



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# DIGITAL MARKETING AND ILLEGAL PRODUCTS: A CASE STUDY ON IPTV

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### ABSTRACT

Digital marketing offers a diverse toolkit for enhancing the visibility, engagement, and sales of products online. This paper investigates the unique landscape of illegal IPTV services, focusing on the challenges and strategies within their digital marketing efforts. Through a mixed-methods approach, analyzing responses from 100 individuals via SPSS, we've uncovered distinct obstacles these services face, particularly in promotion and payment processes. Notably, the study finds that while traditional paid media channels often prove problematic for illicit products due to regulatory hurdles, illegal IPTV providers gravitate towards earned and owned media. These channels circumvent the limitations encountered with paid media, enabling more effective dissemination and promotion of their services. This preference highlights the adaptability required in digital marketing strategies when navigating the legalities and constraints of the digital market space. The insights from this research not only shed light on the operational dynamics of illegal IPTV services but also underscore the broader implications for digital marketing practices in contested or regulated sectors.

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## INTRODUCTION

The digital age has markedly transformed how we access and consume television content, primarily through the introduction of Internet Protocol Television (IPTV). This innovation offers unprecedented access to a wide range of broadcast and on-demand services (Hyeong Yu Jang *et al.*, 2011). IPTV's success stems from a combination of market-specific and universal factors (Wes Simpson, 2007). As a purely digital solution, IPTV adapts its video output to fit various screen types, offering capabilities far beyond those of conventional television networks (Gilbert Held, 2007). Research by Sim and Jung (2009) predicts IPTV will evolve into a unified platform that merges entertainment, information, and communication, shifting towards a consumer desire for anytime, anywhere, any content, on any device approach, with a focus on personalized content (Sim & Jung, 2009). Moreover, Batra and Keller (2016) highlight the critical role of cohesive marketing strategies across old and new media channels in influencing consumer choices, essential for tapping into IPTV's potential as an effective marketing medium (Batra & Keller, 2016). This research provides a comprehensive analysis of digital marketing's influence on the illicit Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) industry, exploring its multifaceted impact. By dissecting the sophisticated tactics employed by unauthorized content distributors, the study aims to delineate the diverse strategies adopted by these illegal IPTV operators to leverage digital marketing's efficacy, specifically how these unlicensed entities utilize digital marketing techniques to augment their user base.

Furthermore, this scholarly article delves into the intricate relationship between digital marketing approaches and the expansion of illegal IPTV services. It endeavors to elucidate the degree to which digital marketing accelerates the proliferation of unlawful IPTV activities and identifies potential strategies to facilitate their advancement. The central research question posed by this study is: *To what extent does digital marketing contribute to the expansion of illegal IPTV practices, and what strategies can be developed to enhance their proliferation?* This query seeks to uncover the impact of digital marketing on the growth of unauthorized IPTV services and to explore potential methodologies for optimizing their promotional efforts within the digital sphere. To address this inquiry, it is imperative to conduct an in-depth review of the existing literature pertinent to this subject matter, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the various dimensions involved.

## RELATED LITERATURE

In the execution of this systematic review, we formulated a search strategy tailored specifically to uncover pertinent literature within the domain of interest. This strategy was meticulously designed to align with the Scopus database, employing a comprehensive set of search terms such as "over-the-top," "digital product," "IPTV," "VOD," "video streaming," and "video on demand." Our search spanned from the inception of the database to the present, filtering for articles, review papers, and research reports published exclusively in English, adhering to the PRISMA guidelines (Moher *et al.*, 2009). The focal point of our literature search encompassed the realms of social

sciences, environmental sciences, business, and economics, with a particular emphasis on economics, covering the period from 2003 to 2023. This meticulous process led to the exclusion of 91 articles, culminating in a curated selection of 29 articles that were identified as pertinent for in-depth review and analysis. In a comprehensive exploration of the digital broadcasting landscape, a series of scholarly articles offers insightful analyses into regulatory, technological, and market dynamics. Antonios (2023) provides a detailed review of the academic literature on the regulation of online platforms, offering a transnational perspective on policy initiatives and arguing that the challenges faced by video-on-demand (VOD) platforms are influenced by state-society relations and global interdependence. Simpson (2007) investigates the success factors behind IPTV services in Europe, identifying low prices, limited competition, a wide range of content, and new services as key contributors to their popularity, including their role in delivering basic international programs. Leyli *et al.* (2016) introduce an innovative privacy-preserving IPTV advertising system that employs encryption techniques and anonymized demographic data to deliver high-quality targeted advertising through a communication model involving users, content providers, advertisers, and cloud servers. Felix *et al.* (2023) explore the adoption of over-the-top (OTT) services by digital natives, integrating theories of perceived value, cognitive absorption, and brand engagement to demonstrate the positive impact of cognitive absorption and brand commitment on content consumption, with notable differences observed across genders.

