



How can I download a movie off a streaming service to show in your class? The answer is you cannot.

What this document will show you...

This document will discuss why it is not possible to redistribute content from a streaming service and it will offer a solution to how you may obtain content from the original creator.

Discussion...

Often the question asked is if ITS is able to take a movie from (Amazon, Hulu, iTunes, Netflix, or whatever streaming service) and put that video on Video47? Another often asked question: Is it possible to show a or rebroadcast (Amazon, Hulu, iTunes, Netflix, or whatever streaming service) video over Zoom or some other video conferencing software so that students can watch the content together online while at different physical locations?

These questions are usually asked because a video cannot be found anywhere and there is no DVD available for purchase. You have even checked with the library it does not appear on any of their video streaming services.

The answer to both of these questions is no. Let us look at why the answer is no. First, (Amazon, Hulu, iTunes, Netflix, or whatever streaming service) are subscription services that are licensed to individual persons. You personally nor Pomona College has the right to download content and redistribute it. Likewise, you personally nor Pomona College has the right to rebroadcast their streaming services via another streaming service such as Zoom. There is no way for (Amazon, Hulu, iTunes, Netflix, or whatever streaming service) to know if you are streaming to your class under banner of fair use or if you are sharing the content with 3,000 random people around the globe.

Over the years there has been found one interesting solution to this problem. Content creators want their films to be seen by your students. However, sometimes you need to make them aware of that. Often the directors, producers, and many involved in the production of the film are actually quite easy to find, especially for some of the newer titles. Simply look at the IMDB, you will get some names, then a few quick searches and you can usually locate someone to contact.

Faculty might want to attempt sending an email to a content creator explaining that they would like to show their film as part of their class and that the current distribution channels (Amazon, Hulu, iTunes, Netflix, or whatever streaming service) does not make this possible. The Faculty can also ask if there is a DVD, film festival copy, or digital file that they could use for student

viewing. The Faculty can also explain that they have the ability to place their creative work on a secure in-house video on demand server (like Video47) and that the copy could be removed at the end of the semester, or something like that.

So, the idea is to ask for permission. Most of the time content creators will say yes. Most will negotiate a simple contract that says the content will be for academic viewing only, ensure that their film will not be redistributed, it will be stored on a secure server, and agree on a timeline that specifies when the digital file might need to be deleted. Sometimes they just send you the title other times they will have you sign a paper that amounts to a basic contract.

Please remember that people make films for them to be watched. Often, creators are happy that you have contacted them. Yes, the film distribution system is broken and honestly some things need to be rethought. There is no technical solution to this that makes fiscal sense on our end or a solution that is legal. Always remember (Amazon, Hulu, iTunes, Netflix, or whatever streaming service) will make you into a criminal if you attempt to rebroadcast or redistribute their work without an agreement. However, those who create these films want them to be viewed.