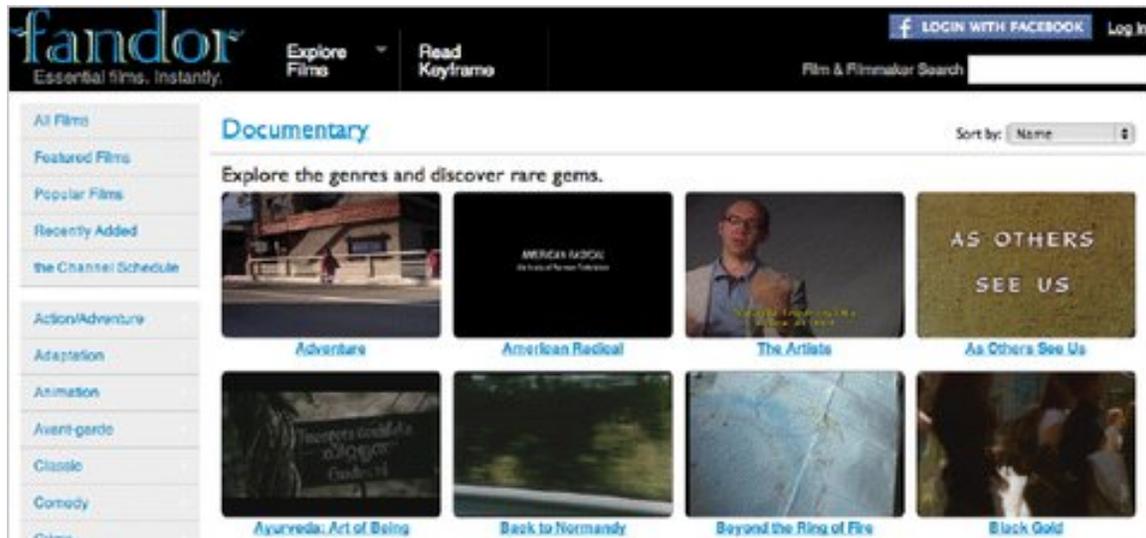


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Hoping to be the Netflix for the Sundance Crowd

By Verne Kopytoff

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Fandor is a new video streaming service for independent films.

A new Web site focused on independent films is hoping to become Netflix for the Sundance Film Festival crowd.

Fandor, introduced on Wednesday, is a subscription service with a library of 2,500 films like “Dogtooth,” a Greek drama nominated for an Academy Award in the foreign language category.

The site is intended to fill a gap in established video streaming sites like Netflix, which have a big catalog of Hollywood blockbusters but relatively few independent movies. Only around 20 percent of Fandor’s films are also available on Netflix, according to Fandor.

“People are interested in content that is outside the mainstream,” said Montgomery Kosma, Fandor’s chief operating officer.

Fandor, based in San Francisco, is hoping that people will be willing to sign up for a second online streaming service in addition to Netflix or one of its rivals.

Fandor, which costs \$10 monthly, supplements those sites and is not a replacement, Mr. Kosma said.

There are already a number of sites for independent films including Mubi, SundanceNow, IndieFlix and IndieMoviesOnline. A few cable television channels are also available for indie film lovers. Because of a lack of money and distribution avenues, many independent film makers fail to get their work shown widely. Film festivals may sift through thousands of films to settle on a hundred for public showing. Even fewer are picked up by a studio for theatrical release.

That leaves a huge number of films for Fandor to choose from. Still, Mr. Kosma said Fandor set a high bar in terms of quality.

Fandor also brags that its licensing system guarantees filmmakers at least some money. A small portion of the company's take is divided equally among the films on the site.

A bigger pot of money is distributed based on the number of minutes a film is watched. The more minutes viewers tune in, the more money collected by filmmakers.

As with many new Web sites, Fandor is counting on its users to market its service by sharing clips that they like on Facebook. Users who prefer to watch Fandor's films on a television screen rather than a computer can do so through Boxee.