



Curtin University

# One audience for accessibility

Professor Katie Ellis  
17/06/2022

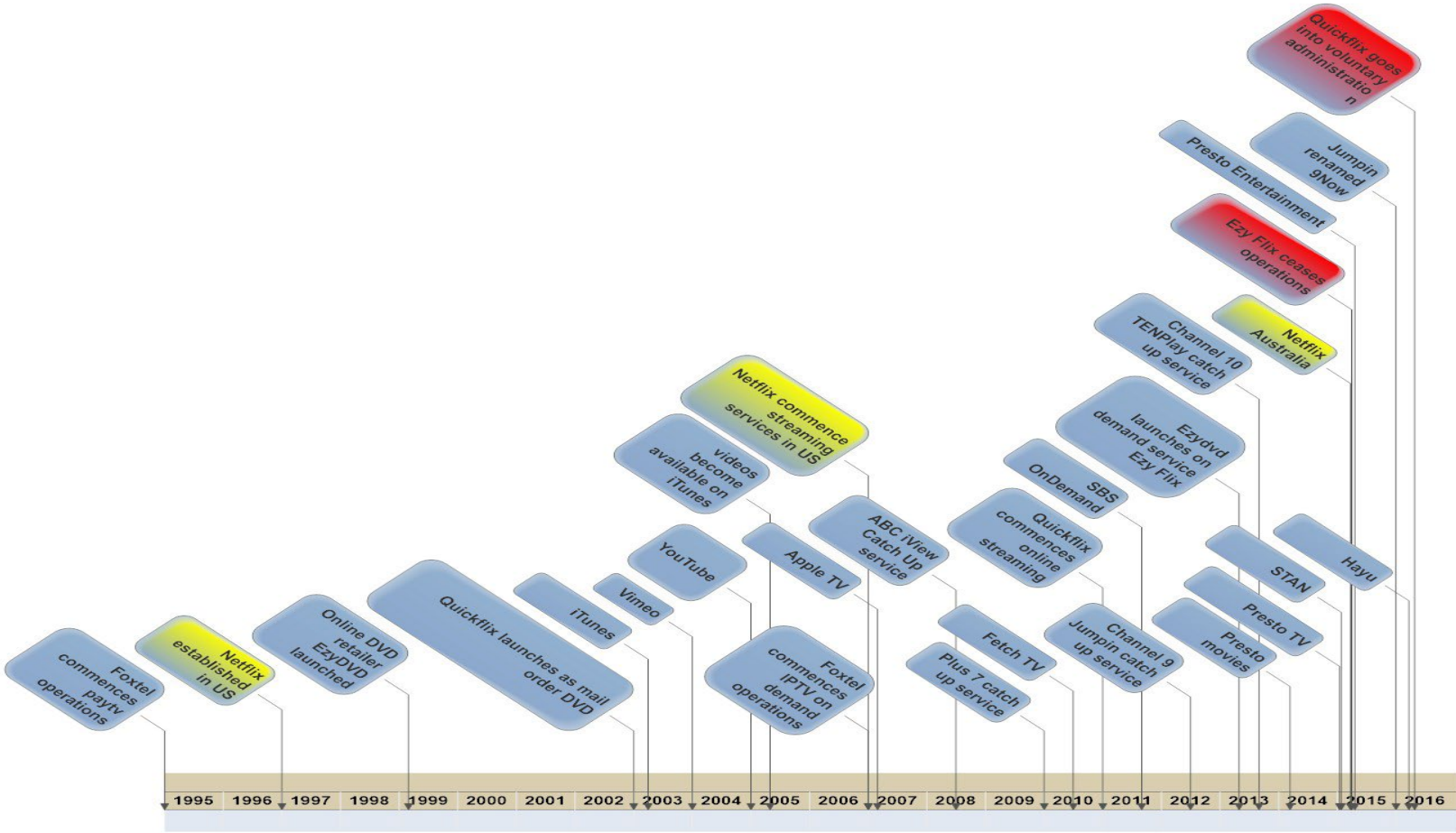
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# Redesigning TV to include PWD

Accessibility feature	Explanation
audio descriptions	A track of narration which describes important visual elements of a TV show, movie or performance.
captions	presentation of the audio component of audio-visual content as text on screen
lip-reading avatars	An animated talking face for lip readers
signing avatars	Animated hands providing sign language interpretation
spoken subtitles	Reading aloud of interlingual subtitles. Can be generated as a separate audio track by the broadcaster or created by the receiver using text to speech software
clean audio	provides the speech without any background music or other sounds

