



VS.



Roku Digital Media Player October 2009



ROKU

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Introduction

Objectives

Overall Feedback

- Gather users' general impressions of the bundled services on the Roku, including overall functionality, presentation of content, and overall fit with user expectations and needs.

Device Usability

- To assess the usability of the Roku device as users perform tasks involving:
 - Activating/Registering the Roku
 - Finding/Buying a movie
 - Watching a movie

Comparison

- Gather users' preferences between Netflix and Amazon Video on Demand services via the Roku player.

Future Use

- Gauge users' reaction to the overall value of the Netflix and Amazon Video on Demand via the Roku and their willingness to use or continue to use one or the other.

Methodology

User Profile

- 11 users were tested during August 2009 at the Catalyst Lab in New York City.
- Each session lasted 45 minutes.
- All users expressed interest in watching movies.
- 5 users were Netflix members or were members in the past.
- None of the users had previously used a Roku.
- Users were not initially told about the Roku player nor that Netflix or Amazon were the focus of the discussion.

Think-Aloud & Review

- Participants performed a list of realistic tasks (e.g., highlighting text, etc.) after which they were asked to comment on their experience using the device (i.e., citing their likes/dislikes, ease/difficulty, suggested improvements, value, etc.)
- Before the end of each session, participants were asked to select the service they liked best and explain why.
- Participants were also asked whether they would likely purchase or use either device.

Statement of Limitations

- The intention of these discussions was to provide insights and design direction; not quantitative assessment.
- The observations in this report reflect the views of 11 participants. While accurate for this population, their views may not be representative of the overall population.
- This report summarizes comments thought to be the most useful for providing insights and design feedback for the reviewed Roku player and streaming services.

Hardware Setup | Roku & Television



* MLB.com added as a channel during a software update on August 11. This channel was not available during our study.

Key Insights

Key Insights

1. Virtually all users saw the benefit of the Roku player and could see themselves using one.

Users pointed to the convenience of the services, portability of the device, and ability to watch movies on a large screen TV instead of their computer as the primary benefits of having a Roku player :

"I could see myself using something like this. It's a lot better than running out to the video store or waiting for it in the mail."

Most users also overestimated the retail price of the Roku player and were delighted to know it was less than they had thought :

"I'd say it costs about \$200. Oh, if it's \$100, then that's even better!"

2. Movie-watching frequency influenced preference for either Netflix or Amazon.

Users who were frequent movie watchers favored Netflix as it touts a flat-fee for unlimited Roku viewing:

"Netflix is more worth it for me. If I watch two movies on Amazon, that's like a month of as much as I can watch on Netflix."

Users who watched movies infrequently preferred Amazon due to its pay-as-you-go scheme:

"This is just like cable on demand or pay-per-view. I don't have to pay more if I just want to watch one show."

3. Users would prefer a standalone experience on the Roku player without the need of a computer.

Users felt that the overall experience of using the Roku would be improved if there was no need to access a computer for activation or finding movies.

"It would be better if you could activate right from your television. Apple TV lets you log into your iTunes account to register."

