

Streaming service aims for French cinema niche

November 16 2021



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A streaming service dedicated to French cinema that launched Tuesday in North America is aiming to carve a niche for itself in a business dominated by Silicon Valley giants like Netflix.

Cinessance founder Clement Monnet, a San Francisco area-based French

expat, founded the platform in response to frustrating efforts to find [films](#) from home to stream, particularly to share with his American wife.

For Monnet, there's no doubt about the appeal of France's production as the second largest exporter of films in the world, with an average of 14 million tickets bought at theaters to see French films each year.

"We see that French cinema is popular," he said.

The subscription-based service launched in North America with a catalog of 100 films from vintage works starring actor Jean Gabin to the latest by filmmaker Cedric Klapisch, along with [animated film](#) "Kirikou" and action comedy "Taxi."

While people tend to stick with subscriptions to a major [streaming service](#) with a broad selection of content, there is a trend toward also signing up for services that are "cheaper and a little more targeted," said Monnet.

He gave examples such as Shudder, known for horror flicks, and Korean drama-focused [service](#) Viki, owned by Rakuten.

To meet costs of running the streaming platform and licensing content, Cinessance will need to quickly get about 3,000 subscribers.

In the growing streaming market, Netflix has been ramping up production of original shows and films by local talent in countries around the world. The US-based firm had a worldwide hit with French-language series "Lupin."

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Citation: Streaming service aims for French cinema niche (2021, November 16) retrieved 19

April 2024 from

<https://techxplore.com/news/2021-11-streaming-aims-french-cinema-niche.html>

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