

Celestial Tiger countdown to CMGO launch

Streaming app marks new
direction for 20-year-old
Asian programmer

Celestial Tiger Entertainment (CTE) is counting down to the rollout of its first standalone streaming app, scheduled to go live in Q3 – possibly in the next week. The Hong Kong-based streamer, which announced the Chinese movies-focused app during the ContentAsia Summit in Bangkok last year, hasn't confirmed the exact date, but says the streaming service will rollout in Singapore first, followed by other markets in Southeast Asia.

The full story is on page 10

Astro premieres 1st Nippon TV scripted format

Love's In Sight! expands
Malaysian storytelling,
continues push into
non-traditional themes

Malaysian platform Astro premieres the local version of its first Japanese scripted format this evening, adding to a 2024 slate that continues to push barriers across genres and themes. *Dari Mata Turun Ke Hati*, which replaces *Daun Hijau Di Angin Lalu* on Astro Ria at 10pm, is adapted from Nippon TV's *Love's In Sight!*, about a visually impaired young woman and a juvenile delinquent.

The full story is on page 12

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Contact: CJ Yong at cj@contentasia.tv

Queen Woo raises hackles in Korea over historical details

Critics & fiction fans feud over alleged Chinese influence on Korean culture

Historical detail activists in Korea have mounted a new campaign protesting drama series, *Queen Woo*, scheduled to premiere on domestic streaming platform TVing on 29 August.

Defenders of the series are rejecting the accusations, saying the drama is fiction not documentary.

Set in the Goguryeo Kingdom, the eight-episode period action show is about a queen's battle to secure the throne after her husband dies with no heir.

Jeon Jong-seo (*Burning*) stars as the queen at the centre of the brutal political jostling that breaks out after the king's death. Ji Chang-wook plays King



Go Nam Moo, and Kim Mu-yeol stars as prime minister Eulpaso.

The series is written by Lee Byeong-hak (*The Royal Tailor*) and directed by Jung Se-kyo (*Oh! My Gran*). Production houses are Andmarq, Compass Pictures and CJ ENM Studios. The trailer released on 31 July

had 690,000 views on YouTube as of 11 August.

Response to the promotional campaign accuses filmmakers of being over-influenced by China's Qin Dynasty costume and hair styles, including top-knots, crowns, and fastenings.

Local media highlight the ongoing cultural feud between Korea and China over various issues, including the origins

of kimchi and hanbok, according to the Korea Times, which pointed to concerns that the drama "could inadvertently strengthen China's efforts to distort history such as through the so-called North-east Project".

Queen Woo has resurrected the 2021 outcry over Korean broadcaster SBS' historical-supernatural series, *Joseon Exorcist*, which was canceled after airing two episodes after viewer backlash.

The series was lambasted for historical inaccuracies and Chinese props, including the Chinese traditional mooncakes and a shaman's Chinese-style costume.

In 2022, tvN's period drama, *Under the Queen's Umbrella*, faced controversy for falsely portraying Korean history when it came to royal customs and using modern simplified Chinese characters in scenes.

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Miss Universe tug-of-war continues

JKN vs creditors: 29 August hearing on biz rehab

Thai listed JKN Global Group has appointed Baker Tilly Corporate Advisory Services (Thailand) to prepare a financial plan ahead of a critical bankruptcy court hearing to decide who will lead the company's business rehabilitation process.

The hearing is scheduled for 29 August.

The tug-of-war over control of the media company, which also owns the Miss Universe Organisation, is between high-profile JKN boss, Anne Jakrajutatip, and a large group of creditors, led by EY Corporate Advisory Services, representing North Haven Thai Private Equity and Gemini Company (Hong Kong) Limited/ Morgan Stanley.

At the end of June, JKN appeared to have won its bid to lead its own business rehabilitation process... but the ink hadn't dried on the vote before irate creditors – said to represent a total debt of US\$98.2 million – demanded the court double-check the numbers. JKN issued bonds totalling THB 3,603.6 million/US\$102.4 million.

JKN told Thailand's Stock Exchange on 8 August that its contract with previous financial advisor, Ploenchit Advisory and Planner, had been terminated by mutual agreement.

Baker Tilly steps into a roller-coaster environment of accusations and counter-accusations over JKN's business dealings and financial structure.

JKN, which hasn't filed financial statements for Q1 this year, confirmed on Friday (9 August) that it has ordered a special independent audit into "certain operational activities" of the company. Details of these activities have not been disclosed.

