwide and a rich cultural legacy, Odisha is a prime example of the potential of regional OTT platforms. Because of the state's distinct linguistic and cultural environment, platforms like AAO NXT that only offer Odia content have grown in popularity. These platforms give spectators an authentic and captivating cinematic experience by offering a well chosen variety of Odia films, web series, documentaries, and short films (Kaushik Das, 2024; Odiasamaj, 2025). In addition to demonstrating the need for local content, these platforms' success emphasizes how crucial effective marketing is to creating and maintaining a devoted following.

OTT platforms use dynamic and diversified marketing techniques for regional Odia content. They include community involvement, influencer partnerships, content customisation, and a fusion of digital and traditional media. Digital marketing is essential for reaching and interacting with the target audience, especially on social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Viewers' credibility and trust are increased through influencer marketing, in which local celebrities and content producers endorse over-the-top (OTT) services. A sense of loyalty and belonging is fostered by community-building activities including interactive campaigns and on-ground activations during cultural festivals (Kaushik Das, 2024; Amirtham, 2024).

For regional Odia content, OTT platforms employ dynamic and varied marketing strategies. These consist of a combination of digital and traditional media, influencer collaborations, content personalization, and community engagement. Reaching and engaging with the target audience requires digital marketing, particularly on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Influencer marketing, in which local celebrities and content creators promote over-the- top (OTT) services, boosts viewers' credibility and trust. Community-building initiatives, such as interactive campaigns and on-ground activations during cultural festivals, promote a sense of loyalty and belonging (Kaushik Das, 2024; Amirtham, 2024).

Regional OTT platforms nevertheless face a number of obstacles in spite of the notable advancements. The seamless streaming experience may be hampered by infrastructure constraints, such as patchy internet connectivity in rural locations. One obstacle to subscription-based business models is the "free content" mentality of users, who are used to obtaining content without paying. Furthermore, regional platforms must innovate and set themselves apart from the competition from national and international OTT giants with bigger marketing expenditures and a wider variety of content libraries (Kaushik Das, 2024; Rao & Rajeshwari, 2024).

A thorough case study-based analysis of the marketing tactics used by OTT platforms for localized Odia content is the goal of this research work. The study aims to comprehend the elements that influence audience engagement, the efficacy of different marketing strategies, and the opportunities and difficulties in this quickly changing market by looking at the performance of platforms like AAO NXT and using industry-wide information. For marketers, content producers, and legislators interested in the expansion and viability of regional OTT platforms in Odisha and other emerging markets, the findings will provide insightful information.

II. Literature Review

The Rise of OTT Platforms in India

For the media and entertainment sector, the rise of OTT platforms in India has changed everything. With the introduction of platforms like Ditto TV and Eros Now in the early 2010s, the idea of over-the-top (OTT) content delivery—which does not require traditional cable or satellite subscriptions—became more popular (Varma, 2015). Since then, the convenience, affordability, and flexibility that these platforms provide have propelled the exponential growth of the Indian

OTT sector. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) claims that OTT providers use the global internet to reach customers by delivering content "over-the-top" of current network infrastructure (TRAI, 2015).

Lockdowns and social distancing measures during the COVID-19 epidemic caused a spike in the consumption of on-demand content, which further pushed the use of OTT platforms. Since traditional television stayed steady and movie theaters mostly closed, over-the-top (OTT) entertainment became the preferred option (Bose, 2022). A few big companies now control the majority of the industry, such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+ Hotstar, and Zee5, and they provide a vast array of material, including documentaries, TV series, movies, and web series from India and other countries (Das & S., 2025).

The Importance of Regional Content

One of the main reasons for OTT platforms' widespread popularity has been the addition of regional content. To capitalize on the upcoming surge in the Indian market, OTT platforms are already providing a variety of regional and local-language content, per a report by the Confederation of Indian Industry and the Boston Consulting Group (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2021). Given the rising demand for native language content, the proportion of regional languages in all OTT video content is predicted to rise from 27% in 2020 to 54% in 2024 (FICCI EY, 2022).