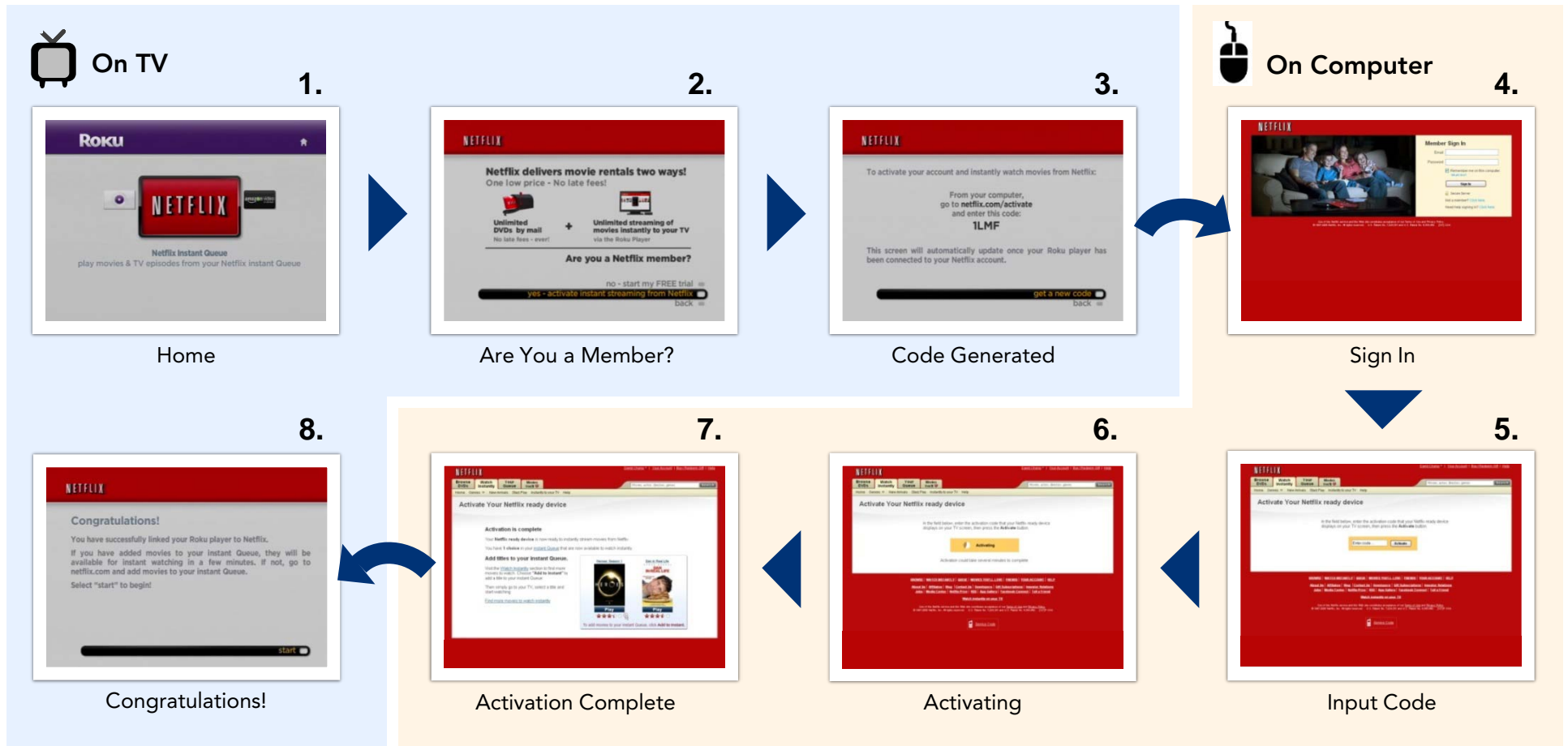
"I should be able to do all these things without leaving my couch."

Observation Summary | Step-by-Step Highlights

	Netflix	Common to Both Services	Amazon
Sense of Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flat fee is best for a frequent video watcher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More convenient than video store 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay-as-you-go is better for an <i>infrequent</i> video watcher
Roku Player Activation Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activation process perceived as "quick" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Users disliked having to "travel" between the TV and computer in order to complete their Roku Media Player activation Users wanted clearer prompts when asked to transition between their TV and computer Ideally, activation could be completed using only the TV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activation process contained detailed/helpful instructions
Finding a Movie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must go online to create and manage list of movies to be watched on the Roku player Users browse and search for movies on Netflix.com 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All users responded enthusiastically to the idea of looking for movies using just their TV – and not having to switch to the computer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to browse movies from TV No search function when looking for movies via the Roku player (as tested) Poor organization of available content (e.g., movies fall into multiple categories, movies unsorted in each category)
Adding Movies to the Roku	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear labeling for adding movies to Instant Queue on Search Results page 	None	None
Watching a Movie	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filmstrip-like navigation method well received 	None
Using the Remote	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated 'back' button requested to provide a more intuitive way to go back one step/level 	None

Activation

Activation | Netflix Flow



Activation | Amazon Flow



Activation | Users mixed over which process was better; each service had its strengths

Netflix

- Some users felt that the Netflix activation process was "quicker" and "shorter" than Amazon's'.

"Netflix was easier for me. Amazon had too much text and too many screens."

"On Netflix, I just enter the code and it's done."

Amazon

- Some users considered the Amazon activation process easier to understand given the instructions available and the fact that the Roku player is mentioned more prominently than on Netflix.

"Amazon has a tighter link here. I know that I'm registering my Roku when I'm on their site."

"I saw the instructions and it was just '4 easy steps'."