Reasons given for the special audit include "to ensure that the Company's transactions and operations are free from doubts and to avoid further objections/oppositions in the Company's business rehabilitation process," JKN said, adding that the audit would "resolve any concerns".

In what turned out to be a busy Friday last week, JKN also issued an update on lawsuits filed against its management in March this year by would-be partner, the Bangkok-based TCG Social Media Group.

The TCG row goes back to late 2023, when TCG accused JKN of giving the public false information regarding a deal for a Miss Universe Coin (MUCoin) cryptocurrency project.

TCG, which counts brands like Dyson, Central Village and Maybelline among its clients, said the MUCoin cryptocurrency project had been agreed between the two companies on 30 June 2023.

In September 2023, TGC introduced the coin during the Philippine Blockchain Week in Manila.

Miss Universe Organisation promptly denied all links with the Miss Universe Coin.

"There is currently no Miss Universe cryptocurrency or blockchain offering," the company said in a social media post, warning fans to please use caution and not to join in the coin scam.

In November 2023, TCG filed a criminal case for defamation through advertising and offenses under the Computer-Related Crime Act.

JKN says TCG's case, which claimed damaged of THB1 billion/ US\$28.3 million, was dismissed on 23 May 2024 as "baseless".

JKN's counter suit against TCG, which it says "has maliciously exercised its right to sue the Company and its managements, damaging the Company's image and reputation", will be heard at a preliminary examination on 19 August 2024.

JKN also plans to pursue a trademark infringement case against TCG, which it alleges used the Miss Universe Organisation's trademark without consent during the Philippine Blockchain Week (PBW).

JKN's stock price is down 93% over three years. Trading remains suspended.



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Toho, Netflix announce first project

Live action series reboot of 1960's *The Human Vapor*



Yeon Sang-ho and Shinzo Katayama

Netflix and Toho are collaborating for the first time on a reboot of the Japanese studio's legendary 1960 classic, *The Human Vapor*, as a live-action series produced by Toho Studios.

The reboot – led by Yeon Sang-ho (*Train to Busan*) as executive producer and scriptwriter and Shinzo Katayama (*Gannibal*) as director – is set in modern-day Japan and will feature a fresh storyline and cutting-edge visual effects technology, Netflix says.

The series is co-written by Ryu Yong-jae (*Parasyte: The Grey*).

Shun Oguri and Yu Aoi (*Hana and Alice*) reunite for the first time in 23 years for the remake, produced in association with Wow Point (*Parasyte: The Grey*).

The original *The Human Vapor*, directed by Ishiro Honda (*Godzilla*), made cinema history for its exploration of power structures and societal oppression.

The project has been in the works since 2018, and included an in-person script writing retreat in Korea.

"Considering the cultural nuances between Japan and Korea, we thought it would be easier to finetune the details by discussing them face-to-face," Katayama says.

In the project announcement this month, Yeon spoke about the challenge posted by Koreans writing a story set in Japan, and the collaboration with Toho to ensure authenticity.

The release date has not been confirmed.

Vikas Sharma joins Locomotive Global Media

Vikas Sharma has joined Sunder Aaron's Locomotive Global Media (LGM) as head of film projects, based in Mumbai. Sharma previously spent eight years at Bandra West Pictures, working with director Raja Krishna Menon. Speaking about his new role,

Sharma highlighted Locomotive's interest in horror and thriller stories "that possess an elevated approach to their storytelling". The new film division expanded LGM's focus on TV, including titles like the Indian version of *Ray Donovan*.

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8 Sept premiere for Nippon TV's first North American adaptation of *Old Enough!*



Old Enough! Canada

The Canadian adaptation of Nippon TV's *Old Enough!* premieres on TVO on 8 September. The eight-episode series – the first adaptation of the Japanese format in North America – is narrated by Canadian comedian Colin Mochrie (*Whose Line Is It Anyway?*). The series is a Blue Ant Studios' production.



Banijay Asia, Nadiadwala Grandson tie up

Banijay Asia and Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment have tied up on a Rs100 crore investment to produce films and TV titles for India, according to India's Economic Times. The two companies said the alliance paired Nadiadwala film experience with Banijay's TV/streaming expertise, and would unlock fresh perspective on storytelling.

TVing paying subs up 29% Korean platform hits 7.4 million MAUs in Q2

Korean streaming platform TVing hit monthly active users of 7.4 million in the second quarter of this year, up from 5.74 million in Q2 2023, with 29% growth in paying subscribers. TVing revenue for the quarter increased 41% to KRW107.9 billion/US\$78.7 million, according to parent company CJ ENM's quarterly earnings report.