In addition to satisfying consumers' linguistic preferences, regional content also strikes a deep chord with their socioeconomic realities and cultural identities. As a result, new platforms and content producers have emerged that are committed to crafting stories that capture the distinct histories and experiences of every area (Sundaravel & Elangovan, 2020). In order to cater to certain regional audiences, platforms such as Sun NXT, Kodeeswari, and A Kalinga TV have arisen. These platforms provide a variety

of material in languages like Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, and Odia (Das & S., 2025).

Marketing Strategies for Regional OTT Platforms

OTT platforms use a variety of complex marketing techniques to promote localized content. Digital marketing is essential for connecting with and interacting with the target audience, especially on social media platforms. Targeted advertising, influencer partnerships, and interactive campaigns that promote user engagement and content sharing are all conducted on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube (Kaushik Das, 2024; Amirtham, 2024).

Viewers' credibility and trust are increased through influencer marketing, in which local celebrities and content producers endorse over-the-top (OTT) services. A sense of loyalty and belonging is fostered by community-building activities including interactive campaigns and on-ground activations during cultural festivals (Kaushik Das, 2024). By customizing content offers to individual interests, AI and ML-powered personalized recommendations and targeted advertising increase user pleasure and engagement (Ken Research, 2025; Das & S., 2025).

Consumer Behavior and Preferences

For localized OTT platforms to succeed, it is crucial to comprehend customer behavior and preferences. According to studies, three important criteria that affect consumer decisions are the quality, diversity, and cost of the material (Sadana & Sharma, 2021). Users place a high value on the convenience of on-demand access, the capacity to view material across many devices, and the choice to download and view offline (Das & S., 2025).

Viewing habits have also changed as a result of the popularity of regional material, with viewers increasingly choosing to watch in their mother tongues. The demand for genuine, culturally relevant narratives that speak to their own experiences is what is driving this trend (Das & S., 2025; India Brand Equity Foundation, 2021). In addition to increasing user engagement, regional content on OTT platforms has helped to preserve and promote regional languages and cultures (Das & S., 2025).

Challenges and Opportunities

Regional OTT platforms nevertheless face a number of obstacles in spite of the notable advancements. The seamless streaming experience may be hampered by infrastructure constraints, such as patchy internet connectivity in rural locations. One obstacle to subscription-based business models is the "free content" mentality of users, who are used to obtaining content without paying. Furthermore, regional platforms must innovate and set themselves apart from the competition from national and international OTT giants with bigger marketing expenditures and a wider variety of content libraries (Kaushik Das, 2024; Rao & Rajeshwari, 2024).

But there are also a lot of chances for development. Key success factors include the unrealized storytelling potential of regional storylines, the growth of the audience base through multi-device accessibility and mobile optimization, and smart alliances with regional production companies and filmmakers. Unlocking the next growth phase in

Odisha's digital entertainment sector requires the application of AI and data analytics to improve marketing targeting and personalize experiences (Kaushik Das, 2024; Rao & Rajeshwari, 2024).

III. Methodology

The paper employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative observation of marketing activities with quantitative survey analysis.

Qualitative observations included monitoring promotional campaigns by major OTT platforms in Odisha across digital platforms, traditional media (TV, radio, print), and on- ground activations during a one-month period.
Quantitative data was collected through structured questionnaires from 80 active internet users in Odisha, covering demographics, content consumption habits, awareness of OTT advertising, platform subscription behaviour, and perceived advertising effectiveness.

This approach enabled a holistic understanding of marketing strategies employed by platforms like AAO NXT and their reception by regional audiences.

Case Study: AAO NXT's Marketing Strategies
Background
The emergence of vernacular digital media serving specialized cultural audiences is shown in AAO NXT, which was introduced in Odisha as the first autonomous OTT platform in the area. It is especially popular with local viewers and the Odia diaspora around the world since it provides high-definition streaming of Odia films, web series, documentaries, and other regional programming. Personalized suggestions, offline downloads, multi-device support, and membership levels that may be customized to meet a variety of customer demands are among the services offered by AAO NXT. Das Kaushik (2024).