Activation | "Hopping" between the TV to Computer

Both Services

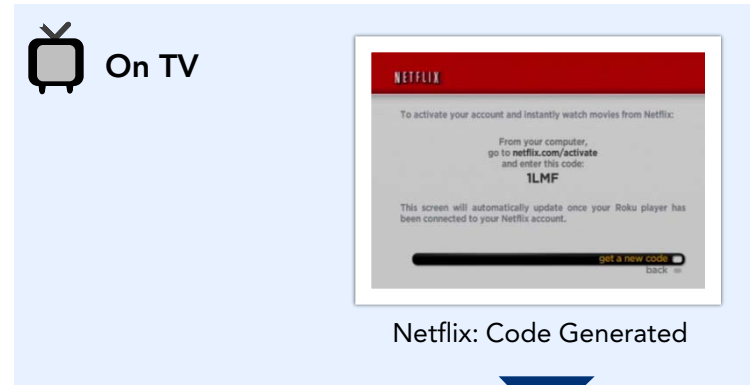
- Many users felt that the relationship between the Roku player and the two streaming content services (Netflix, Amazon) could be presented more clearly.
- Activation of both services required users to switch back and forth between their TV and computer. This was unpopular with several users.

"So I go to my computer now? I hope I don't have to do this every time I want to watch something."

- Several users wanted clearer prompting to alert them when they needed to move to a computer from the TV, or vice versa.
- Though users expected to only activate each service once, all users thought it would be beneficial to be able to complete their activation solely using their TV – without the need to use a computer.

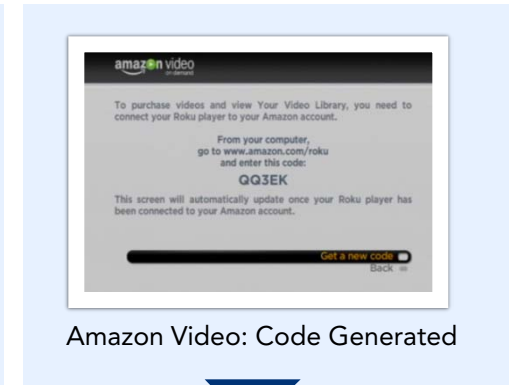
"It would be great if I could activate my service from my TV."

Netflix

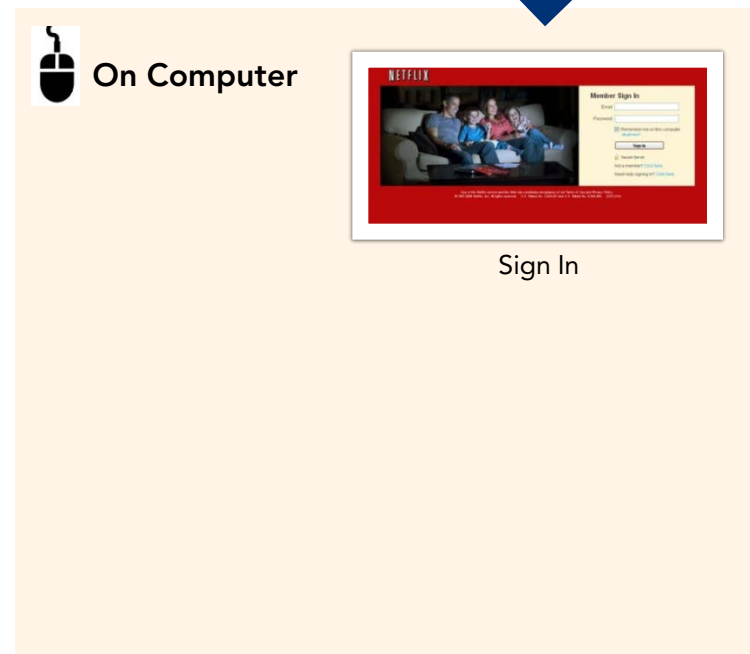


Netflix: Code Generated

Amazon Video



Amazon Video: Code Generated



Sign In



Register Your Roku in 4 Steps

Activation | Amazon instructions largely unread

Amazon

- Many users did not read the instructions provided during the activation processes for Amazon.

"Just let me enter the code. This 'Begin Registration' seems like an extra step."



