

1 Exploring Tourism Promotion in OTT Era Through 2 Case-Lets.

5 Abstract:

6 Over-the-top (OTT) platforms have become a significant component of audiovisual content
7 consumption, circumventing traditional television and film industries on a global scale. Audiences
8 increasingly view web series and movies on mobile devices rather than in conventional television or
9 cinema settings. Destinations are often encountered virtually before being experienced in person.
10 As a result, OTT streaming platforms have broadened the scope of tourism by enabling global
11 access to diverse media content. This paper investigates the strategies employed by global tourism
12 development agencies to market destinations through web series and movies featured on OTT
13 streaming platforms.

14 OTT platforms play a substantial role in destination marketing by enhancing audience awareness,
15 shaping travel aspirations, and indirectly influencing tourist arrivals through the popularity of web
16 series and films set in specific locations. Employing a qualitative multiple mini case study
17 methodology, this study analyzes how the portrayal of destinations in OTT content supports tourism
18 promotion. Several prominent destinations featured in web series and films were selected for
19 analysis. Data sources included tourism destination websites, tourism development agency
20 campaigns, references within OTT content, and media articles. The study identifies key
21 characteristics of destination images and examines how tourism agencies leverage these portrayals
22 in their promotional strategies.

23 **Keywords:** Destination marketing, OTT platforms, tourism promotion, movies.

25 **1. Introduction**

26 In recent years, OTT platforms have gained recognition for promoting locally made shows and
27 films in destinations. Audiences watch series and films that romantically and nostalgically
28 showcase various locations, creating a sense of longing for those places among viewers and
29 prompting them to visit those locations. OTT platforms now strategically drive media-induced
30 tourism through visual storytelling. Long-form content is more effective at attracting potential
31 tourists as streaming platforms build on-screen narratives for and around the shows and films they
32 produce and host. The on-screen storytelling, narrative-building, and portrayal of fictional
33 characters engage audiences; viewers can form strong emotional bonds with on-screen
34 environments and regional cultures through long-form narratives on services like Netflix or
35 Amazon Prime Video. By creating a sense of simulated familiarity, this psychological
36 "transportation" significantly lowers perceived travel anxiety. Consequently, the locations featured
37 in the show or movie generate curiosity among viewers, leading to destination searches,
38 accommodation bookings, and flight bookings. Governments globally are partnering with OTT
39 platforms to boost tourism. This paper highlights government partnerships with OTT platforms and
40 strategies for developing and promoting destinations globally.

41 **2. Literature Review**

42 **2.1. Evolution of OTT Platforms**

The digital entertainment revolution began when Netflix transitioned from a DVD-by-mail service to an instant-streaming platform. Online entertainment and affordable internet connectivity have led to a global upsurge of Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms. It started as a web experiment; however, it transformed the content-consuming experience by bypassing traditional television (Tian, 2024; Behare et al., 2024). This has presented opportunities for diverse content streaming experiences worldwide. With the outbreak of the global pandemic, the content-consuming experience has also changed for the public. This transformed audience experience has contributed to the growth of OTT platforms (Khanna et al., 2024; P S, 2022). In addition to altering how consumers consume video content, over-the-top (OTT) services have created a global video-content value chain (Lee et al., 2022). While major film production companies levelled allegations against Netflix, accusing it of defying theatre regulations and invading their market, they were also in a hurry to launch their own streaming services.

2.2. Relationship between OTT and Tourism

The demand for inbound travel has increased due to the rapid growth of the OTT market and its role in facilitating globalization (Lee et al., 2022). The continuous transformation of digital media and the chronic online presence of Gen Z motivate travel intentions. Screen-tourism, as it was traditionally known, has also evolved with the advent of online streaming platforms and is now observed to influence Gen Z populations globally through locations showcasing audiovisual content on OTT platforms (Chauhan, 2026). By converting long-form digital storytelling into actual travel demand, OTT platforms motivate viewers' travel decision-making. This phenomenon is also known as "set-jetting" or media-induced tourism. Shows serve as indirect marketing channels that encourage viewers to travel to distant or rural places by engrossing audiences worldwide with authentic local stories (Yoon et al., 2026).

2.3. OTT Platforms and Their Impact on Global Tourism

Unfamiliar places are normalized by binge-worthy shows on Netflix and Amazon Prime Video. Series that highlight particular local cultures, environments, and ways of life function as potent, immersive advertisements, converting viewers' curiosity into direct search and travel behaviors (Lopez-Cordova, 2020). Netflix partnered with the UN Tourism (formerly UNWTO) to use research-backed strategies to ensure that on-screen exposure leads to continued international and domestic travel to the featured destinations (UN Tourism, 2021).

73

74 **3. Objective**

- 75 • To explore the engagement of government agencies with OTT platforms for the promotion
76 and development of tourism destinations.
- 77 • To investigate the marketing strategies used for the tourist destinations.