Market Trends and Consumer Behaviour
AAO NXT's marketing strategy is tailored to Odisha's distinct digital ecosystem, characterized by:
Rising demand for indigenous narrative-driven content reflecting local culture, languages, and social realities.
Mobile-first consumption patterns, with a significant portion of the audience accessing content on smartphones.
Increased interest in web series and short-form videos, prompting content diversification.
Competitive pressure from national OTT players with extensive content libraries and bigger marketing budgets (Kaushik Das, 2024).
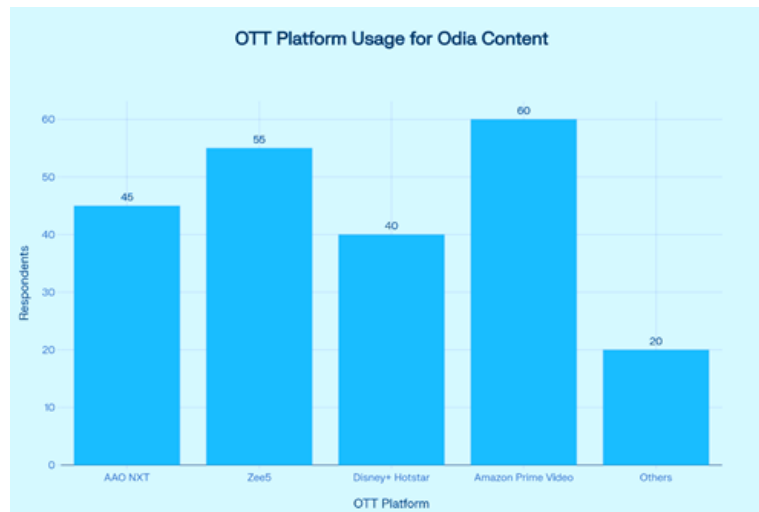
Fig-1-Usage of different OTT platforms for Odia content among survey respondents (n=80)

- Amazon Prime Video: 60 users
- Zee5: 55 users
- AAO NXT: 45 users
- Disney+ Hotstar: 40 users
- Others: 20 users

Figure 1 shows that Amazon Prime Video (60 respondents) and Zee5 (55 respondents) are the most used platforms for Odia content, followed by AAO NXT (45) and Disney+ Hotstar (40), while only 20 respondents reported using other platforms.

Marketing and Media Mix

AAO NXT's media mix strategy balances digital and traditional channels to maximize reach and engagement:

Digital media accounts for approximately 70% of the marketing budget, emphasizing social media advertising (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube), influencer collaboration, paid search, and interactive campaigns.

Traditional media (local TV, radio, print) takes up about 60% of the budget to address the offline audience and areas with low internet penetration.

On-ground activations during cultural festivals and local events foster direct connections with audiences, building brand loyalty (Kaushik Das, 2024).

This careful blend ensures wide accessibility while fostering emotional cultural resonance.

Creative Communication and Engagement

AAO NXT emphasizes authenticity and storytelling in all promotional efforts, working with local writers, filmmakers, and celebrities to create brand narratives that resonate deeply with Odia viewers. Strategies include:

Launching interactive social media campaigns encouraging viewer participation and user- generated content.

Leveraging popular regional influencers for broader reach and credibility.
Hosting live virtual events with creators to strengthen community bonds.
Using personalized advertisements and notifications based on viewer preferences and history.

Personalized recommendations powered by AI enhance user retention by helping audiences discover new relevant content (Kaushik Das, 2024).

