

Netflix movie streaming coming to PlayStation 3

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FILE - In this July 23, 2009 file photo, Netflix customer Arthur Michelson poses with the "Frost Nixon" DVD in Palo Alto, Calif. Netflix reports quarterly earnings after the market close Thursday, Oct. 22, 2009. (AP Photo/Paul Sakuma, file)

(AP) -- PlayStation 3 owners will soon be able to stream movies and TV shows from Netflix to their TVs using the gaming console, just as Xbox 360 owners have been able to do for a year.

Sony Corp. and the DVD rental company planned to announce the service Monday and launch it next month. It will be available for free to

PlayStation 3 owners who have a [Netflix](#) subscription that starts at \$9.

Netflix streaming is already available on a broad range of devices, such as the Roku digital video player, Internet-connected TV sets (including Sony's) and Blu-ray players - and the PlayStation 3's archrival, [Microsoft Corp.'s Xbox 360](#). On the Xbox, however, the Netflix streaming is available only to [Xbox Live](#) "Gold" members, who pay \$50 a year mainly to play games online with friends in other places.

For Netflix Inc., the deal brings millions of potential new customers, to add to the 11.1 million it already has in the United States. About 9 million PlayStation 3 systems have been sold in U.S., and more than 25 million worldwide.

Movie streaming is an increasingly important service for Netflix even though it says it expects to keep renting DVDs until 2030. And Netflix CEO Reed Hastings has said he would like the streaming service to be available on all three of the major gaming platforms - the Xbox, the Wii and the PlayStation. Until now, however, the company had an exclusive deal with Microsoft.

"The PlayStation 3 is an amazing video platform," Hastings said in an interview.

This leaves the Wii as the last console without Netflix streaming. But even without it, the [Wii](#) is the top-selling console.

Netflix has about 17,000 movies and TV shows available for streaming, though few of them are new releases. This will expand the movies [Sony](#) already rents and sells through the PlayStation 3, and will give the company another feature to tout as it markets the PlayStation as a diverse entertainment device.

With a TV ad campaign whose slogan is "It Only Does Everything," Sony is targeting men and women between 18 and 49 and playing up the console's capabilities beyond gaming. Last year, its aim was still younger men, the gamer demographic.

"I think we always knew we made a significant investment in the PS3 and we were ahead of the time in terms of technology," said Jack Tretton, CEO of Sony Computer Entertainment of America. "But technology that was mystifying to the consumer three years ago is being coveted now."

To access the Netflix streaming service, [PlayStation 3](#) users will have to pop in a Blu-ray disc that Netflix will mail out. The disc will access the Internet and activate the Netflix system so people can find movies to stream.

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