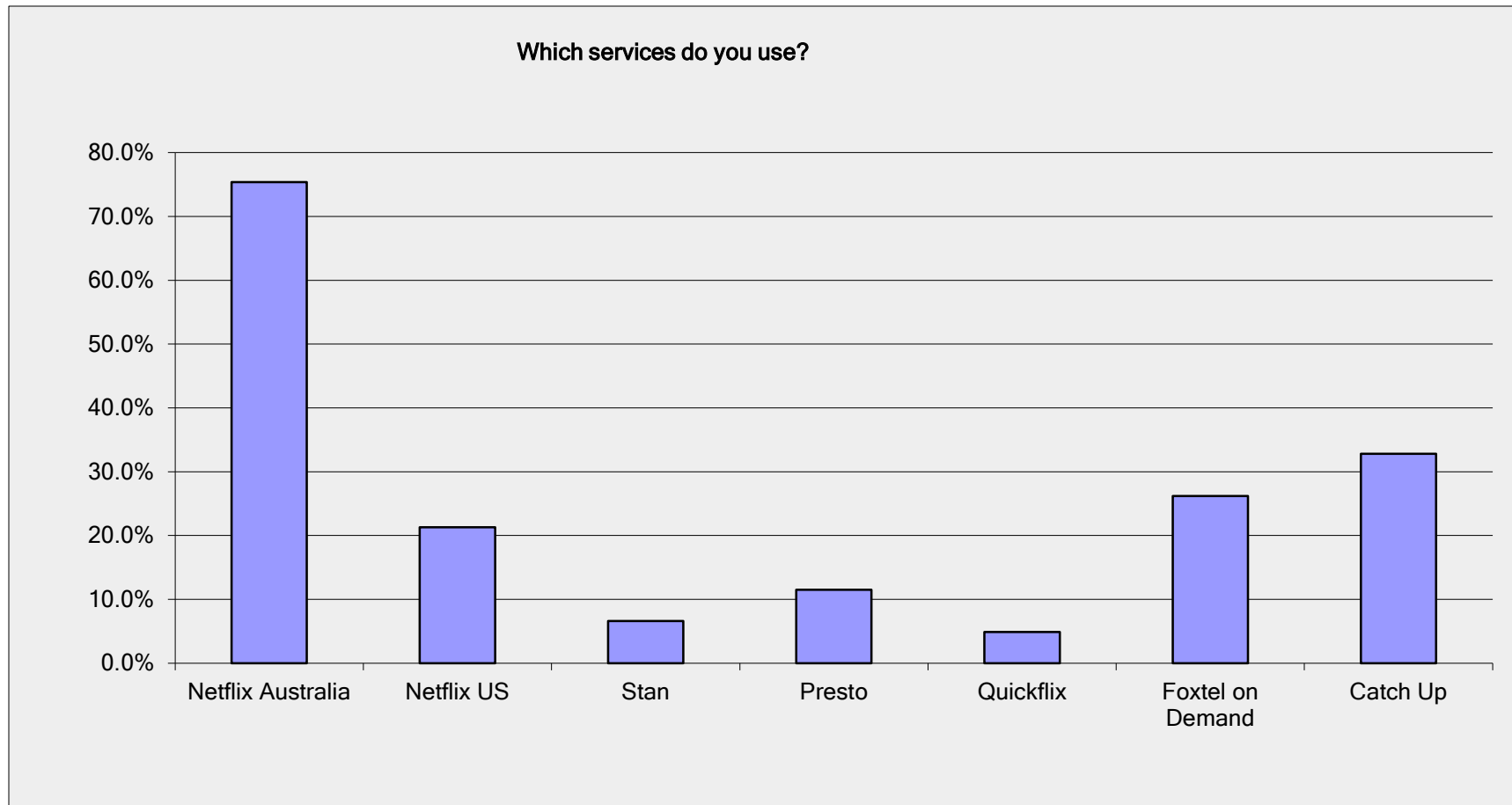
# History of VOD and Accessibility in Australia



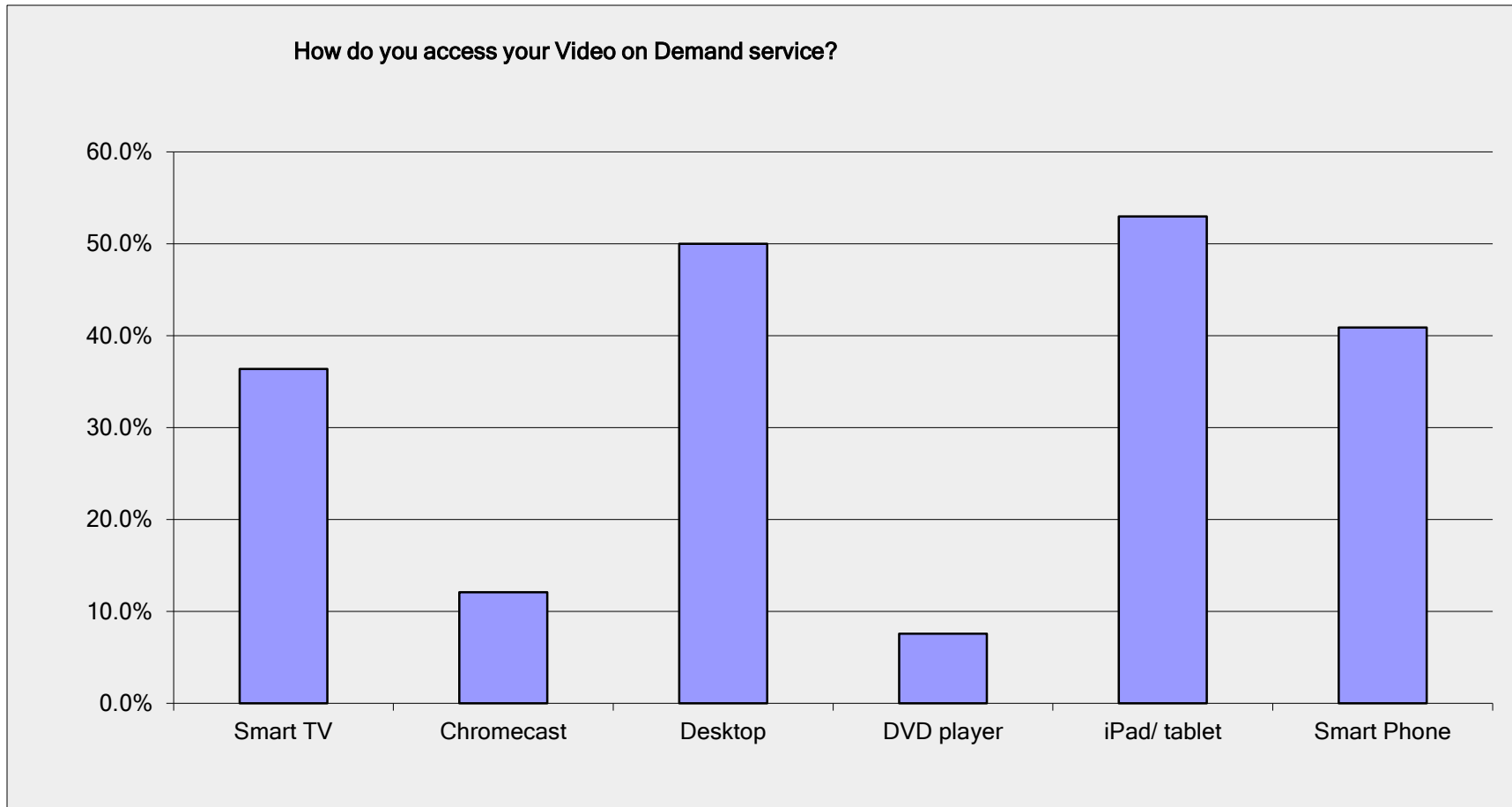
# Accessibility of subscription VOD in Australia in 2015