Register Your Roku in 4 Steps



Input Code

Looking for a Movie

Looking for a Movie | Netflix Flow



Empty Instant Queue



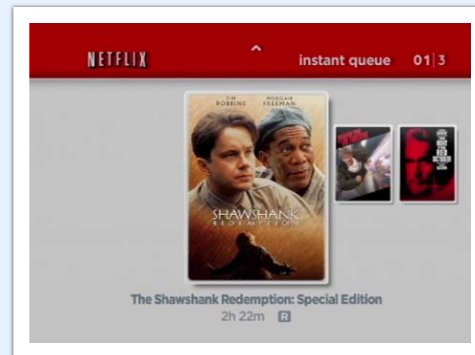
Search Results



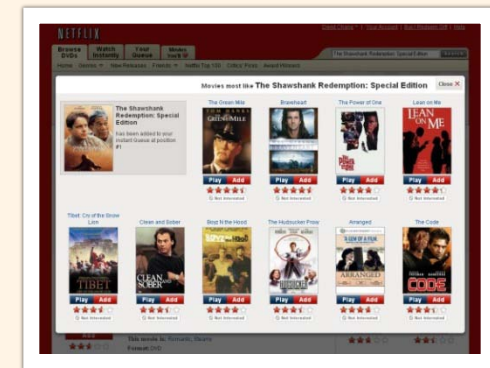
Movie Page (Computer)



Movie Page (TV)



Instant Queue

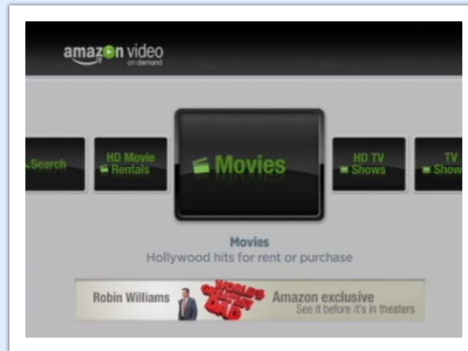


Movie Added to Instant Queue

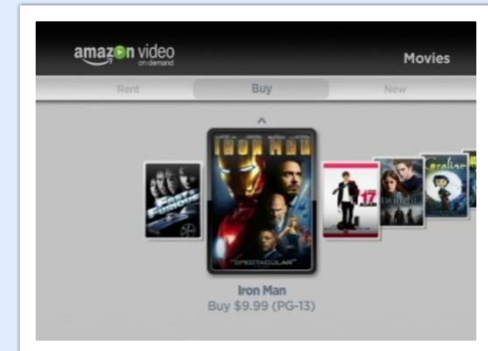
Looking for a Movie | Amazon Flow



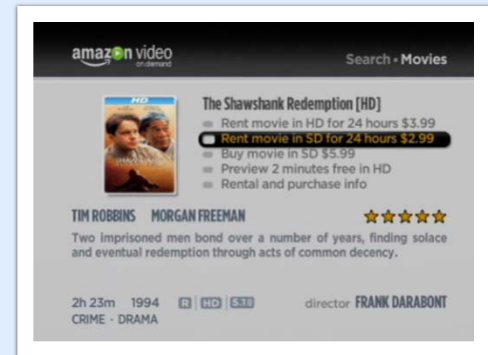
Home



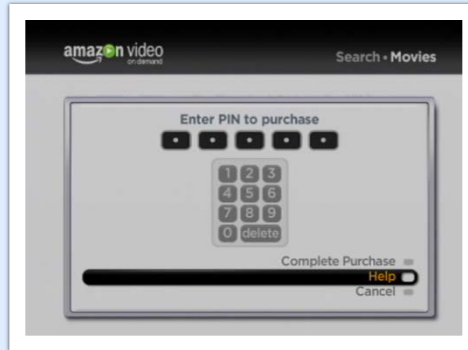
Amazon Main Menu (Movies)



Browsing for a Movie (Buy Area)



Movie Page (Roku)



Input PIN

Looking for a Movie

How It's Done: Netflix

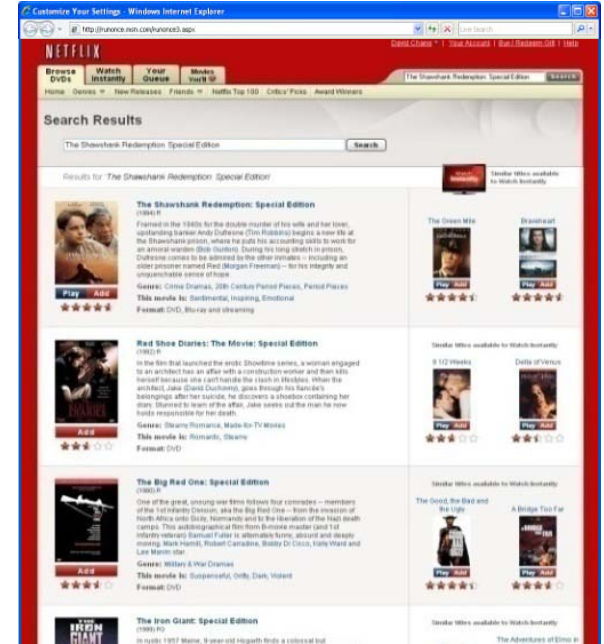
Netflix

- Netflix users first have to add movies to their Instant Queue in order to watch them on their Roku player.
- However, some other users did not mind as they often had a computer nearby.