Sooyeon (2023) addresses the factors influencing the perceived value of digital content services on OTT platforms, highlighting the discrepancy between user satisfaction and ease of use, and pointing out the ineffectiveness of costs in enhancing perceived value. Camilleri *et al.* (2021) examine the use and satisfaction with online broadcast technologies during the COVID-19 pandemic, revealing the importance of perceived usefulness and ease of use in achieving emotional satisfaction. Shanu (2023) studies user experiences and beliefs regarding OTT video platforms, employing the cognitive absorption method to assess perceived usefulness and intentions for continued use. Further research by Yohanes *et al.* (2021) focuses on system quality, perceived value, and brand personality as predictors of subscriber behavior, underscoring the role of consumer loyalty driven by brand value, uniqueness, authenticity, and enjoyment. Dario (2022) investigates user attitudes towards streaming content piracy under strict copyright enforcement regimes, finding that positive beliefs about piracy correlate with positive emotions, while negative emotions foster resistance. Menon (2022) identifies eight Uses and Gratifications criteria for OTT service use, noting that only some predict purchase intentions. Subsequent studies, including Michael *et al.* (2023), Timothy *et al.* (2023), Jitender *et al.* (2020), Tim *et al.* (2018), Can *et al.* (2021), Chulmin *et al.* (2023), and Sinem *et al.* (2020), further expand on the themes of strategic challenges, user behavior, content piracy, and marketing strategies within the evolving digital broadcasting and OTT service landscape, offering nuanced perspectives on the interplay between technology, market forces, and regulatory environments. Upon a comprehensive examination of the existing literature, we have identified a significant knowledge gap: there is a lack of research exploring the promotion strategies of illegal IPTV services, the challenges encountered by both sellers and buyers during the transaction process, and the distinctions between legal and illegal IPTV offerings. This study is dedicated to addressing these critical questions, aiming to provide a thorough understanding of the intricacies involved in the illegal IPTV market.

**Internet Protocol Television:** Prior to delving into the distinctions between legal and illicit dimensions of Internet Protocol Television (IPTV), a foundational understanding of the term is imperative. As delineated by Amal *et al.* (2011), IPTV refers to a suite of digital television services transmitted over an Internet network. From the perspective of service providers, the scope of IPTV includes the procurement, processing, and secure dissemination of video content via an IP (Internet Protocol) network. Building on the aforementioned definitions, IPTV essentially operates as a platform for distributing television channels, movies, and series. Thus, illegal IPTV represents

a violation of copyright laws that safeguard the intellectual property rights of content creators and broadcasters. In essence, it denotes a service facilitating access to copyright-protected content absent the necessary licensing or permissions. Within the context of IPTV services as outlined by Amal *et al.* (2011), a diverse array of offerings caters to varying consumer preferences and viewing habits:

- **Live TV Services:** This category enables viewers to access television channels in real-time, paralleling the experience provided by traditional cable or satellite TV. It facilitates immediate engagement with a wide array of programming, including TV shows, news broadcasts, sports events, and other live occurrences.
- **Video-on-Demand (VOD) Services:** VOD represents a segment within IPTV that provides a comprehensive library of content available for on-demand viewing. This service encompasses a vast selection of movies, TV series, documentaries, and other video content ready for broadcast, allowing users the flexibility to select and view content at their leisure.
- **Time-Shifted TV Services:** Offering a level of control comparable to that of a Digital Video Recorder (DVR), time-shifted TV services permit users to pause, rewind, or fast-forward through live TV broadcasts. Additionally, it enables the scheduling of recordings for future playback, enhancing the convenience and personalization of the viewing experience.

**Digital communication platforms:** Digital communication platforms are classified into three distinct categories: paid media, owned media, and earned media, each integral to the formulation of comprehensive marketing strategies. These channels collectively facilitate a multifaceted approach to engaging audiences, enhancing brand visibility, and driving consumer interaction in the digital landscape. The POE (paid, owned, earned) model presents a framework for country brand communication, highlighting the increasing dilemma of selecting the right tools among the many available, with a focus on Hungary and other good practices (Papp-Vary & Farkas, 2019). In entertainment branding, earned media is more impactful per exposure than paid and owned media. However, due to the vast number of exposures, paid media has a dominant influence, with earned media mainly enhancing enjoyment (Lovett & Staelin, 2012). In emerging markets, owned media and digital inbound marketing significantly influence B2B customer acquisition, with earned social media complementing owned but not paid media, suggesting a need for market development approaches in such contexts (Vieira *et al.*, 2019). Treem and Leonardi (2013) investigate the role of specific social media features, such as visibility, the capability for edits, enduring content, and the facilitation of connections, in influencing the dynamics of communication within organizations. Their research suggests that these characteristics encourage practices that foster social interaction, the sharing of knowledge, and the restructuring of power relations, thereby challenging and possibly transforming established paradigms of organizational communication. The harmonization of Owned, Paid, and Earned media channels forms the cornerstone of a sophisticated marketing strategy, meticulously capitalizing on the unique attributes of each to amplify brand visibility, foster audience engagement, and catalyze strategic goals. Herein lies a concise elaboration (Scott, D. M. 2010):