Provider	Closed captions?	AD?	WCAG 2.0 compliant?
Netflix Australia	Yes (most titles)	Yes (limited titles)	No
Stan	Yes (some titles)	No	No
Quickflix	Yes (few titles, difficult to identify)	No	No
Presto	No	No	No
Foxtel Play (Foxtel Play)	No	No	No

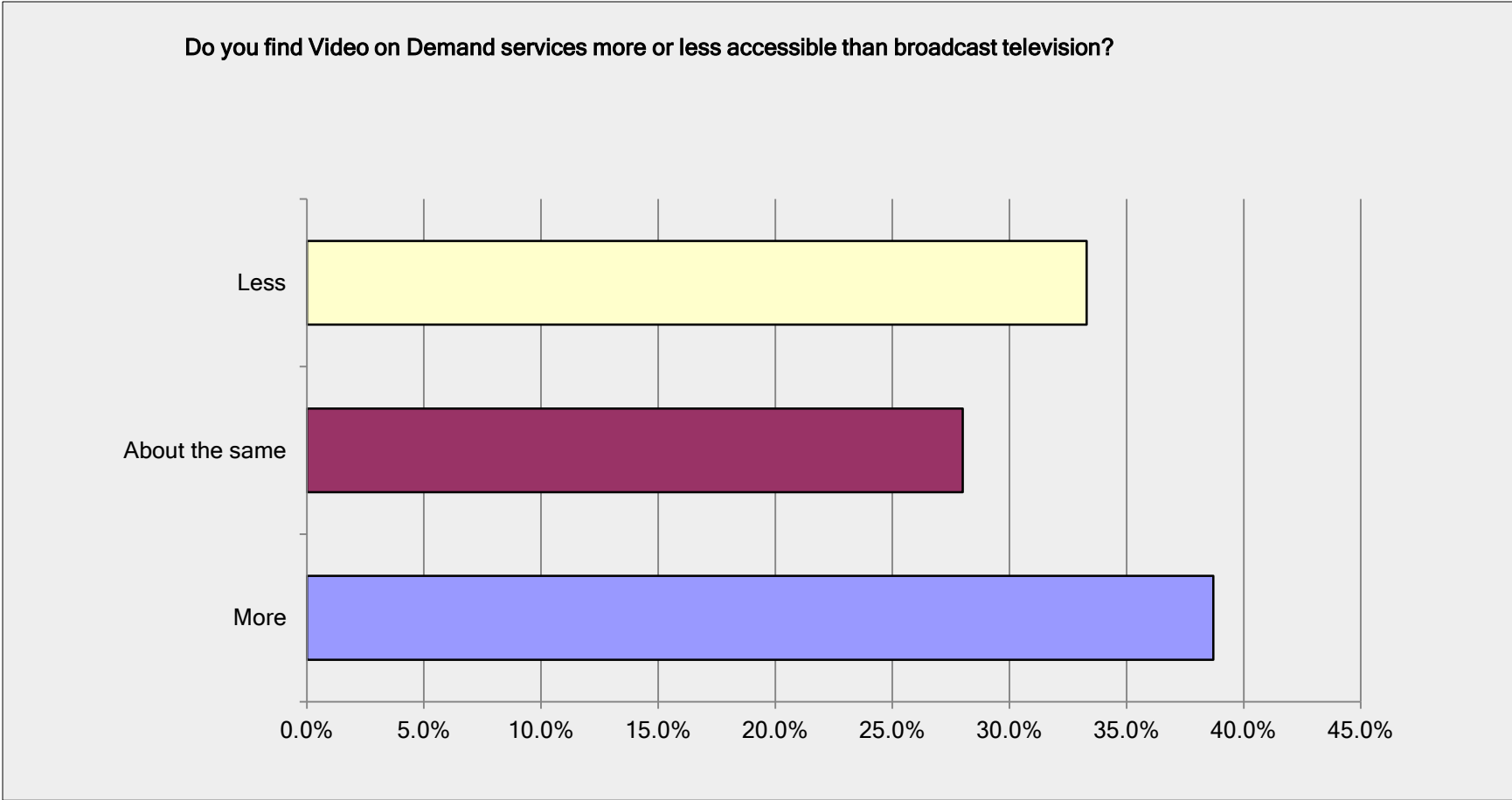
# Which Services?