Fifth Season revenue more than doubled during the quarter to KRW157.2 billion/US\$114.6 million.

Top titles including blockbuster series, *Queen of Tears*, which gave tvN its highest ratings ever at 24.9%, and the eight-episode *High School Mystery Club*

3, which led new sign ups for seven consecutive weeks.

Global content sales were led by *Lovely Runner*, *The Midnight Romance in Hagwon* and *Lady in the Lake*.

Speaking about Studio Dragon, CJ ENM said its priority in the second half of this year was to "revitalise via enhanced content, an efficient production cost structure, and improved corporate value".

Business model changes are at the top of the agenda, with a focus on "optimising production cost structure and processes by internalising talent as our primary IPs".

Studio Dragon episodes plummet "Old library" 2nd window sales soar 139%

Studio Dragon's streaming episodes plummeted 58% in the second quarter of this year to eight, while TV episodes fell 47% to 34 in the three months to end June, the Korean production giant said in its latest earnings report.

Overall, the number of episodes aired in the quarter fell just under 50% to 42 from 83 in the same quarter last year.

Meanwhile, sales of "old library" titles soared 139% during the quarter, with second-window sales outstripping first window revenue for the first time in five quarters.

The increased licensing revenue came from, among other regions, Japan and Southeast Asia.

Revenue for the quarter was down 16.1% to KRW137.1 billion/US\$100 million – the lowest in five quarters – with the

bulk coming from overseas.

Studio Dragon's biggest titles during the quarter were *Queen of Tears* and *Sweet Home* season three.

The company reported a 35.7% drop in operating profit for the quarter to KRW10.5 billion/US\$7.7 million.

Net profit was down 20% year on year to KRW8.2 billion/US\$6 million for the quarter, but stable at KRW28.3 billion/US\$20.6 (down 0.8%) for the first half of the year.

Studio Dragon listed three new titles on its Q3 line up – *Love Next Door* for tvN and Netflix (17 August); the seven-episode *Gyeongseong Creature 2* for Netflix; and *To My Haeri* for ENA.

Studio Dragon's share price is down 31.55% year to date.

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Celestial Tiger Entertainment countdown to CMGO launch

Streaming app marks new direction for 20-year-old Asian programmer

Celestial Tiger Entertainment (CTE) is counting down to the rollout of its first standalone subscription streaming app, CMGO, scheduled to go live this quarter – possibly in the next few weeks.

The Hong Kong-based streamer, which announced the Chinese movies-focused app during the ContentAsia Summit in Bangkok in 2023, hasn't confirmed the launch date, but says the streaming service will rollout in Singapore first, followed by other markets in Southeast Asia.

CTE hasn't yet announced CMGO's movie line up, saying only that the app will offer a curation of top Chinese movie titles from Hong Kong, China, Taiwan and Southeast Asia.

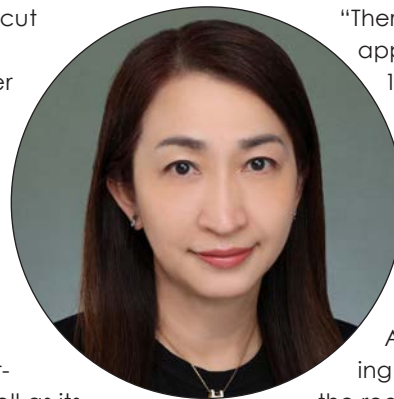
The line-up will include exclusive, never-seen-before titles, along with

original and director's-cut versions and classics. Among these are edgier titles that cannot be streamed on linear channels.

CTE also has plans to produce CMGO Originals. No details have been disclosed.

The CMGO strategy leverages CTE's partnerships in the region as well as its strengths in curation, honed over the past 20 years in delivering Chinese movies to audiences in Asia.

The new service fills a glaring market gap, Choi said in a session on Chinese content during the 2023 ContentAsia Summit.



Ofanny Choi, CEO, Celestial Tiger Entertainment

"There hasn't been one single app in the market to now 100% focused on Chinese movies," she said.