"Usually I'm on my couch with the laptop in my lap anyway."



TV: Empty Instant Queue



Computer: Netflix.com (Search Results)

Looking for a Movie

How It's Done: Amazon

Amazon

- Amazon users could browse for movies on their Roku player.

"That's the convenience of Amazon; you don't need a computer once you're set up."

Both Services

- All users embraced the idea of being able to browse for a movie while on their TV, without the need of a computer.

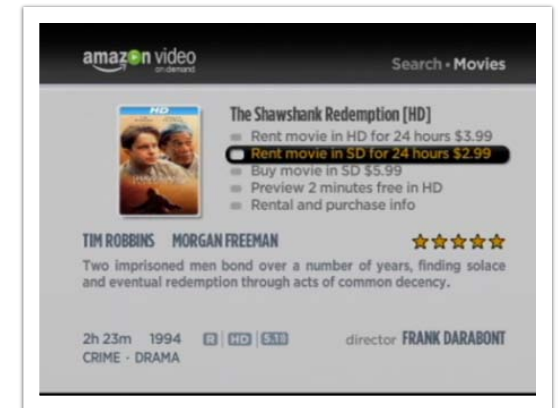
"Ideally, I'd be able to find and watch movies from just my TV."



Amazon Main Menu (Movies)



Browsing for a Movie (Buy Area)



Movie Page (Roku)

Looking for a Movie | Netflix' Confusing Lists

Netflix

- Users struggled to understand how titles on Netflix.com would be available to watch on their Roku player. **A** Specifically, users were unclear of the distinction between "Play", "Add", and "Add to Instant Queue" and wanted better labeling and an indication of what to expect for each.

"I thought pressing Play would play it on the computer? It's not clear."

"I didn't know there were separate lists."

"The buttons don't tell me what's going to happen. They could be more descriptive."

- We suspect simply using the approach on the Netflix Movie Page and changing the last button to "Add to Roku/Xbox Queue" may have helped users.

- B** Users found the buttons on the Netflix.com Movie Page more descriptive than the buttons on the Search Results page.

"These [button labels] are much clearer than the previous [Search Results] page."



Search Results (hovering over Play)



Movie Page

Looking for a Movie

Amazon browsing difficulties on the Roku

Amazon

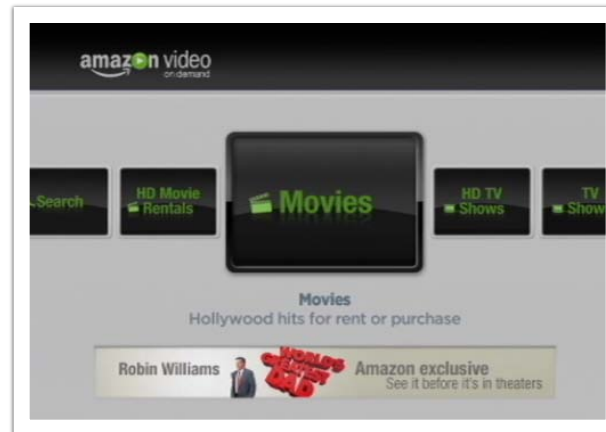
> Users clearly struggled with Amazon's browsing options when looking for a movie for the following reasons:

1. Users did not know what categories movies belonged in
2. Number of movies in each category was unclear
3. Sort order not clear
4. No search function

"There's no sense of sorting within categories... It seems to scroll on forever. Maybe have it in alphabetical order."

"How would I know if the movie I want is HD or not?! It just seems like a bad way to organize movies."

"Oh, I didn't even see the A-Z search before. I had to really dig for this."



Amazon Main Menu (Movies)



Movies to Buy (Not Sorted)

Looking for a Movie

Roku updates Amazon browsing options

Amazon

- A software update (on August 11) to the Roku player appears to address the main issues users encountered.