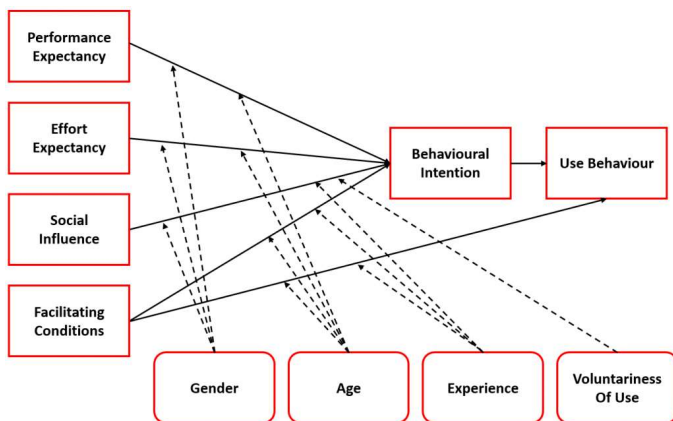
- **Owned Media:** This category encompasses the array of communication platforms and assets over which a brand exercises unilateral control. It epitomizes the brand's proprietary channels, with the company's website serving as the quintessential example of a medium fully under the brand's governance. This domain extends to encompass search engine optimization strategies, the primary website, product-specific microsites, and the overarching corporate web presence.
- **Paid Media:** This segment embodies the comprehensive suite of advertising endeavors a brand can undertake to bolster its visibility. It spans a diverse range of formats, including but

not limited to paid search campaigns, social media advertising on platforms like Facebook, and native advertising initiatives. Paid media is instrumental in extending the brand's reach, targeting specific demographics, and driving immediate engagement.

- **Earned Media:** Manifested through the organic spread of brand mentions, including customer feedback, reviews, social media endorsements, and peer-to-peer recommendations, earned media represents the credibility and acknowledgment a brand acquires spontaneously from external entities. This type of media emerges as a direct consequence of the brand's inherent value and the quality of its engagements, serving as an authentic barometer of public sentiment and trust.

### Technology acceptance theory

The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) has indeed been a cornerstone model in illuminating the various determinants that influence technology acceptance and usage across diverse fields. Established by Venkatesh *et al.* (2003), UTAUT integrates elements from eight prominent theories on technology acceptance and usage, including the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), into a singular, comprehensive framework. This model has significantly contributed to our understanding of how performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions collectively impact individuals' intentions to adopt and use new technologies.



**Figure 1. Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)**

This comprehensive model is impeccably aligned with our objectives to elucidate the purchase intentions and actual purchasing behaviors of internet users. It delineates four principal constructs — performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions — each playing a pivotal role in shaping users' acceptance and utilization of technology. Moreover, the model offers an insightful perspective on the variability in technology adoption rates among individuals, attributing these differences to four moderating factors: age, gender, experience, and voluntariness of use. This nuanced approach allows for a more granular understanding of how and why individuals engage with technology, making it an invaluable tool for analyzing consumer behavior in the digital domain. Through its application, we aim to uncover the underlying motivations and barriers that influence internet users' decision-making processes regarding online purchases. Following the detailed explanation of Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) and the exploration of digital promotion tools alongside the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology, our investigation now turns to distinguishing the marketing practices of IPTV services within both legal and illegal parameters. To comprehensively address these distinctions, our research employs a customized interview guide designed specifically for IPTV service providers. This tool acts as a focused methodological approach for a deep dive into the perspectives and experiences of professionals involved in the marketing of IPTV services. Through meticulously structured interviews, our aim is to

capture relevant, in-depth data that illuminates the operational nuances of the IPTV industry and identifies the challenges faced by service vendors. With the research objectives clearly defined and the empirical data collected, we proceed to the analytical phase of our study. This stage is committed to a thorough evaluation of our findings, with the ultimate goal of confirming or disproving the hypotheses formulated in response to our research question. This analytical process is crucial for uncovering the intricacies of IPTV marketing strategies, thereby enriching our understanding of the sector's legal and illegal practices.

**Research Model:** This article is dedicated to exploring a critical inquiry: "To what extent does digital marketing facilitate the proliferation of illegal IPTV practices, and what strategies can be devised to foster their promotion?" Notably, existing literature predominantly focuses on the lawful aspects of IPTV, often failing to delineate between the service's legal and illicit components. Furthermore, while terms such as OTT (over-the-top) and VoD (Video on Demand) are frequently mentioned, there exists a lacuna in comprehensively elucidating the vast array of contemporary IPTV formats. Thus, this study aims to bridge this gap by posing the following research question:

**Question 1:** What constitutes illegal IPTV, and in what forms does it manifest?

Given the absence of scholarly exploration into the marketing context of this service, it becomes imperative to examine whether the marketing techniques employed for promoting such services mirror those utilized for lawful equivalents. This curiosity gives rise to additional questions:

**Question 2:** In what ways do digital marketing strategies bolster the expansion and user acquisition of illegal IPTV services?