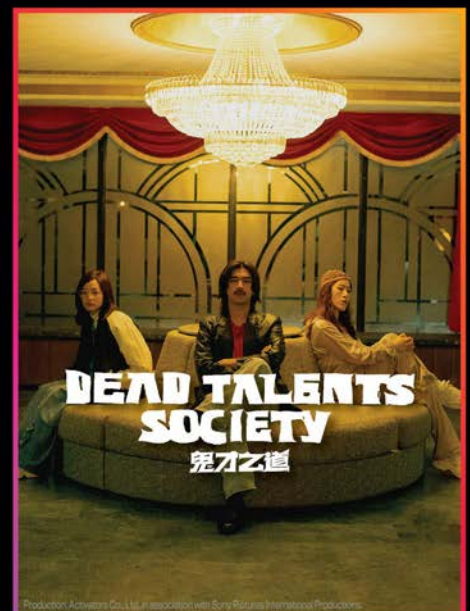
She added that the streaming line up consolidated Chinese movies into one place, presenting unprecedented Chinese movie depth for Asian audiences, including titles not seen before in the region.

CTE operates a bouquet of pay-TV channels, including first-run Chinese movie network,

Celestial Movies; CCM; CM+ in Singapore; PopC, featuring online movies from China; action channel Kix; horror thriller channel Thrill; and edutainment network Miao Mi.



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Malaysia's Astro premieres 1st Nippon TV scripted adaptation *Love's In Sight!* expands local storytelling, continues push into non-traditional themes

Malaysian platform Astro premieres the local version of its first Japanese scripted format today, adding to a 2024 slate that continues to push barriers across genres and themes.

Dari Mata Turun Ke Hati, which replaces *Daun Hijau Di Angin Lalu* on Astro Ria at 10pm, is adapted from Nippon TV's *Love's In Sight!*, about a visually impaired young woman and a juvenile delinquent.

The coming-of-age romcom is based on a manga about the lives of social minorities, and is one of two Nippon TV scripted formats acquired by Astro.

The second Nippon TV scripted title is *Homeroom* (*Kelas Tahanan Cikgu Hiragi*), which is in production.

Dari Mata Turun Ke Hati stars Arabella Ellen (*Dewi Remaja*) as the strong-willed girl who attends a school for the blind. Her life changes when she meets a young man with a pure heart despite his tough exterior, played by Mierul Aiman (*Project High Council*).

The series is directed by Michael Ang and produced by Juita Viden.

Homeroom is a school mystery that plays out 10 days before graduation, when a teacher takes 29 students hostage. As they confront the past, they uncover the truth behind a classmate's suicide.

The journey into Japanese scripted adaptations is part of Astro's expanded content strategy, tackling a range of social issues and venturing into topics considered sensitive for mass-market audiences.

These include the 10-episode *Si Jantung Hati*, the story of a religious teacher who receives a pig's heart in a life-saving transplant.

The series was directed by Zainorhisyam Samudin, with Syarul Ezani and Siti Hariesa in lead roles.



Dari Mata Turun Ke Hati

Si Jantung Hati aired in February/March this year on Astro Ria.

Another of Astro's boundary-busting series is *Khunsa*, a 28-episode drama about an intersex person whose family chooses to raise him as a man.

Directed by Shahrulzad Mohamedin, *Khunsa* is the story of Che Khun, whose feminine ways stir his father's wrath and invokes cruel treatment by his stepmother. The series aired on Astro Rio in March and April this year.

Astro's new originals also include *Dedaun Hijau di Angin Lalu*, which

topped Malaysia charts with an audience of 1.135 million, and *Takdir Itu Milik Aku*, which was #2 with 1.127 million.

Takdir Itu Milik Aku's total audience reach over the season was 7.2 million.

As of 27 July, *Dedaun Hijau di Angin Lalu*'s reach was 4.7 million. The show finale was on Thursday (8 August).

In addition to a slate of theatrical releases, Astro is also backing large-scale musicals/live shows, including major TikTok collaboration, *TikTok Live X Astro Gimme The Mic Malaysia*.

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Executive Director, Programming & Acquisitions

Jamie Osmund

Executive Director, Technology & Product



Ofanny Choi



Annie Lim



Janice Lam



Jamie Osmund

Celestial Tiger Entertainment (CTE) is a leading independent media company dedicated to entertaining audiences in Asia and beyond. 2024 marks an exciting new chapter for CTE with the launch of its new Chinese Movies app, CMGO, in Southeast Asia, starting in Q3 with Singapore. This adds to its already powerful offering of distinct pay television and digital services.