Users arriving in the Amazon portion of the Roku player now see Search as their first and default function. Going into Search, users are provided an on-screen keyboard that includes predictive search functionality.

We believe these improvements greatly complement the unique ability to both find and watch movies with Amazon on users' TVs.

As Tested



Main Menu (Tested)

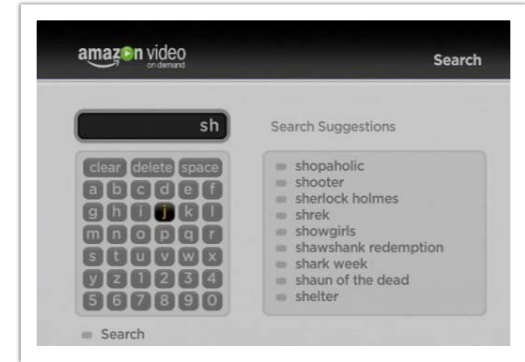
Updated



Main Menu (Updated)



Segmented Search
(replaced with update)



New Search

Watching a Movie

Watching a Movie | Netflix & Amazon

Both Services

The three screens shown on right were used by both Netflix and Amazon to display movies and indicate progress.

- Generally, users experienced no significant issues watching movies and would typically watch them from beginning to end.
- **A** Users responded positively to the filmstrip-like presentation for scanning within a movie.

In fact, a few users preferred this method over the conventional chapter/scene navigation approach found on DVDs as the filmstrip provided more context for their location within the movie.

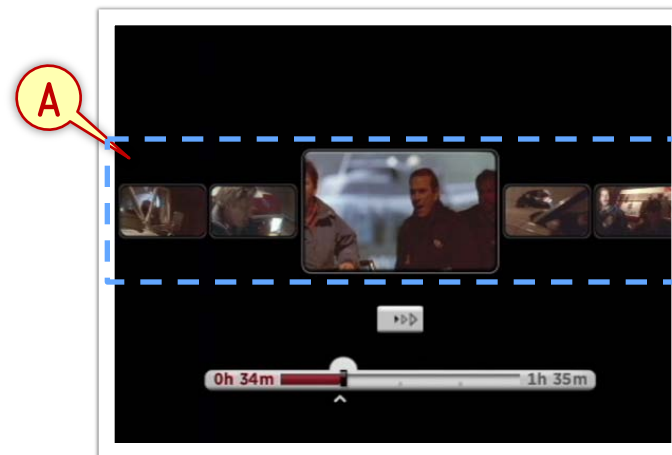
Some participants wanted to access both scanning options.



Buffering



Playback



Scanning Within a Movie

Remote & Navigation

Remote & Navigation | Netflix & Amazon

Both Services

- > **A** Users did not intuitively know that pressing the 'UP' arrow button would bring them back one step in a menu or when watching a movie. Almost all users pressed the **B** 'HOME' button for this purpose, and were annoyed that they were typically taken several steps back and would have to start over from Roku's Home screen.

"It's frustrating... I just want to go back a step, not start all over from the main menu."

*"They should have dedicated **C** 'BACK' button on the remote like on a browser."*



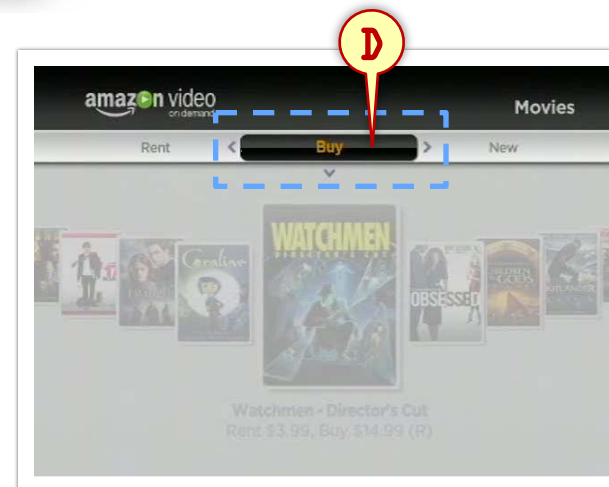
Example of a 'Back' Button featured on a Microsoft Zune Wireless Remote

Amazon

- > **D** Some users did not observe the 2nd level navigation options, including the arrows.

"Oh, I didn't see that there were more categories for movies."

"It's a bit faint. But now that I see it, it's obvious."



2nd Level Navigation