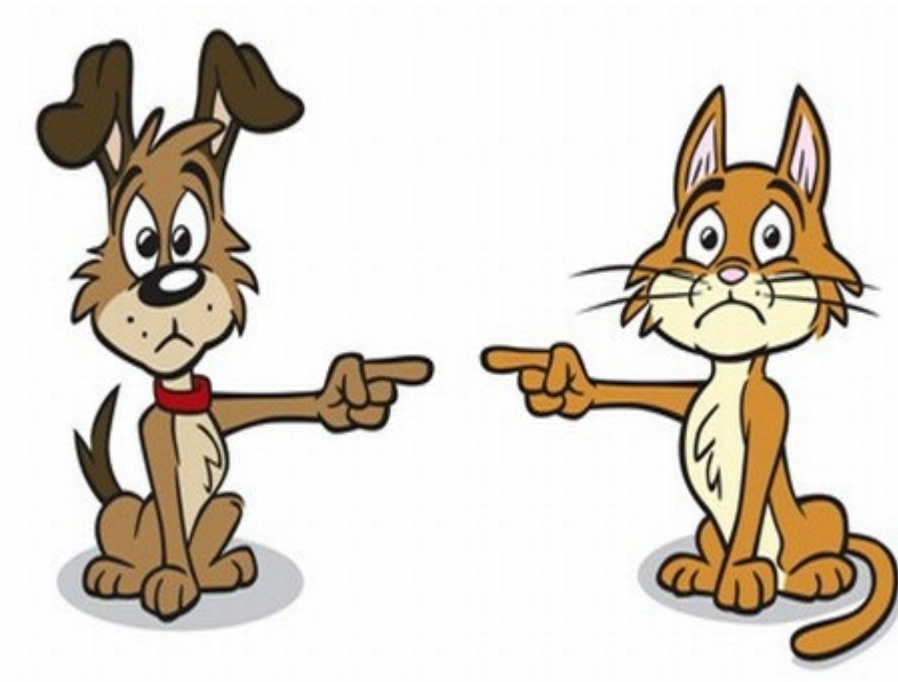
# How Do You Access?



# VOD more or less Accessible?



# Government v Industry?





# Recommendations

Government: legislate and communicate

Video on demand providers: Recognise your disabled audience

People with disability: demand accessibility through advocacy

# Three requirements to make television accessible


1. Legislation or government support
2. Innovation: how can people without disability benefit?
3. Penalties

# Captions have also become mainstream

JASON KEHE CULTURE 06.26.18 06:00 AM

## THE REAL REASON YOU USE CLOSED CAPTIONS FOR EVERYTHING NOW



Closed captions are a must for foreign-language movies and shows like Netflix's 3%, and they're great for shows with heavy accents or jargon. But more and more people are leaving them on for everything. Why?  PEDRO SAAD/NETFLIX

## Get Over Your Fear Of Subtitles, Please

REBECCA FARLEY  
JULY 31, 2017, 11:00 PM



ILLUSTRATED BY MALLORY HEYER.

It's the end of the day, and I'm watching *The Office*, a ritual I've adopted out of sheer necessity. Mundane things make me feel calm. It's the casino episode, because that is objectively the best piece of television there is. Halfway through, my roommate strides into the room; he, like me, needs *The Office* the same way other people need a glass of Merlot. He notes that it's the casino episode — the one where Jim first confesses his love to Pam — and sits down.

And then: "Not the subtitles again."

I'm watching with subtitles, as I've done since 16-year-old me discovered that Netflix had every season of *Bones*. I'm not hard of hearing at all — but this is a thing I need. In my mind, subtitles are necessary for any viewership, save for a movie theater experience. (Although I'd really like to have a word with movie theaters. I want every showing to have words at the bottom, not just foreign features.)

# Could AD become mainstream?

## The Descriptive Audio Narrator Is the Best Part of Netflix's 'Sense8'

"They kiss....the brown-skinned woman drops a dripping, rainbow-colored dildo on the floor"

By Vinnie Mancuso · 06/09/15 1:34pm



Sense8 in a nutshell. (Murray Close/Netflix)

## How To Turn Netflix Shows Into Audiobooks (And Why You Should)

Emily Price

Mar 8, 2018, 10:30am · Filed to: audio ▾

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Image: Netflix

Sure, you've heard of binge-watching shows on Netflix, but how about binge listening?

Netflix has a category of programs that it offers audio descriptions for, where a voiceover explains to you what characters are doing in a scene. With it you can listen to shows rather than watch them, essentially transforming them into something like an audiobook or podcast you can stream while you're out for a walk or when you're in bed at night trying to fall asleep.

