DOES TRANSMEDİA STARTED WİTH FİLM?

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Abstract

There is no one to be unimpressed by a well-told story. Stories can change even the most rigid, most stereotypical minds of people because their logic resistance "wanders around" the ego walls. We're witnessing is the emergence of a new form of narrative that's native to the Internet. Told through many media at once in a nonlinear fashion, these new narratives encourage us not merely to watch but to participate, often engaging us in the same way that games do.

Star Wars stands in a different place in content creation and marketing, **it is possible to encounter all kinds of content in film's official website.** From the teaser series to fragments, interviews, comic books, art works by fans, events, games, and applications, there's a lot of content here, and more and more content continues to grow and expand. From the second and all subsequent films, we are given glimpses of different corners of the *Star Wars* universe on screen precisely so that material can be mined and developed through these other platforms. And these other creative developments sustained audience engagement across the long years. Transmedia storytelling , maybe, the end of a narration with a precise narrations with the beginning and the end. *Star Wars*, is a good example of transmedia narration. In this study Star Wars will be examined with it's transmedia storytelling activities. The answer of the "Does Transmedia Started with Film?" will be searched by taking the Star Wars to the center of the study.

Keywords: Transmedia, Star Wars, Storytelling, Marketing

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TRANSMEDYA ANLATIM SİNEMA FİLMLERİYLE Mİ BAŞLADI?

Özet

İyi anlatılan bir hikayeden etkilenmeyecek kişi neredeyse yoktur. Hikayeler, insanların en sabit, en basmakalıp düşüncelerini bile değiştirebilir, çünkü hikayelerin mantıksal dirençleri, insanların ego duvarlarını yıkar. Öyküler aracılığıyla bağ kurulan insanları harekete geçirmek, onları verilerle ikna etmekten çok daha kolaydır. İnternete özgü, kendinden önceki tüm araçları da kapsayan yeni bir anlatı biçiminin ortaya çıkmasına tanıklık ediyoruz. Pek çok ortamda aynı anda doğrusal olmayan bir anlatım gelişiyor, bu yeni anlatılar sadece izlemeye değil, aynı zamanda tıpkı oyunların yaptığı gibi izleyicileri değişik yollarla katılıma da teşvik ediyor.

Star Wars, kendi çağında gösterime giren diğer filmlerden; içerik oluşturma ve pazarlama alanlarında farklı bir yerde durmaktadır. Star Wars resmi web sitesinde film serileri, oyunlar, lisanslı ürünler, kısa tanıtım videoları, fragmanlar, röportajlar, çizgi romanlar, hayranların sanat etkinlikleri, etkinlikler, oyunlar ve uygulamalar gibi pek çok içerik bulunmakta ve daha fazla sayıda içerik üretilmeye ve genişlemeye devam etmektedir. Star Wars filmlerinde yer alan tüm konu, karakter gibi bu evrene ait tüm öğelerin diğer platformlar aracılığıyla üretilip geliştirilebilecek bir yapıda olduğunu ve izleyici katılımını ve katkısını desteklediğini görmekteyiz. Star Wars film serisi transmedya hikaye anlatımı için iyi bir örnek olarak karşımızda durmaktadır. Star Wars filmleri bu çalışmanın merkezine alınarak transmedya hikaye anlatımının film ile başlayıp başlamadığının cevabı aranmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Transmedya, Star Wars, Hikaye Anlatıcılığı, Pazarlama*

1. *Star Wars* An Example Of Transmedia Storytelling?

Since its release, *Star Wars* series has been an irreplaceable material for popular culture. Costumes, T-shirts, hats, mugs, plates, bed sets, toys, figures, comic books, computer and console games, applications for mobile phones, television productions, in short every product we could think of was made. These associated products, which brought many innovations, allowed the creation of a fictional universe known as the Expanded Universe by the followers of the series. "Licensed Product" Policy has been followed since the release of the first series, and especially after the release of the second series in 1999, all *Star Wars*-related products were launched under the license of Lucasfilm Ltd. According to data from early 2018, the total revenue of seven *Star Wars* movies was approximately $ 10 billion, when the sale of licensed products was added to this, the size of commercial success achieved comes into an incontrovertible dimension.