**Question 3:** What are the specific tactics and methodologies deployed to engage the intended audience effectively?

**Question 4:** Does the transactional process for illegal services parallel that of legal offerings?

By addressing these queries, this article seeks to delve into the intricacies of digital marketing's role in the ascendancy of illegal IPTV practices. Our objective is to uncover the nuanced strategies that underpin the promotion of these services, thereby contributing a sophisticated analysis to the discourse on digital marketing's impact on the segmentation between legal and illegal IPTV services. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has been widely recognized as an effective framework for assessing user acceptance of technology. It suggests that the perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness significantly affect users' intentions to engage with a technological offering. Leveraging the foundational principles of TAM, we have formulated four research questions aimed at dissecting the factors influencing users' intentions to engage with illegal IPTV services:

**Question 5:** How does the anticipated performance of the service influence users' intentions to utilize it?

**Question 6:** In what way does the expected effort required to use the service affect users' willingness to adopt it?

**Question 7:** To what extent does social influence shape users' intentions to engage with the service?

**Question 8:** How do facilitating conditions impact users' decision to use the service?

Through these questions, we aim to explore the multifaceted dimensions that drive user engagement with illegal IPTV services. This investigation seeks to unveil the complex interplay between service performance expectations, the effort perceived by users, the role of social dynamics, and the influence of supportive conditions in shaping users' intentions, providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors that propel users towards the adoption of illegal IPTV services. To address the outlined research questions, our methodology will encompass both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Firstly, qualitative research will form the bedrock of our study, concentrating on the exploration of perceptions, viewpoints, and ideas to deeply understand our research questions. This approach will be

operationalized through content analysis, which aims to gather and interpret data from various sites. This method will enable us to uncover the marketing practices within the IPTV sector and evaluate their significance. Additionally, we will create an interview guide tailored for salespersons, aiming to identify the distinct attributes and challenges associated with marketing IPTV services. Secondly, to ensure a comprehensive analysis and enrich the findings of our study, we will implement a quantitative research strategy. This approach will allow us to collect raw data in numerical form, which will be systematically organized and analyzed statistically. The quantitative data will assist in drawing broader conclusions from our study. Specifically, we will conduct a survey designed to validate the insights obtained from the content analysis and to gather further details regarding user motivations, service acceptance, and perceptions of IPTV services, irrespective of their legality. This dual-method approach is designed to provide a thorough investigation into the research questions, offering both depth and breadth in understanding the dynamics of IPTV service promotion and user engagement.

**Interview guide:** The interview guide was meticulously prepared and executed with the founder of a company deeply involved in the development of an IPTV Player—a platform designed for streaming IPTV content. To ensure the protection of privacy and maintain confidentiality, the identity of the company's founder will not be disclosed. The interview shed light on the array of challenges faced by the company, especially concerning the utilization of the term "IPTV" in their online marketing efforts.

The company recognizes that the designation "IPTV" has garnered a degree of illegitimacy, attributed to its association with certain keywords and its visibility in search engine results on social media platforms, including Facebook and Instagram. A significant area of concern revolves around the transactional mechanisms employed by the company. Given that the application developed by the company serves as a content player, which remains lawful within its operational jurisdiction, the company nonetheless faces obstacles with payment processes. Specifically, issues have arisen with the use of PayPal, a payment service that tends to favor the consumer over the merchant in disputes. This bias presents a notable challenge for the company, complicating the transaction process and impacting its business operations. Through this interview, insights into these operational difficulties provide a valuable perspective on the complexities encountered in the marketing and monetization of legal IPTV content delivery platforms. Incorporating insights from a comprehensive interview conducted with a salesperson representing the IPTV service, our research delves into the perceived advantages and operational challenges associated with IPTV platforms. The salesperson posited that IPTV offers an optimal solution for consumers eager to access movies and sports broadcasts, presenting a diverse array of content at a cost-effective price point when juxtaposed with alternatives like Netflix, Amazon, and Apple TV. Contrary to the necessity of actively promoting the service—a task complicated by the contentious legality surrounding the term "IPTV"—the strategy employed revolves around generating organic traffic. This is achieved by directing potential customers to their website, thereby facilitating transaction conversions.

Meta also fully supports the overall goals of the Notorious Markets List – an important tool to combat piracy and counterfeiting on the global stage and to induce foreign governments to take action to stop abuse of intellectual property rights. But if the Notorious Markets List is to continue to advance U.S. trade interests internationally, it needs to remain focused on the underlying purpose of the Special 301 program: the identification of *foreign* countries and *foreign* markets that engage in or facilitate piracy and counterfeiting. USTR should not allow parties to misuse the report to target U.S. companies – particularly those that have developed leading practices to protect intellectual property, driven American innovation forward and provided thousands of jobs globally. In that regard, Meta strongly objects to the assertions that Meta, including any of its family of apps and services, should be placed on the Notorious Markets List.