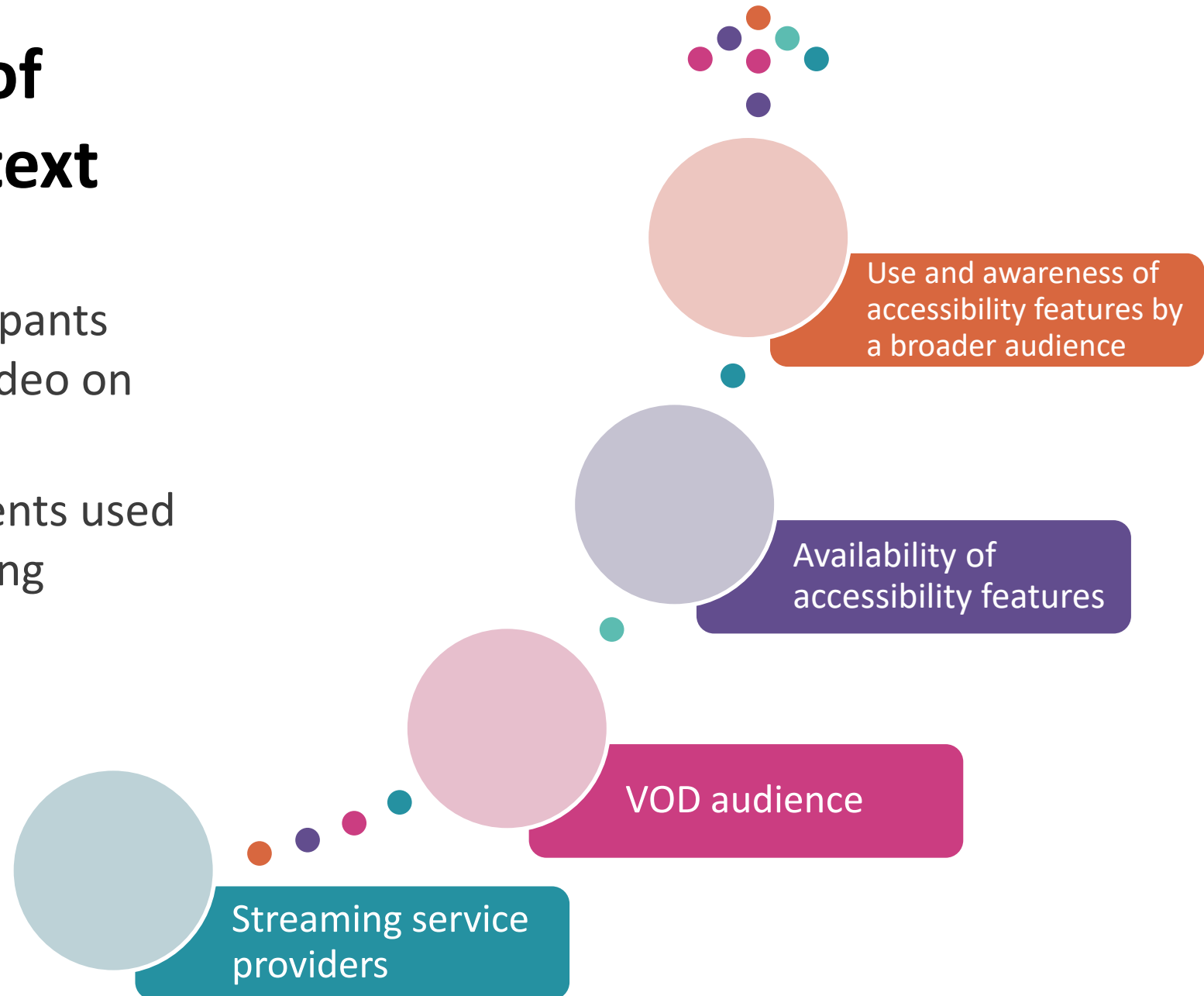
# COVID-19 pandemic a time of great digital innovation



# Accessibility of VOD – in context

2015 - 52% of participants surveyed watched video on demand.

2021 - 93% respondents used one or more streaming service



# Why and what people watch

- 93% watch video on demand

3% wanted to but could not figure out how to use it, and 6% did not. Of these 6%, inaccessibility, preference for other video content sources (such as Youtube), and lack of internet were cited.

