

Africa's most popular video streaming sites

Despite the major infrastructural challenges that Africa faces - such as low connectivity and the high cost of data, the number of video streaming platforms active in Africa has exploded over the past few years as the continent responded to the global shift from linear TV to on-demand viewing.



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Online streaming is cheaper and more convenient than traditional cable TV because it gives you an option to watch the programs of your choice at a time convenient to you. Due to flexibility, low cost and convenience many Africans would rather subscribe to a streaming platform.

The hype surrounding the Video-on-Demand (VOD) sector is gradually growing in Africa as local and international platforms obtain actual subscribers. Here are some of the leading streaming platforms in Africa. Some are established international companies while others are startups.

1. Showmax

Rate: \$7,22 USD per month

Showmax was launched in August 2015 with the backing of South African media giant Naspers. Showmax carries a number of HBO titles including *Game of Thrones*, *True Blood* and a variety of local Afrikaans movies and series. The service has both movies and TV series and allows you to stream and/or download content. This means you can still watch your favourite shows when you don't have an internet connection.

2. Netflix

Rate: from \$6.85 USD per month

Launched in October 2016 in Africa, Netflix's standard subscription rate is \$11.99 per month. Netflix is estimated to have more than 500,000 subscribers in Africa alone and witnessed a 25% increase in its subscriber base during the last year. It is available on a wide range of devices from set-top boxes to smart TVs, tablets, laptops and smartphones. You can also download shows to watch when not connected to the internet.

3. iROKOTv

Rate: from \$10.99 per month

iROKOTv is the first major streaming service to offer Nollywood content. Dubbed the 'Netflix of Africa', iROKOTv launched in December 2011. It has also had success translating its long-term Nollywood relationship into international broadcasting channels on South Africa's DStv, UK's Sky and investment from France's Canal Plus. iROKOTv started out on YouTube and later moved to become a VOD platform.

4. Google Play Movies

Rate: from \$3.99 USD for rentals

The service has both movies and TV series and allows you to stream and/or download content. This means you can still watch your favourite shows when you don't have an internet connection. This is definitely handy on planes or areas with limited internet access. Unlike other popular streaming sites, Google Play Movies doesn't have a per-month subscription fee.

5. StarNews Mobile

Rate: \$9.95 USD per month

Startup, [StarNews Mobile](#), launched in July 2017 and has been steadily growing in numbers. StarNews Mobile has a network of over 50 mobile channels offering celebrity-based content at a daily subscription rate. Subscribers to StarNews Mobile receive short exclusive videos from their favourite celebrities, which, in many cases, they can watch data free. After nine months of pilot deployment in Ivory Coast in partnership with operators MTN and Moov, StarNews Mobile broke the one million subscriber mark in April 2018. The startup confirmed the strength of its model with subsequent launches in Cameroon and Congo Brazzaville and is now set to expand to an additional 20 markets, including South Africa and Nigeria, thanks to a group deal with MTN.

6. Amazon Prime

Rate: from \$2.99 USD per month

Amazon rolled out its Amazon Prime Video SVOD service in 240 countries and territories around the world including South Africa in 2016. 'Prime Video' service offers shows such as the *Grand Tour from Jeremy Clarkson, Richard Hammond and James May*, and award-winning Amazon Original Series including Golden Globe-winner *Mozart in the Jungle*. Subscribers can watch anytime through the Amazon Prime Video app on Android and iOS phones and tablets, smart TVs or online at [PrimeVideo.com](#).

7. Hulu

Rate: from \$43.99 USD per month

Although Hulu hasn't officially launched in Africa yet, you can watch content by making it seem as though you are accessing the site from within the United States. See details [HERE](#).

8. Acorn TV

Rate: \$4.99 USD per month

Acorn TV offers African users British and international television series. The platform launched in South Africa in December 2018. It is run by RLJ Entertainment, owned by AMC Networks. Acorn TV's international offering will add new programs each week and currently features a wide assortment of first-rate British and

international television. Besides the website, Acorn TV is available as an Acorn TV app on Apple TV, Android, iOS phone and tablets as well as Roku streaming players.

9. Cell C Black

Rate: \$5,03 USD per month

Launched by South African telecoms operator in 2017, Black offers linear TV channels – meaning TV channels that you watch like “normal” broadcast television and that run for 24 hours. The linear TV channel on Cell C Black include a strong set of TV news channels. The platform also has over 450 of the latest movies along with local and international TV series. Users can access Black using iOS and Android apps (called GetBlack), as well as an Android-powered TV set-top box.

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