Figure 2. Meta Rebutts Notorious Markets Claims

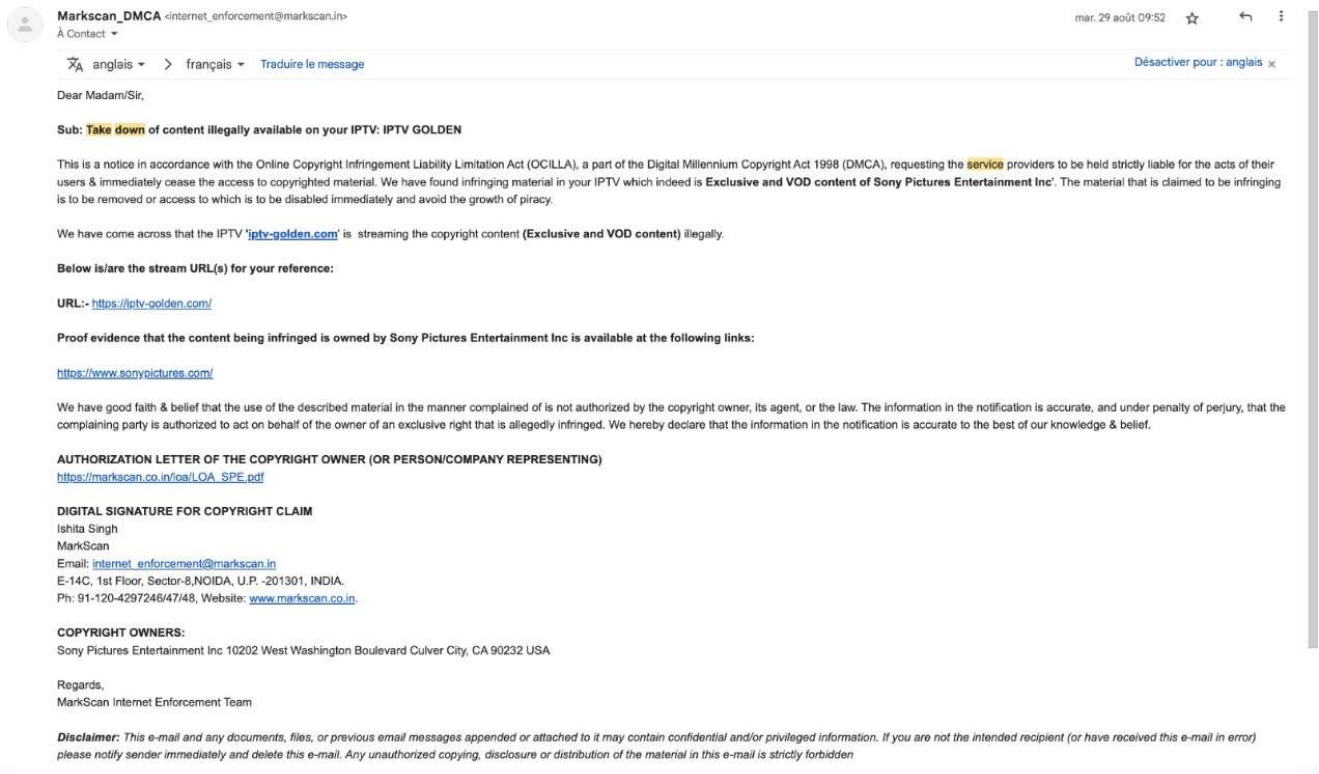


Figure 3. DMCA warning (Digital Millennium Copyright Act)



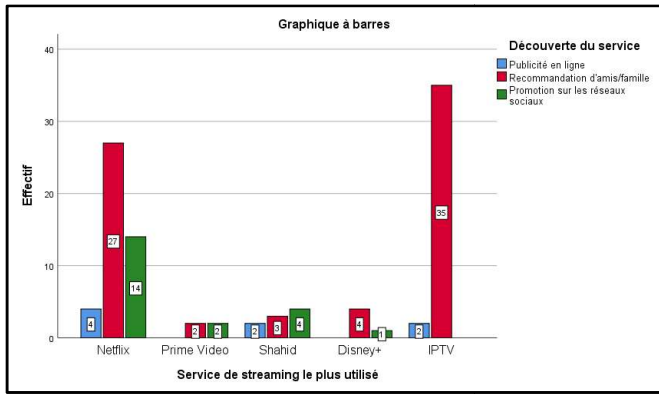


Figure 6. How the most popular service was discovered (source: SPSS)

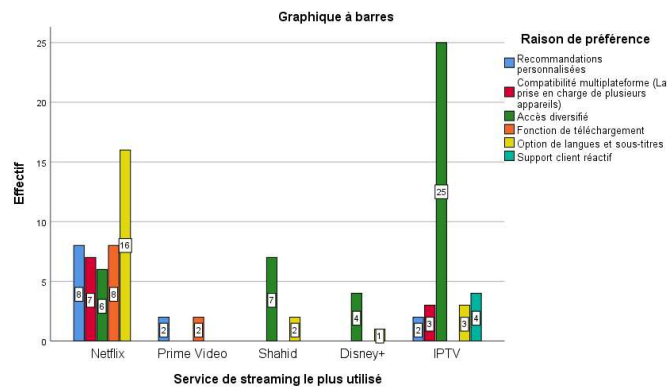


Figure 7. The reason for preference of the main service most used (source: SPSS)

Our research indicates that the primary motivation for 67.56% of individuals subscribing to an IPTV service is the diversified access it offers, encompassing movies, series, and live broadcasts. This highlights the value users place on a comprehensive content library. Additionally, online support is cited by 10.81% of respondents as a factor, illustrating the importance of customer service in the user experience. Cross-platform compatibility and the availability of multiple language and subtitle options are each identified by 8.1% of users as significant, reflecting the demand for accessibility and personalization in content consumption. Lastly, personalized content recommendations account for 5.4% of the motivations behind subscriptions, underscoring the role of tailored user experiences in enhancing viewer satisfaction. This distribution of reasons elucidates the multifaceted appeal of IPTV services, demonstrating the critical factors that contribute to their popularity among consumers.