78 **4. Case-studies**

79 **Case 1: The Indian Tourism Ministry signed MoUs with Netflix**

80 In the latter half of 2025, the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) of the Government of India announced a
81 collaboration with Netflix. This announcement unveiled the opportunity for potential tourism
82 development in several parts of the country. The initiative seeks to highlight various regions of the
83 country in Netflix productions, which inspire viewers to visit those locations for their cultural and
84 emotional impact. This partnership will identify opportunities to feature Indian regions and ensure
85 their portrayal is contextual and authentic. The MoT also wants to present the location's historic
86 and cultural context to showcase their local practices and the importance of the communities.
87 Netflix has partnered with several tourism boards globally to promote tourism in those countries.
88 Vice President of Content at Netflix India, Monika Shergill, stated that this collaboration will create
89 new opportunities for local communities to share their talent and stories from their region. Netflix
90 has already shot in more than 100 cities in India over the last decade, and helped popularise several
91 regions of the country through on-screen storytelling; some of these are "Kaala Paani," "Jaane
92 Jaan," "The Elephant Whisperers," and the list goes on.

93

94 **Case 2: South Korean Tourism Surge with K-dramas on OTT Platforms**

Digital platforms, both domestic and international, are of great significance in South Korea. A few local OTT platforms, such as Wavve, Tving, Whacha, and Weverse, have competed with international OTT platforms in cultural production; in contrast, a few American OTT platforms, such as Netflix, Disney+, and Apple TV, have started establishing business in Korea. South Korean regions have experienced an increased tourist footfall with the globalisation of K-dramas. During the COVID-19 pandemic, OTT platforms such as Netflix saw an increase in subscriptions, along with viewership of South Korean dramas that were premiered on Netflix. In South Korea, Netflix launched “Netflix Services Korea” in July 2015 and began broadcasting Korean dramas in June 2019 (Kuo, 2024). The advent of K-dramas on Netflix has led to a surge in inbound tourism to South Korea, mostly from Asian countries such as China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Japan. Tourists from non-Asian countries, such as the United States of America, have also visited South Korea (Jo et al., 2025). This phenomenon, known as the New Korean Wave, has been linked to the expansion of digital platforms in the cultural industries, including OTT platforms and music streaming services. While acquiring licensing programs, Netflix created its original shows in Korea, including Squid Game (2021), All of Us Are Dead (2022), and The Glory (2022–2023). These shows are breakout successes for the Korean entertainment industry and have also boosted tourism. In addition to competing with international OTT platforms, local OTT platforms like Watcha, Wavve, Tving, Coupang Play, and Seezn also compete with one another in the domestic cultural market (Jin, 2024). In June 2025, Netflix announced its partnership with the Korean Tourism Organisation and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism for a global campaign. The campaign aims to target audiences worldwide, including the U.S.A. Japan and Canada. Findings from a recent Netflix survey suggest that 72% of Korean content consumers are interested in visiting Korea.

Case 3: Brazil Tourism Board Embratur and Netflix Partnership

119 In May 2025, the Brazilian Tourism Board, Embratur, announced a cooperation agreement with
120 Netflix during Rio2C. The purpose of this agreement was to boost tourism by promoting Brazilian
121 national and cultural stories through audiovisual content. This would, in turn, drive viewer
122 engagement and motivation, increase the country's global visibility, and foster socio-economic
123 development and promotion. France and Spain have experienced a massive tourism surge due to
124 their collaboration with Netflix, which influenced Brazil to partner with the streaming platform.
125 This initiative began with a promotional video featuring clips from Brazilian shows such as Love is
126 Blind Brazil, Invisible City, and Amparo (SP), which are already loved by audiences. According to
127 Marcelo Freixo, President of the Brazilian Tourism Board, this collaboration is a medium for
128 transforming the power of Brazilian narratives into practical connections. As part of the partnership,
129 a travel guide featuring itineraries and tourist experiences inspired by popular Netflix titles with
130 high local and international engagement was also launched. These titles represent the primary
131 cultural assets that the Brazilian Tourism Board seeks to promote. This cooperation agreement also
132 seeks to develop the local economy and Brazilian culture.

133

134 **Case 4: Collaboration between South Africa Tourism and Netflix**

135 The official announcement of this collaboration came in March 2021. It aims to provide a global
136 platform to showcase South African storytelling through stories set in those locations. Netflix has
137 an outreach that enables content to be consumed globally (Adisa et al., 2026). Some of the Netflix
138 original series, like Queen Sono, Blood & Water, How to Ruin Christmas: The Wedding, and Kings
139 of Joburg, are content made in South African locations. Other international shows and films that are
140 locally produced in South Africa include Holiday in the Wild, Last Days of American Crime, and
141 global Netflix originals like Sacred Games, The Crown, Black Mirror, and The Kissing Booth (1 &
142 2). The South Africa Tourism Board stated that the local creative industry has benefited from the
143 opportunity to showcase its art and talent on a global stage, both on- and off-screen, due to these
144 stories that transcend Mzansi's borders. They added that every production helped local companies
145 and entrepreneurs, such as regional stylists, makeup artists, and other creatives, be part of the
146 show's entire supply chain, thereby boosting the nation's economy. The CEO of South Africa
147 Tourism stated that they are seeking to attract a global audience; in doing so, a non-traditional
148 strategy for tourism promotion was required.