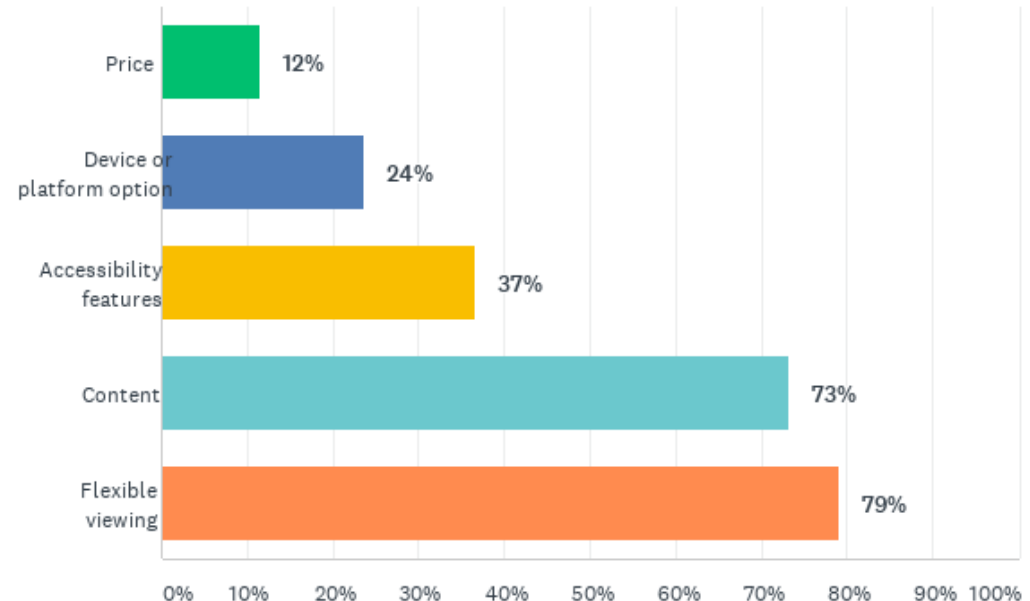
- **Accessibility features**

These were important for people with and without disabilities, but for people with disabilities accessibility became more pertinent, with over 46% citing this factor as a reason for choosing video on demand.

- **Subscription vs. Free-to-view**

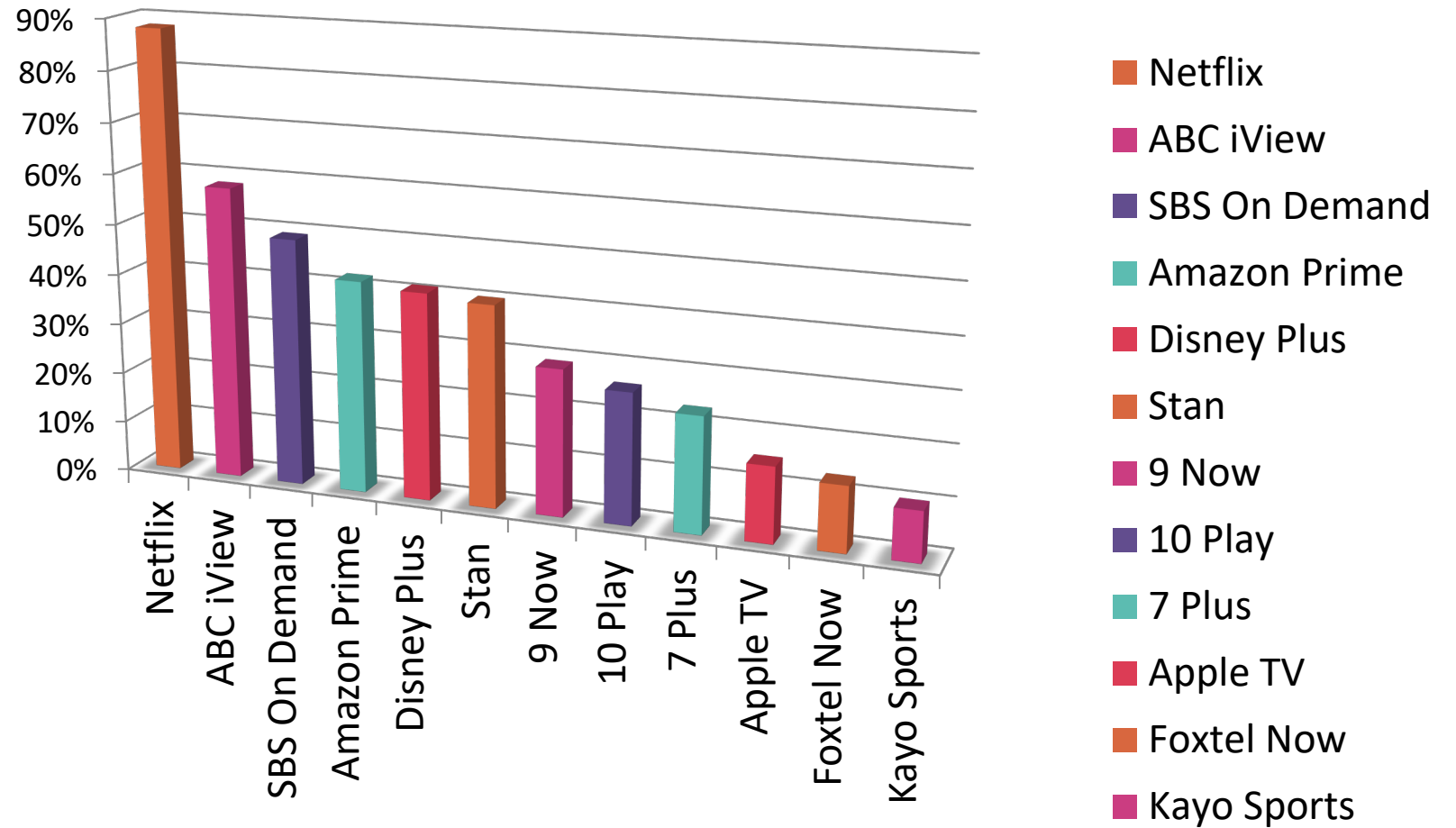
63% used both, 30% used only subscription video on demand. 6% of respondents used only free, broadcast-on-demand services.