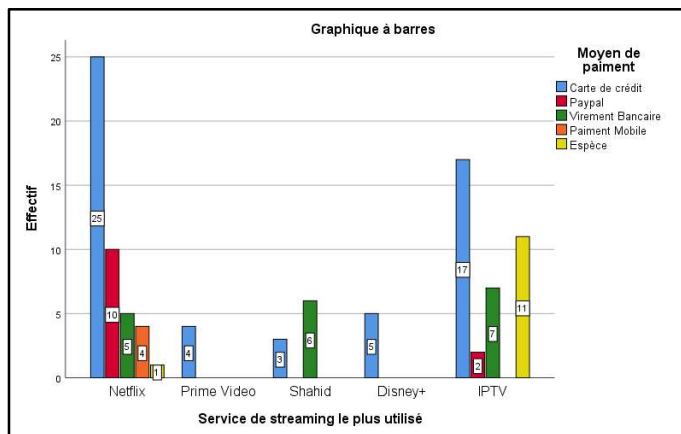


Figure 8. Payment method (source: SPSS)

Our analysis reveals that the predominant method of payment for IPTV subscriptions is via bank card, accounting for 45.94% of

transactions. This preference underscores the convenience and security associated with direct card payments in digital services. Following this, cash payments represent 29.72% of the payment landscape, indicating a substantial portion of users still opt for traditional payment methods. Bank transfers constitute 18.91% of payments, reflecting a preference for direct financial institution transactions. Lastly, PayPal, known for its global payment facilitation, is utilized by 5.4% of subscribers, highlighting its role, albeit smaller in comparison, within the payment ecosystem for IPTV services. This distribution of payment methods provides insight into the diverse financial preferences of IPTV users, highlighting the importance of offering multiple payment options to cater to a broad user base.

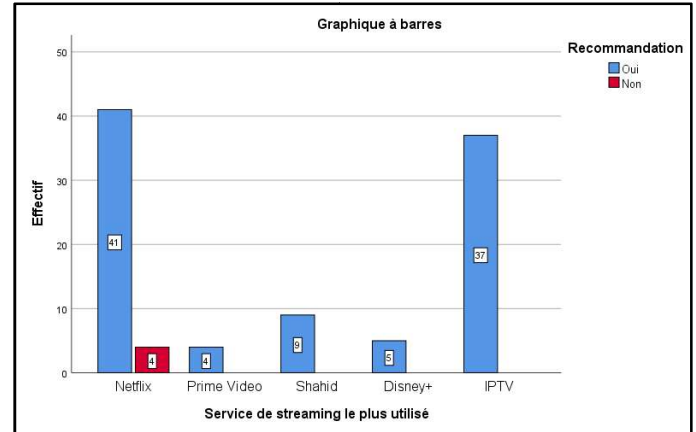


Figure 9: Payment method used (source: SPSS)

Our findings indicate that an unequivocal 100% of IPTV users advocate for the service by recommending it to others, showcasing an exceptional level of overall satisfaction among the user base. This unanimous endorsement highlights the positive reception and perceived value of IPTV services, suggesting that they effectively meet or exceed user expectations in terms of content, usability, and overall experience.

Rapport Qualité Prix	N	Moyenne	Ecart type	Erreur standard	Intervalle de confiance à 95 % pour la moyenne			Minimum	Maximum
					Borne inférieure	Borne supérieure			
Netflix	45	3,98	,988	,147	3,68	4,27	1	5	
Prime Video	4	3,50	1,732	,866	,74	6,26	2	5	
Shahid	9	3,33	1,118	,373	2,47	4,19	2	5	
Disney+	5	4,60	,548	,245	3,92	5,28	4	5	
IPTV	37	4,65	,484	,080	4,49	4,81	4	5	
Total	100	4,18	,957	,096	3,99	4,37	1	5	

Figure 10. Comparing averages: Service x Price-performance relationship (source: SPSS)

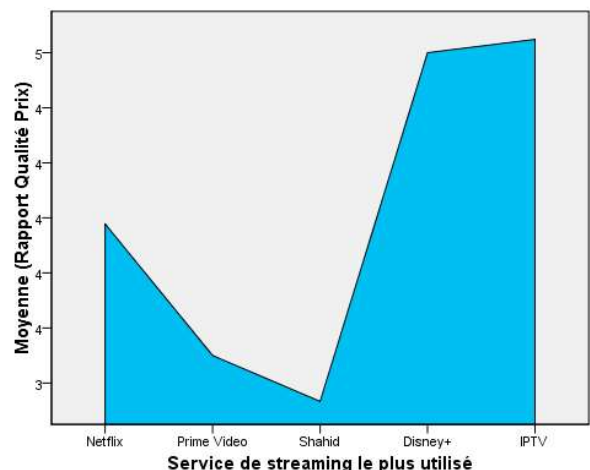


Figure 11. Graph showing comparison of averages: Service x Quality-price relationship (source: SPSS)

Our investigation into the relationship between streaming services and perceived value for money indicates that satisfaction levels fluctuate based on the service provider. Notably, individuals with an IPTV subscription report the highest level of satisfaction regarding value for money, with an average score of 4.65. This finding underscores IPTV's strong position in delivering content that subscribers deem worth their financial investment, compared to other available streaming options.