149

150 5. **Finding**

151 The study has investigated the cooperation between OTT platforms and different government
152 agencies. Out of all the international streaming services, Netflix has the most partnerships with
153 national tourism boards. With half of its original library or catalog coming from American
154 productions and the other half from nations like India, Japan, South Korea, France, and Spain, it is
155 also the top OTT streaming platform globally. Additionally, this platform has the broadest reach
156 across more than 190 nations (Iordache, 2021). Additionally, Netflix worked with UN Tourism
157 (formerly UNWTO) to investigate how OTT platforms affect local communities and how they
158 perceive cultural connections. Their cooperation with UN Tourism resulted from this goal.
159 Government institutions target tourism potential by selling their local stories and increasing
160 visibility through content marketing with a worldwide reach. It also demonstrates how watching
161 local stories and legends can increase one's interest in the customs, heritage, music, food, language,
162 and people of another nation. This connection creation is the catalyst for economic growth and
163 tourism development (Lopez-Cordova, 2020). The study also noted that the countries that have
164 collaborated with OTT streaming platforms have experienced a massive rise in tourist arrivals over
165 the years. The boost was most prominent after the merger between UN Tourism and Netflix.

166

167 6. **Discussion**

Aligning with the first goal of the paper, this study discovered that government organizations around the world are collaborating with over-the-top (OTT) platforms to produce and broadcast locally produced content following the COVID-19 pandemic. Their main goal is to raise awareness of that nation while providing opportunities for the local economy and culture to thrive. Every nation has unique cultural narratives about its indigenous spirit, and using storytelling and audiovisual media content to highlight heritage is an ideal way for government organizations to guaranty a worldwide audience (Khanna et al., 2024; Jo et al., 2025). Examining the marketing tactics employed for the tourist destinations was the study's second goal. Government organizations determined that their primary approach was to work with internet streaming services to produce locally made television series and movies. As a result, this tactic was successful for a number of nations, including France, Spain, Japan, and the United States of America (Iordache, 2021). This phenomenon has also encouraged the adoption of this strategy by nations like Brazil, South Africa, South Korea, and India. According to the study, Netflix is at the forefront of collaborations and mergers with international government agencies as the top online streaming service. The partner nations and their economies benefit greatly from these mergers (Chauhan, 2026). Over time, these nations have also seen a significant increase in demand from tourists. Netflix's partnership with UN Tourism (formerly UNWTO) is a global tourism boost.

7. Conclusion

188 The paper investigates how the rise of OTT platforms, which have eclipsed traditional television,
189 has impacted tourism development across the globe (Tian, 2024; Behare et al., 2024). The
190 emergence of online streaming services and widespread affordable internet access has made content
191 more reachable for a larger audience, increasing their enthusiasm for travel destinations showcased
192 online. It has been noted that screen tourism has been driving tourism demand for many years, and
193 media-induced tourism has emerged as an important factor in promoting tourism (Gaonkar et al.,
194 2022). The research employs a case study approach to analyze the various collaborations that OTT
195 platforms have formed with countries around the world. The aim of this research was to examine
196 how government agencies interact with OTT platforms to enhance and promote tourism
197 destinations, while also looking into the marketing tactics employed for these locations. The goals
198 were achieved by utilizing a case study methodology. This research indicates that online content
199 streaming services are open to collaboration with government agencies, particularly when the
200 destinations feature rich cultural heritage and possess moderate levels of recognition. Tourism
201 boards around the globe are partnering with OTT platforms to showcase their nations' economies
202 and cultures through effective narrative-building and storytelling. This approach has resulted in a
203 rise in tourist visits to various destinations, including France, Spain, Japan, the U.S.A., and
204 numerous others (Yoon et al., 2026). Additionally, it has been found that the majority of the "first
205 world countries" or "developed countries" were involved in marketing their locations as tourist
206 attractions. As a result, it makes perfect sense for nations like India to take part in promoting their
207 travel destinations as part of their "Viksit Bharat" vision. As the top OTT platform in the world,
208 Netflix has also been found to play a significant role in the demand for travel. Additionally,
209 according to Jo et al. (2025) and Lee et al. (20), it is the most active OTT platform when it comes to
210 taking part in international government initiatives to stimulate cultural, economic, promotional, and
211 development efforts.

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