What is the main reason you choose to watch on demand television?



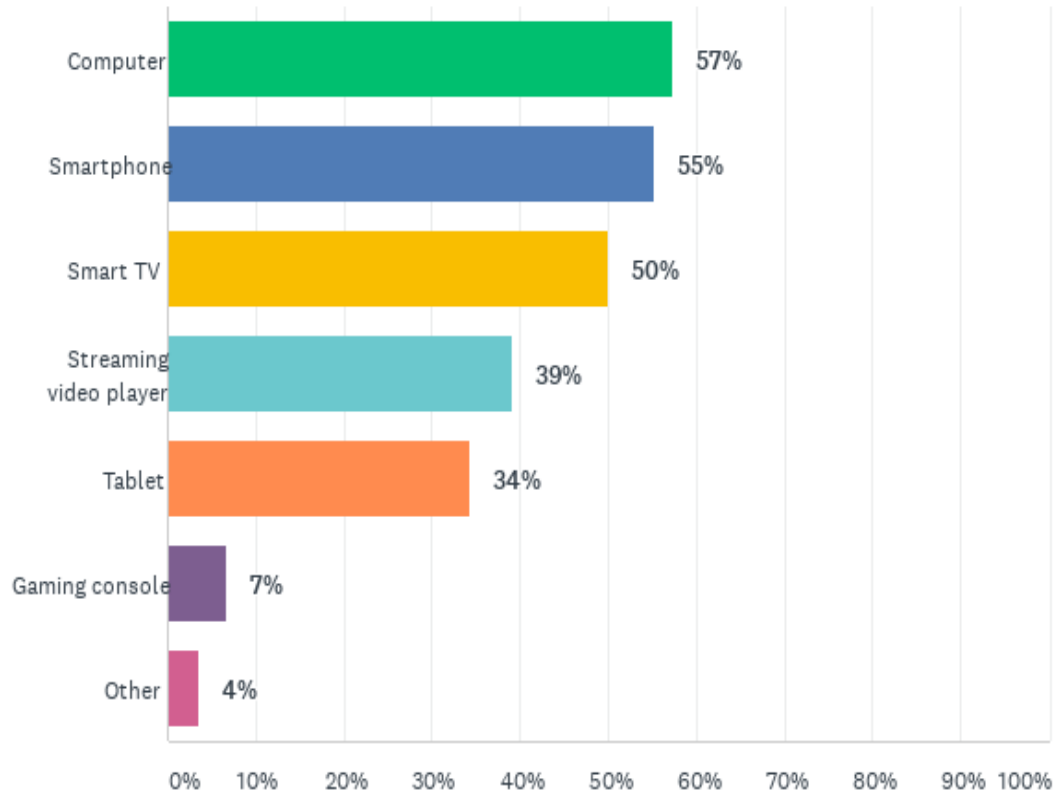
## What on demand services do you use?

- Most people watched multiple services (3+)
- Other services were also noted include Binge, Samsung TV+, Fetch, Tubi and Hayu.





Q13 On what device do you access on demand television?



## Devices used

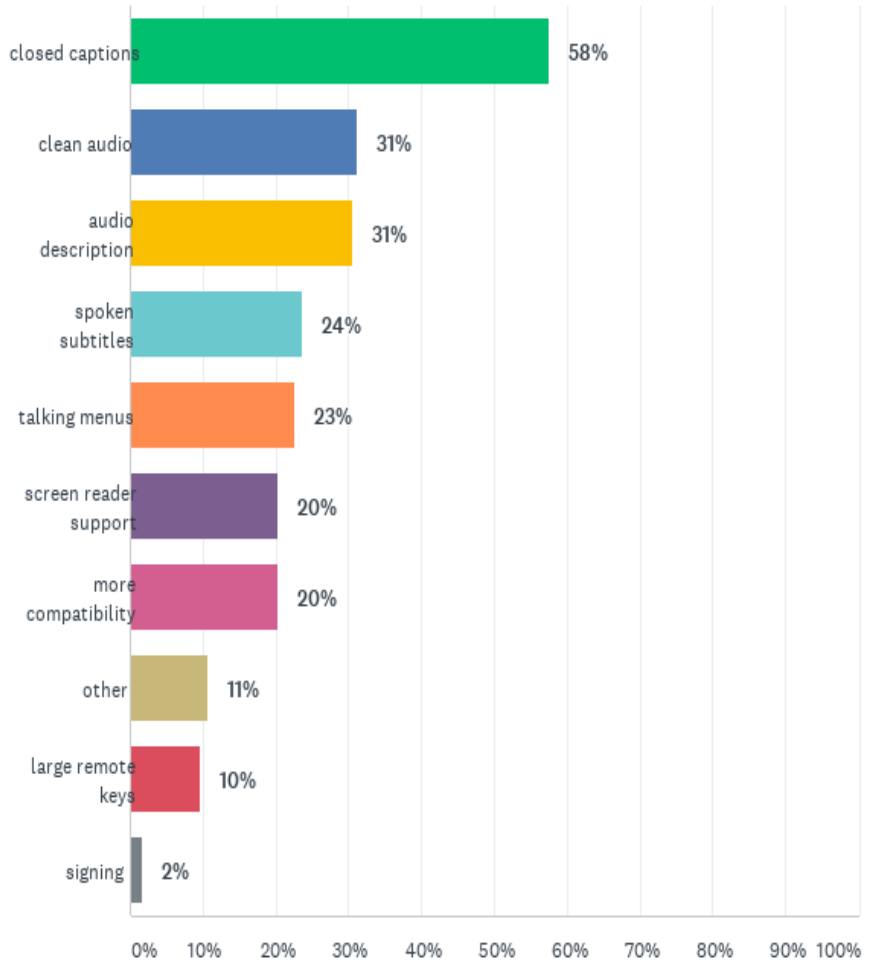
- Multiple devices and the decline of the TV  
Most people listed using more than one device (generally 2+)