Comparative Marketing Strategies in the Industry
National OTT Platforms
Larger OTT platforms like Zee5 and Disney+ Hotstar adopt different yet complementary strategies for Odia content:
Incorporation of Odia films and shows within a broader multi-language content library to attract pan-Indian and diaspora viewers.
Partnerships with telecom companies offering bundled subscriptions to increase accessibility.
Customized platform interfaces highlighting regional languages to improve discoverability.
Nationwide promotional campaigns that include regional content to maximize cross-market appeal (Rao & Rajeshwari, 2024).
Despite their scale advantages, these platforms often lack the nuanced cultural connection that localized platforms like AAO NXT maintain.
Survey Analysis: Audience Perception of OTT Marketing
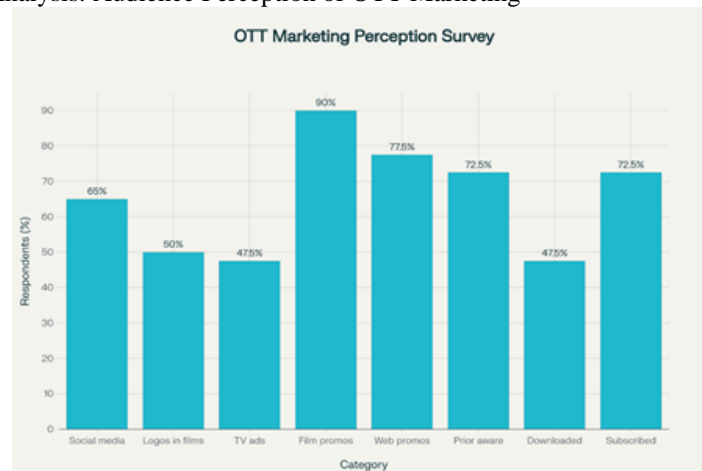
Audience perception of OTT marketing strategies among 80 surveyed internet users in Odisha

Among the 80 surveyed internet users in Odisha:
65% reported observing OTT promotional content primarily on social media platforms, with 50% seeing logos during films or trailers and 47.5% via television ads.
90% had seen promotions for newly released films on OTT, followed by 77.5% for web series promotions.
72.5% indicated prior awareness of OTT platforms before seeing advertisements.

47.5% reported downloading or visiting OTT platforms after noticing promotional activities.

72.5% subscribed to OTT services influenced by marketing campaigns, mainly motivated by movie content (100%) and web series (55.5%).

Amazon Prime Video emerged as the most subscribed platform, followed by Disney Hotstar and Sony Liv. Subscription preferences shifted toward annual plans, showing long-term commitment fueled by effective promotional engagement (Rao & Rajeshwari, 2024).

Challenges and Opportunities
Challenges
Infrastructure gaps and inconsistent internet availability in certain Odisha regions hamper smooth streaming experiences.

Competing with national/global OTT players with larger marketing budgets and diverse content libraries.

Overcoming the prevalent "free content" mindset among consumers to promote paid subscriptions.

Maintaining high production quality within constrained budgets for regional content (Kaushik Das, 2024).

Opportunities

Untapped storytelling potential through regional narratives with deep cultural roots.

Expanding audience base via mobile optimization and multi-device accessibility.

Strategic partnerships with local filmmakers, production houses, and cultural institutions.

Using data analytics and AI to personalize experiences and refine marketing targeting.

Leveraging community engagement through events, influencer marketing, and interactive social media campaigns (Kaushik Das, 2024; Rao & Rajeshwari, 2024).

Growth Projections and Future Strategy for AAO NXT

AAO NXT projects growth of 50% in subscriber base and 75% revenue increase in 2024 by:

Expanding the content library with original web series, movies, documentaries, and genre diversification including animation and reality shows.

Enhancing streaming technology for seamless HD playback even on low bandwidth.

Increasing investment in digital marketing, influencer collaborations, and social media engagement.

Strengthening community ties through sponsorships of cultural events, film festivals, and talent hunts.

Geographic expansion to include languages like Assamese and Maithili for broader East India reach (Kaushik Das, 2024).

IV. Conclusion

The marketing techniques of OTT platforms supporting localized Odia content offer a blend of traditional outreach and novel digital practices customized to local culture and consumption trends. AAO NXT's concentrated approach—leveraging digital-first, data-informed, and community-centric strategies—illustrates how regional OTT platforms may prosper amidst severe national and worldwide competition. The increasing need for authentic Odia narratives, combined with evolving mobile-first user

behavior, presents a favorable atmosphere for growth. Challenges persist in infrastructure and consumer mindset, but strategic alliances, content quality, and personalized engagement are vital to unlocking the next growth phase in Odisha's digital entertainment business. The case study offers transferable lessons for regional OTT networks elsewhere in India and emerging markets.

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