**Descriptives**

Service Après Vente

	N	Moyenne	Ecart type	Erreur standard	Intervalle de confiance à 95 % pour la moyenne			Minimum	Maximum
					Borne inférieure	Borne supérieure			
Netflix	45	3,62	,936	,140	3,34	3,90	2	5	
Prime Video	4	4,50	,577	,289	3,58	5,42	4	5	
Shahid	9	3,44	1,424	,475	2,35	4,54	2	5	
Disney+	5	3,40	2,191	,980	,68	6,12	1	5	
IPTV	37	4,24	,683	,112	4,02	4,47	3	5	
Total	100	3,86	1,025	,103	3,66	4,06	1	5	

**Figure 12. Comparison of averages: Service x After-Sales Service (source: SPSS)**

In examining the connection between streaming service selection and the quality of after-sales support, our study reveals notable differences in satisfaction levels among various service providers. Importantly, subscribers to IPTV services report a significantly positive experience with after-sales support, achieving an average satisfaction score of 4.24. This places IPTV as the provider with the second-highest satisfaction rating for after-sales service compared to its competitors. This outcome highlights IPTV's commitment to customer support, underscoring its effectiveness in addressing post-purchase queries and concerns, thereby solidifying its reputation among users for reliable after-sales service.

**Descriptives**

Performance Attendue

	N	Moyenne	Ecart type	Erreur standard	Intervalle de confiance à 95 % pour la moyenne			Minimum	Maximum
					Borne inférieure	Borne supérieure			
Netflix	45	4,02	,753	,112	3,80	4,25	2	5	
Prime Video	4	4,00	1,155	,577	2,16	5,84	3	5	
Shahid	9	3,78	,833	,278	3,14	4,42	3	5	
Disney+	5	4,60	,548	,245	3,92	5,28	4	5	
IPTV	37	4,22	,712	,117	3,98	4,45	3	5	
Total	100	4,10	,759	,076	3,95	4,25	2	5	

**Figure 13. Comparison of means: Service x Expected Performance (source: SPSS)**

Our analysis of the nexus between streaming service selection and performance expectations uncovers divergent satisfaction levels across different service providers. Crucially, individuals with an IPTV subscription reported a satisfaction average of 4.22 regarding the expected performance of their service. This positions IPTV as the provider with the second-highest satisfaction rating in terms of performance expectations when compared with other services. This finding highlights IPTV's capability to meet or exceed user expectations on performance metrics, affirming its standing as a reliable and efficient choice among streaming platforms.

**Descriptives**

Facilité d'utilisation

	N	Moyenne	Ecart type	Erreur standard	Intervalle de confiance à 95 % pour la moyenne			Minimum	Maximum
					Borne inférieure	Borne supérieure			
Netflix	45	4,42	,657	,098	4,22	4,62	3	5	
Prime Video	4	4,50	,577	,289	3,58	5,42	4	5	
Shahid	9	3,22	,972	,324	2,48	3,97	2	5	
Disney+	5	4,20	1,095	,490	2,84	5,56	3	5	
IPTV	37	4,73	,450	,074	4,58	4,88	4	5	
Total	100	4,42	,755	,075	4,27	4,57	2	5	

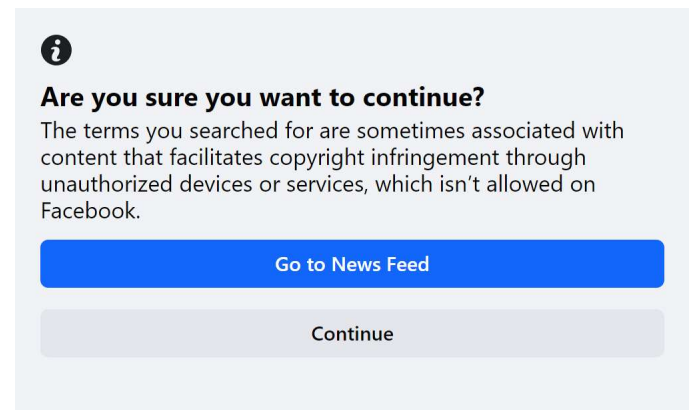
**Figure 14. Comparison of averages: Service x Ease of use (source: SPSS)**

In our exploration of the correlation between the choice of streaming service and its perceived ease of use, we discovered distinct variations in satisfaction levels among different service providers. Significantly, individuals who selected an IPTV subscription reported the highest

level of satisfaction regarding ease of use, with an average score of 4.73. This remarkable rating places IPTV at the forefront in terms of user-friendliness when compared to its competitors. This outcome underscores IPTV's excellence in providing a seamless and intuitive user experience, thereby enhancing overall user satisfaction and preference for IPTV services over others in the market.