Effective leaders everywhere, from marketing to politics, training to managing companies, tell stories to create visions, transfer values, motivate people, and inspire them. The shortest way to influence and motivate people is to tell stories. Before the social media entered our lives, the brands were telling their stories through television, newspaper, cinema, store-window design and in-store applications.

As Frank Rose wrote in *The Art of Immersion* (2012: 8), embracing the story and even personalizing the story and even creating new stories "making collages" within the story by the audience expand the dimension and scope of the interaction. Today's cinema audience also enjoy creating "their own stories", inspired by the story of the film's creator.

At this point, a narrative/story being written over in a different environment and suitable with the nature of that means and created with the contribution of the participant that the *Star Wars* Extended Universe appears as one of the first and successful examples of this practice. Today, the presence of new media increases communication possibilities and offers new opportunities, on the other hand the development and diversification of media can cause noise pollution and turn into a disadvantage. Bringing a story that has been existing for centuries and/or created just yesterday to the target audience or the plan that determined on the road to share with people should not only be a road map but also a guide. Although transmedia and storytelling are not some concepts that have just entered into our lives, their gathering and appropriate use in new media environments make them as a contemporary concept, as transmedia storytelling. Transmedia and the new media applications first appear in Henry Jenkins's *Convergence Culture* book, and enables these studies remain on the agenda. In fact, by its discipline, definition and nature, "Transmedia storytelling" is an "interdisciplinary" creative perspective and its aim is quite clear: To redefine being a part of the story. Accordingly, it is entering to our lives as an inevitable development that the audience, who had previously deepened in the given story, to take one more step and make collages from the available materials to create a remix/mash–up culture (Cılga, 2012), http://melihcilga.blogspot.com.tr/2012/02/transmedia-storytelling-nedir-neye.html. Accessed on March 1, 2016).

According to Frank Rose, for the last 100 years we have been trained in the belief that stories should only be passively listened, we were just consumers, we didn't have to be in the stories, and the target audience had no such demand, they just contented themselves to consume the texts. With the internet being part of our lives, the formation a new form of expression is being witnessed. In this new form, the story spreads simultaneously in a nonlinear way in different

media and invites the audience, the followers, to become a participant. It's possible to call it "deep media"; stories are entertaining and inclusive, immersive, subsumer, it bears an attractive nature that takes the viewers deeper than an hour's worth of television series, thirty-minute documentary or two-hour movies. In this new environment, the definition of some concepts become unclear, blurred and needs to be re-defined; the blurring of the distinction between author and reader/audience: Whose story is the story? Blurring of the definition of story and play: How do you establish a connection with the story? Blurring of the boundaries of entertainment and marketing: What does it serve? Blurring of the boundary between fiction and reality: Where does one end, where does the other begin? (Rose, 2012: 187).

2. Method and Findings

"Transmedia storytelling" is based on two insights: *engagement*, interactive engagement of the target audience in the communication process and *convergence*, convergence of both the content and the media. The main idea that is the essence of transmedia storytelling can be summarized as the embracing of the story by the audience and personalizing the story through the interaction in order to deepen in the plotline. Naturally, these "multi-tiered" story plots that can respond to such a deepening and adoption need to be prepared in advance (Cılga, 2012). http://melihcilga.blogspot.com.tr/2012/02/transmedia-storytelling-nedir-neye.html. Acccessed on March 1, 2016). In the old media order, while the point was only described through a media and repeated through other media – extended - enriched, in the transmedia story telling the point can be told through the use of a combination of multimedia media, and it has a depth and integrity. The story can no longer be told through a single setting, the whole story can only be told through the experience of the multimedia environment. The new audience wants to contribute to the story, and as they share their own preferences and discoveries about the story, new information and interesting details in social media, they quickly gain new followers, as well as contributing the story to remain on the agenda and updated and spread out.