CMGO is a subscription streaming service that offers a curation of the best and greatest Chinese movies from Hong Kong, China, Taiwan and Southeast Asia. From new releases and the latest blockbusters, to exclusive, never-seen-before titles, original and director's cut versions, award-winning movies, favourite timeless classics, as well as CMGO Originals, the world of Chinese movies is ready for you to explore at your fingertips! Access your favourite movies anytime, anywhere on your preferred devices in original sound track, all ad free and with localised sub-titles and user interface!

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Avi Himatsinghani



Sandie Lee

Rewind Networks, a Singapore-based multimedia entertainment company, delivers premium pay-tv content across the Asia Pacific. Through extensive licensing with leading Hollywood and international studios, Rewind's curated channel destinations offer the best of tv shows and movies to viewers in Asia. The networks reach 20+ million homes in 11 countries

across the Asia Pacific region, distributed via major pay tv affiliates and telcos in each market.

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In 2018, Rewind Networks introduced HITS MOVIES, a basic movie channel service featuring blockbusters and popular award-winning movies from across 4 decades the 1960s to the early 2000s.

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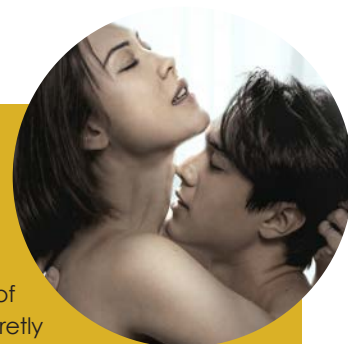


Stags

This darkly comic thrill ride follows groom-to-be Stu and his friends on a bachelor party in South America. When airport security finds that one of them is smuggling cocaine, what was meant to be a raucous week takes a terrifying turn. The group get thrown into a deprived prison island run by two warring siblings and a fight for survival ensues. Length: 6x60 mins **Sony Pictures Entertainment** E: Eugene Lin, Eugene_Lin@spe.sony.com

The Sweetest Taboo / หวานรักต้องห้าม (Waan Rak Tong Harm)

Pakamalin (Lin), a self-absorbed online businesswoman, falls in love with Kata, a much younger university freshman with high ideals. Both must face their differences and wrestle with the resulting trials when Lin discovers that Kata is the only son of Rungsun, the head of the business empire with whom she secretly had an affair. Meanwhile, Kate – Kata's mother and Rungsan's husband – tries every means to sabotage her son's unconventional relationship with her husband's mistress. Lin and Kata's love for each other is put to the test as they must work together to find happiness in their sweet but complicated relationship. Length: 21x60 mins **BEC World Public Company Limited** E: inter-sales@becworld.com



HER – Women in Asia

HER – Women in Asia, season 5, tells the stories of women from Asia who are breaking stereotypes and voicing their opinions loud and clear. In each episode, three women share their perspectives on universal and existential topics, such as overcoming loneliness, living a waste free life or body image and mental health. The series portrays the lives of women from all spheres of Asian societies, featuring protagonists from India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. What challenges do they face, what stories do they have to tell. Length: 6x12 mins **DW - Deutsche Welle** E: Mee Fung Lee, meefung.lee@pikfilm.com.my

Can't Buy Me Love

Bingo is a hardworking young man who earns a living by selling everything and anything he can under the sun. One day, he chances upon Caroline, a young lady about to be abducted. In order to save her, he offers the kidnapper all of his savings. Caroline, however, despite being the youngest daughter of the moneyed Tiu clan, cannot easily repay him for personal reasons. Not unexpectedly, the two clash due to their starkly different backgrounds and cultures. But as they learn more about the other, they soon realize they value the same things that wealth cannot buy: loyal friendships, a close-knit family, and genuine love. Length: 63x45 mins **ABS-CBN CORPORATION** E: Maria Wincess Joy R. Lee wincess_lee@abs-cbn.com



The Choice 2024

As American voters face an unprecedented presidential election, FRONTLINE is producing a deep and unflinching examination of the candidates in its landmark series, *The Choice*. Drawing on extensive interviews with those who know them best, *The Choice 2024* will investigate the life experiences, the decisions, and the times that forged the candidates – and shaped how they could lead the country over the next four years. Length: 1x120 mins **PBS Distribution** E: Anna Alvord, agalvord@pbs.org





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What's on where...

