

Netflix releases vast viewing data for first time

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Netflix co-CEO Ted Sarandos has come under pressure to be more transparent during strikes by Hollywood writers' and actors' unions.

Netflix for the first time published detailed viewing figures about thousands of its shows and movies Tuesday, offering an unprecedented glimpse into the world-leading streaming platform's top hits and highest-

profile flops.

The report, which Netflix says will be repeated every six months, is a major departure for a company that has historically guarded its data closely, but came under renewed pressure to be more transparent during strikes this year by Hollywood writers' and actors' unions.

"This is a big step forward for Netflix and our industry," the company said in a [press release](#).

"We believe the viewing information in this report... will give creators and our industry deeper insights into our audiences, and what resonates with them."

Since 2021, Netflix has released weekly Top 10 lists, and a regularly updated "most popular" leaderboard based on views within a title's first 91 days on the platform.

But the biannual new publication, entitled "What We Watched: A Netflix Engagement Report," goes further.

A new spreadsheet contains data for all shows that were watched by Netflix users for more than 50,000 hours—that is 18,000 titles in total, representing 99 percent of all viewing on Netflix.

The data only covers the period of January to June 2023, meaning that films and series released during that time fared better.

Topping the chart was season one of "The Night Agent," a US action-thriller that debuted in March, drawing more than 812 million hours watched globally.

Other high-profile Netflix titles performing well were "Wednesday,"

"You" and "Bridgerton" spin-off series "Queen Charlotte."

Non-English language shows were well-represented, generating 30 percent of all viewing—most notably Korean- and Spanish-language titles.

The lack of transparency among streaming platforms including Netflix, Apple and Prime Video has long been a bugbear of Hollywood agents, journalists and the stars themselves.

But it came into stark focus during this year's Hollywood strikes.

Striking actors and writers, previously accustomed to receiving generous "residuals" whenever their shows drew large audiences on television networks, this summer demanded new mechanisms to similarly reward them for hit shows on streaming.

Deals struck with those unions to end the strikes did contain bonuses for successful shows, but did not require streamers to publicly release any data.

Speaking to reporters Tuesday, Netflix co-CEO Ted Sarandos denied that the new initiative was triggered by talks with those guilds.

He said Netflix in its early years "did not want to provide roadmaps to future competitors" by sharing valuable [data](#).

But that policy had "created an atmosphere of mistrust over time," and the company had become more transparent as streaming became more mainstream.

"This has been on a continuum for several years. So this is not driven by anything differently than that," he said.

He added, "This is probably more information than you need. But I think it creates a better environment for the guilds, for us, for the producers, for creators, and for the press."

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