Once the audience has more opputunities to personalize the content and embrace the told story over again, there appears an expectation of "continuous content flow" that it is no longer easy to be met. In order to meet this expectation, storytellers should be able to design what they are going to say as "a living construction that grows and developsby means of the people living or using it. In the background, there must be a story architecture and story integrity such that the audience who encounters a tier of story in any setting, should be able to find tiers of content that they can discover in other settings and interfere and get involved and that contain new and unexplored elements, if they wish. There must be a major setup that is suitable to add new rooms, new windows, new mysteries to the story by the audience. In other words, every setting used in the "transmedia storytelling"should no longer be merely setting and integrate with the content, and should turn into a part of the story and take it further/deeper in the hands of the audience (Cılga, 2012). http://melihcilga.blogspot.com.tr/2012/02/transmedia-storytelling-nedir-neye.html. Accessed on March 1, 2016).

Our age is information and technology age and as Castells states, we are living in the "network" society (2005: 65). People are getting more and more affected by the developments in mass media technologies. As a result of the technological developments, human life became easier. Today, automation has a potential that can significantly replace human beings and bring out more leisure time for them. The increase in leisure time of people changes their understanding of social life, their relationship with the social environment and their daily lives. Now everyone has multiple screens in their home; these possibilities and speed bring a great diversity to human

life. In today's networked world, young people are so comfortable with using media technologies that they almost flow from one platform to another, and transmedia storytelling supports this flow. The Internet and technology revolutions have influenced our way of watching / screening and using old and new devices. Mobile phones and tablets have put so much of our life that even our annual habits have changed. A decade ago, people were discussing and talking about the previous evening's TV programmes and before that cinema films. Today, these discussions happen in real-time on social networks or instant messengers, while the watching actions is still going. This phenomenon is described, as the Second Screen. And it implies a companion experience in which a consumer engages in relevant content on a second device, such as a smartphone, tablet or laptop while watching something on the 'primary screen' commonly a television. More and more people every day are using their mobiles to consume content and interact with what they are watching one screen. Multi-screening allows people to have different modes of usage. Second screen is transforming television and cinema into a real interactive, participatory medium, the key role in this field is played by the new generations.

The audience demands to be in the middle of the action, to interact, to share, to change, to play content and to apply multimedia content. They want to tell their own story as a continuation of the existing story. The audience is constantly streaming between settings and screens. If we summarize the topic together with the decription in Henry Jenkins' book "*Convergence Culture*": " In terms of narration, content and platform to be presented to the audience, character is a term that involves creating and telling other stories by deepening one or more elements such as character, event, time, and place". Transmedia storytelling works through multiple distribution channels in order to create a systematic, combined and coordinated entertainment experience as integral elements of a fictional text, and ideally every environment needs to make a unique contribution to the evolution of the story.

If a person wants to convince others, the most effective method she/he can use is to tell a story because stories easily breaks the back of the walls of logic. It is much easier to motivate people who are connected through stories than to convince them with logical and rational data, because people identify themselves with story heroes. Stories teach people what the world is like, heroes and betrayers, truths and mistakes. It tells us that there is no such thing as desperation, that the power that will take out the hero inside is in his hands. Even in the most difficult moments, the heroes in the world of fairy tales sustain and inspire the reader, the listener and the audience. Mythological stories are based on greed, lust, jealousy, slyness and pride. All the feelings that make man a Human in all mythology are told through the Gods (Aksoy, 2010) http://www.temelaksoy.com/oykuler-neden-bu-kadar-onemli/, accessed on March 2, 2016). Folk tales tell the values, beliefs, fears and hopes of a society. While these stories criticize society and people, on the one hand, show the ways of a better world. This is what George Lucas do with *Star Wars*. It is to turn into the good–bad encounter that has been going on since the existence of human history to the screenplay. It presents the antagonism and the stories fed by this antagonism and to the audience the blending of Mythology, ancient religions and folktales using new technologies. The basis of its success is in fact to use new techniques and developments in the technology courageously.