August 2024	20-24	Beijing International Radio, TV & Film Exhibition 2024	Beijing, China
	27-29 Aug	BCWW 2024	Seoul, Korea
	29	AVIA: Korea in View 2024	Seoul, Korea
September 2024	2-8	TrendyTaipei	Taipei, Taiwan
	2-5	ContentAsia Summit 2024	Taipei, Taiwan
	5	ContentAsia Awards 2024	Taipei, Taiwan
	24-26	APOS 2024	Bali, Indonesia
	26-29	Gwangju Ace Fair 2024	Gwangju, Korea
October 2024	5-8	Asian Contents & Film Market 2024	Busan, Korea
	9	AVIA: Vietnam in View 2024	Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam
	18-20	MipJunior 2024	Cannes, France
	21-24	Mipcom 2024	Cannes, France
	29 Oct	AVIA: Japan in View 2024	Tokyo, Japan
	30 Oct-1 Nov	TIFFCOM 2024	Tokyo, Japan
November 2024	12-13	Dubai International Content Market (DICM)	Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai
	20-22	16th Content Tokyo 2024	Chiba, Japan
December 2024	3	The ATF Leaders Dialogue 2024	Singapore
	4-6	Asia TV Forum & Market /ATF 2024	Singapore
	5	AVIA: OTT Summit 2024	Singapore
February 2025	23-27	Mip London 2025	London, U.K.
	23-24	Mip Doc 2025	London, U.K.
	23-24	Mip Format 2025	London, U.K.
	24-28	The London TV Screenings 2025	London, U.K.
March 2025	2-5	Australian International Documentary Conference 2025	Melbourne / Naarm
	17-20	Hong Kong FILMART 2025	Hong Kong
	25-27	Series Mania Forum 2025	Lille, Hauts-de-France
April 2025	24-29	Canseries 2025	Cannes, France
May 2025	28-31	19th Busan Content Market 2025 (BCM)	Busan, Korea
June 2025	12-14	Telefilm Vietnam 2025	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
July 2025	2-4	17th Content Tokyo 2025	Tokyo, Japan

Prime Video's *The Boys* wins Hong Kong Digital top 10 spread across streaming platforms

Prime Video's *The Boys* was Hong Kong's runaway hit for the week of 12-18 July, coming in at more than the double demand of Disney+'s *The Acolyte* (its closest rival in the digital space) and 15 points higher than the NBA sports overall, according to data science company Parrot Analytics.

Netflix took something of a beating in Parrot's digital demand stakes for Hong Kong, with just one title – the acquired Nippon TV series *The Apothecary Diaries* – at #7 at 10.7x demand of the aver-

age title in Hong Kong for the week. Netflix's own Hong Kong top 10 for the week was led by Korean comedy *Miss Night and Day*, the first episode of the new season of *Sweet Home* in second place and anime series, *Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba: Hashira Training Arc* at #3.

Three sports events – NBA, UEFA European Championship and Wimbledon – made the top 10 overall, along with four U.S. titles – *The Boys*, *The Acolyte*, *Modern Family* and *House of the Dragon*.

Top 10 overall TV shows: Hong Kong

Rank	Title	Difference from Market Average
1	<i>The Boys</i>	39.8
2	NBA	24.2
3	UEFA European Championship (EUROS)	19.3
4	<i>My Hero Academia</i>	18.0
5	<i>Star Wars: The Acolyte</i>	16.6
6	<i>Girls Band Cry (ガールズバンドクライ)</i>	16.1
7	<i>Joy of Life (庆余年)</i>	14.9
8	Wimbledon	14.7
9	<i>Modern Family</i>	14.1
10	<i>House of The Dragon</i>	13.1

Top 10 digital originals: Hong Kong

Rank	Title	Platform	Diff from Market Average
1	<i>The Boys</i>	Prime Video	39.8
2	<i>The Acolyte</i>	Disney+	16.6
3	<i>Joy of Life (庆余年)</i>	Tencent Video	14.9
4	<i>Shogun</i>	FX (Disney+)	12.4
5	<i>The Tale Of Rose (玫瑰的故事)</i>	Tencent Video	11.4
6	<i>The Bear</i>	Hulu	10.8
7	<i>The Apothecary Diaries</i>	Nippon TV (Netflix/Crunchyroll)	10.7
8	<i>Star Trek: Discovery</i>	Paramount+	9.1
9	<i>Fallout</i>	Prime Video	9.0
10	<i>Dark Matter</i>	Apple TV+	9.0

Date range: 12-18 July 2024

The total audience demand being expressed for a title, within a market. Audience demand reflects the desire, engagement and viewership, weighted by importance; so a stream/download is a higher expression of demand than a 'like'/comment. In this dataset we are comparing the demand that exists for each series in this market, against the average TV show. A difference of 1x represents the market average and 10x means a series is ten times more in demand than the average TV show in this market



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