## DISCUSSION

The empirical analysis conducted within this study has illuminated the complexities surrounding the IPTV service, addressing the research questions posited at the study's inception. We delineate two principal components of IPTV service: the player and the content. The player, essentially an application for content playback, occupies a legal grey area, contingent upon the jurisdiction. For instance, in the United States, such applications are deemed illegal, a stance echoed by Google's removal of an IPTV player from the App Store due to copyright infringement concerns. Conversely, the content component, typically accessed via a link to movies, series, and live TV channels, is unequivocally illegal, as demonstrated by Meta's proactive measures on its platforms, Facebook and Instagram. Here, users searching for IPTV or piracy-related terms encounter a pop-up detailing Meta's anti-intellectual property infringement policy, directing them to further resources.



**Figure 15. Meta's policy on intellectual property infringement (source: Facebook)**

This illicit aspect significantly hampers the service's promotability and transactional operations akin to legitimate services. Our findings, derived from both questionnaires and interviews, reveal a pronounced aversion to paid promotional avenues, likely due to potential punitive actions from Meta's and Google's algorithms against sponsored content and accounts. Instead, reliance on Earned and Owned media, particularly through offline and online customer recommendations, emerges as a viable promotional strategy, classified under the umbrella of Free-Traffic, indicating cost-free promotion. Payment processing presents additional challenges, with PayPal's rigorous transaction scrutiny leading to minimal usage by sellers due to the risk of account suspension for policy violations, especially when dealing with services like IPTV. A workaround involves utilizing a secondary, legally compliant site for payment redirection, effectively circumventing PayPal's scrutiny. This study has synthesized these operational intricacies into a comprehensive figure, offering a visual representation of the IPTV service's operational and promotional dynamics within the current legal and market framework. The questionnaire results pertaining to user motivations for selecting illegal IPTV services underscore the significant influence of the four foundational factors delineated by the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology. These factors are:

- **Expected Performance:** Users have high expectations regarding the benefits and performance of the service, believing that it will positively impact their viewing experience. This anticipation of favorable outcomes from utilizing the service underscores its perceived value.

- **Expected Effort:** The findings suggest that users perceive the service as user-friendly, asserting that engaging with it does not demand undue effort. This ease of use is a crucial factor in their decision to adopt the service.
- **Social Influence:** Recommendations and endorsements from peers play a pivotal role in influencing user choices, highlighting the significant impact of social networks and word-of-mouth in the adoption of illegal IPTV services.
- **Facilitating Conditions:** Users acknowledge the presence of adequate technical support and infrastructure that simplifies the usage of the service, enhancing its accessibility and convenience.

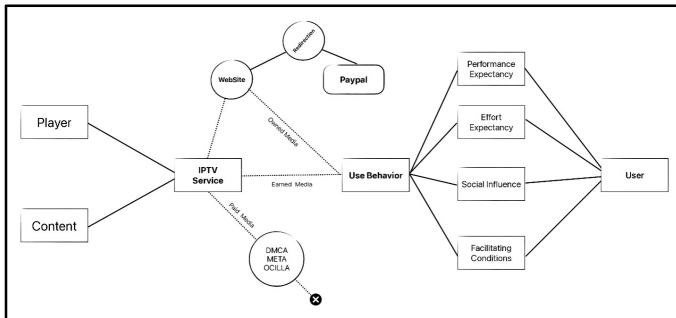


Figure 16. Summary of research results

These insights reveal that the appeal of illegal IPTV services is not merely a consequence of their content offerings but is also deeply rooted in the service's alignment with key factors that govern technology acceptance and use. The positive perceptions of expected performance, minimal effort requirement, strong social endorsement, and supportive technical conditions collectively contribute to the user's decision to engage with these services, despite their legal ambiguities.

## CONCLUSION

In the contemporary landscape, IPTV services emerge as formidable contenders against streaming giants like Netflix, drawing users with their superior value for money and access to a diverse content library. However, the pathway to accessing these services is fraught with complexities, particularly in the realms of payment processes and promotional hurdles, encompassing both the player application and content access (e.g., m3u links). It becomes evident that traditional marketing communication tools, commonly employed to deliver products to consumers, are not viable for IPTV services. Promotional efforts are often intercepted by copyright enforcement entities such as the DMCA (Digital Millennium Copyright Act) and OCILLA (Online Copyright Infringement Liability Limitation Act), precluding the use of online or paid advertising avenues due to potential legal repercussions, as depicted in figure 3 of our study. Consequently, sellers pivot towards leveraging "owned media" and "earned media" strategies, including search engine optimization and personal recommendations, to circumvent these challenges. While this article endeavors to shed light on these intricate dynamics, it is imperative to acknowledge inherent limitations that may influence the breadth of our conclusions. Specifically, the research scope is geographically confined to Agadir, potentially restricting the extrapolation of our findings to broader contexts. Additionally, our examination is exclusively focused on PayPal as the payment method for sellers, offering a detailed exploration of its associated challenges but simultaneously limiting the applicability of our insights to other payment platforms. These delineated constraints necessitate a careful interpretation of our study's implications and relevance within the wider scholarly and practical domains.

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