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# Over-the-top (OTT) as Safeguard to Malaysia Films into Digital Film Archiving

Ahmad Elrafaei Mohamed Sapi

[1] Ahmad Elrafaei Mohamed Sapi, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Perdana, Selangor, 2020917525@student.uitm.edu.my

## ABSTRACT

Digital technology gives an impact to film archiving to save original films from damage and lost. Not all films have been doing for purpose of preservation and restoration. As an option, film can be preserved and restored by over-the-top (OTT) streaming platform. This OTT become as popular demand for producers to screening their films to public which are not depending on cinema. OTT also become as favourite medium for audiences as entertainment pleasure. In the year of 2025, producers have more selection of OTT streaming platform whereby it can be screening and access on television, smartphones, tablets, and computer. The purpose of this study is to investigate how OTT streaming platforms could help producers to screening their film reel or any audiovisual content in digital format. This article also intended to provide better understanding of OTT streaming platform that can possibly safeguard original films especially from physical copy. This study aimed to identify the function of OTT streaming platform which can be used for the purpose of film preservation and restoration. The data were collected from previous research and news article related with OTT and film archiving.

**Keywords:** *Film archiving; preservation; restoration; over-the-top; OTT*

## INTRODUCTION

The revolution on digital technology brings more issues to film archiving. Most of issues are not all films has been kept in digital format, the selection of film to be screening on OTT streaming platform and the technology OTT streaming platform itself where it can be possible to save original films into film archiving. Two iconic Malay film for example, *Kembara Seniman Jalanan* directed by Nasir Jani and *Mat Gelap* which directed and produced by Datuk Zahim Al-Bakri was screening on OTT streaming platform known as SIAR. Both films were upgraded in HD resolution after involved in restoration process. Unfortunately, Malay's first film, *Laila Majnun* has no archiving and it was believed that some of others old films also cannot be screening via OTT streaming platform because of the original reels was damaged and lost. Some producers have their own selection for OTT streaming platform to be more focused on audience targeted and to get an exclusivity screening. Another issue was the low quality of films produced in the 70s and 80s which have difficulties in screening on OTT streaming platform. Malaysia Filmmaker, Isazaly Isa in his keynote speech during World Day for Audiovisual Heritage 2021 said that our audiences still can watch the Malay classic films on TV today because of the original copy of the movies which were recorded in 35 mm, celluloid with black and white version was kept safely in videotape such as Betacam since the 1980s. He added, restoration is not only to give new visual or change the product to be different from the originals. Restoration must respect the original material as an upgrade in the latest technology and save as heritage collections also for future reference to filmmakers. Award winning film director, Aziz M Osman make the decision to do restoration for his film, *Leftenan Adnan* in 2K format before screening on OTT streaming platform via Netflix and SIAR. The restoration project was led by Isazaly.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The world has change as the entertainment platform also interact with new digital age. Audiences always looking for new content to be entertained while producers and content service provider are trying to produce more quality content and at the same time, penetrate the new market. Česáľková (2024) mentioned that digital technology has created an environment that has resulted in many old films rising from their graves, with producers now able to make profits by selling broadcast rights to television channels and OTT platforms, illustrating the incentive to convert their decaying films into new digital assets. Award-Winning actress, Erma Fatima had collaboration with Usanita Sdn Bhd to helping local producers to screening their content via OTT streaming platform. She said their mission is to produce more telefilm and film with different genre which are not depending on audience demands. They have their own content to be collaborate and screening only on this OTT streaming platform, not for other television channel or different OTT streaming platform (Abdul Rahman, 2025). When the current technology more upgraded and entertainment atmosphere has been changed, this OTT streaming platform brings more advantage to filmmakers and producers to screening their program at different platform. For instance, the accessibility of films via OTT platforms has raised public knowledge and interest in particular films, which has resulted in increased box office receipts for those films. OTT platforms have also made it possible for independent filmmakers to connect with a larger audience, which has aided in the promotion of varied and original material. By altering the way people consume media, OTT platforms have had a significant impact on the movie business (Pathak & Kumar, 2023).

## CONCLUSION

OTT streaming platform has created a new option for filmmakers to screening their films to the audiences. As filmmakers are trying to explore and penetrate the new platform of OTT, this will also help them to preserved own film in the future. The advantages of using OTT streaming platform are not only to screening their film into digital format but it creates awareness and better understanding about digital platform.

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