- Type of disability and device preference

People with low vision or blindness predominantly used smartphones (65%), smart TVs were more commonly used by people with a hearing based disability (54%). These preferences were, in part, related to the accessibility of the device and compatibility with assistive technology.

- Social dimension and co-viewing experience

Q15 What accessible features would make watching television easier for you?



# Accessibility features used

- Accessibility features are used by people without disabilities

56% used/would like to use accessibility features, including closed captions (76%), followed by clean audio (35%), spoken subtitles (20%) and audio description (11%).

- Audio description has become the most significant feature for people with disabilities

45% of people with disabilities used AD, a feature which was rarely available five years ago. Closed captions was listed by 44%, followed by talking menus (35%).

# Experiences of inaccessibility

- **More or less accessible?**

49% of all respondents thought video on demand was more accessible, 24% said it was about the same, and 7% said it was less.

- **Assistive technology**

Screen readers (29%), magnifiers (15%), and voice activation (15%) were most commonly cited. Almost half of people with disabilities used no additional assistive technology.

- **Availability of accessibility features and accessible content**

Almost half of participants with a disability stated it was never, rarely or sometimes available. 30% had problems finding accessible content.

- **Set up and assistance**

23% said it was either very difficult or difficult to set up video on demand, and 38% asked someone to help with set up (predominantly family or friends).

*“Make setting up easier, simplify search options (menu/s), and a larger number of technical support 'FAQs' available online/in the manuals in order to not have to contact tech support by phone (being that I am hard of hearing).”*

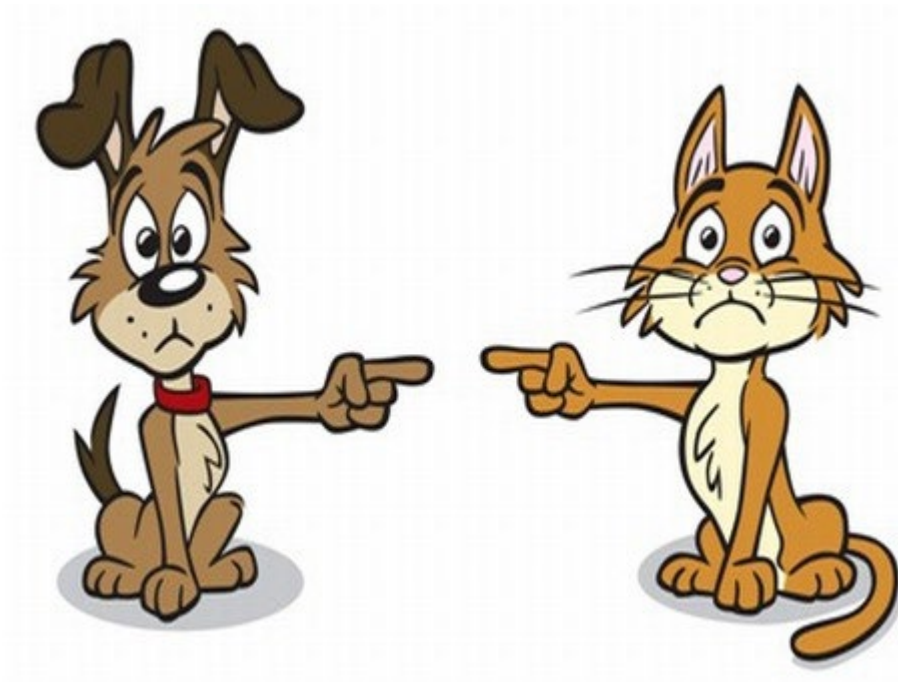
*“Simplified app interfaces maybe a section or filter that only shows programmes with certain features e.g. show only programmes with closed captions.”*

*“Promote the accessibility of the services so that people know prior to purchase how limiting the service is”.*

*“Most on demand apps are inaccessible with screen readers. I would watch a lot more and there are many shows I wish I could watch but the app is not accessible.”*

*“Always having closed captions available. Having a quick tutorial on how to access different features at the beginning of using the app or website.”*

# Government v Industry?



# Links to research

- [Digital Disability, Mental Health and Social Inclusion - Centre for Culture and Technology \(CCAT\) \(curtin.edu.au\)](#)
- [Access On Demand – Accessibility and Streaming Television \(accessible-video-on-demand.com\)](#)
- [Audio Description in Australia – Words Becoming Pictures \(audiodescriptionau.com.au\)](#)
- [Live Caption Monitoring on Australian Free-to-Air Television \(accan.org.au\)](#)
- [Accessing Subscription Video on Demand: A study of disability and streaming television in Australia \(accan.org.au\)](#)