Right after Lucas Film was acquired by Walt Disney on October 30, 2012 "One of my greatest pleasures for the past 35 years was to watch *Star Wars* transition from generation to generation. I think *Star Wars* will continue after me, and my duty is to ensure this transition process when I am alive. I believe that with Walt Disney, *Star Wars* will be able to reach more generations. Owing to Walt Disney's experience, the movie will have a new vision for television,

entertainment parks, interactive media and consumer products." said George Lucas in his statement about partnership. From this statement, a sign is given that *Star Wars* with all its products and texts, will enter more and more areas of life. Since the first movie that was released in 1977, Lucas has been following a Licensed Product Policy, and the transmedia storytelling just begins at this point with the introduction of the movie's figures on the market. The audience tends to create "their own story" gradually and their own mythology, through causality links in the plot of events described, but often through emotional abstractions rationalized later. Every individual who plays with these figures begins to write her/his own story around the present narrative and since then the circle has been expanding, the variety of products and environments has been increasing.

Star Wars		
Feature Films	**Saga**	Star Wars ; The Empire Strikes Back; Return of the Jedi; The Phantom Menace; Attack of the Clones; Revenge of the Sith; The Force Awakens; The Last Jedi; Episode IX
	Anthology	Rogue One; Solo
	Other	The Clone Wars
Television	**Series**	Droids; Ewoks; Clone Wars; The Clone Wars; Rebels; Forces of Destiny; Resistance; Detours (unaired)
	Films	Holiday Special; Caravan of Courage: An Ewok Adventure ; Ewoks: The Battle for Endor
Music	**Soundtracks**	Star Wars; The Empire Strikes Back; Return of the Jedi; Ewoks; Episode I: The Phantom Menace; Episode II: Attack of the Clones; Episode III: Revenge of the Sith; The Clone Wars; The Force Awakens; Rogue One; The Last Jedi; Solo
	Themes	Star Wars (Main Title); The Imperial March; Ewok Celebration; Duel of the Fates; Battle of the Heroes; Kylo Ren ; Rey Suite; Across the Stars
Outside Media	**Attractions**	A Galactic Spectacular; Jedi Training: Trials of the Temple; Star Tours; The Adventures Continue; Galaxy's Edge; Star Wars Hotel; Star Wars Hyperspace Mountain; Star Wars Launch Bay; Star Wars Weekends; Where Science Meets Imagination
	Lego	Droid Tales; The Resistance Rises; The Freemaker Adventures
	Merchandise	Action figures ; Hasbro (Vintage Collection, Star Wars Transformers) ; Games; Star Wars Pez; Manga; Force Trainer; Shepperton Design Studios; Trading cards; Vinylmation; Star Wars Rollinz toys

	Television Specials	The Making of Star Wars; SP FX: The Empire Strikes Back; Classic Creatures: Return of the Jedi; From Star Wars to Jedi: The Making of a Saga
	Other	Radio dramatizations; Video games; Shadows of the Empire; Knights of the Old Republic; The Force Unleashed; The Old Republic; Art; Books (non fiction); Comics; Expanded Universe
Cultural Impact		501st Legion; Comparison to Star Trek; Fan films; Parodies; Force for Change; Jedi census; Jediism; Rebel Legion; Star Wars Celebration; Star Wars Day; Star Wars: In Concert; Star Wars Insider; Wookieepedia; TheForce.Net; Yoda conditions; The Dark Allience; The Dark Empire; Jedi Assembly; Mandalorian Mercs; R2-D2 Builders Club; Saber Guid; Team Saberproject

Retrieved from; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars, 10.08.2018.

All settings and products other than the content and settings produced by Lucas film are officially named as the Expanded Universe. In his statement George Lucas said: "There are two worlds over there: one is the world of movies, the other one is the world of licensed books, toys, games and comic books that I call the parallel universe. They do not interfere in my world, which is a clear period, and I do not interfere in their world. "They can only enter the remaining periods between movies," he said. Other than the seven movies of *Star Wars*, the main elements of the story of the Expanded Universe consists of the materials from the comic book, the book, the computer game, the movie, the Encyclopedia etc. Its purpose is to expand the universe, branch out, which coincides at this point with the transmedia storytelling. Walt Disney announced in April 2014 that they would protect the Expanded Universe, that references can be made to the Expanded Universe, nevertheless they will not allow new work to be created in the Expanded Universe concept, and that new materials will be prepared together with the Lucasfilm Story Group. The Expanded Universe changed its name to Star Wars Legends and turned it out of order. It was stated that Star Wars Legends will be controlled much more closely, conflict with each other will be avoided, but the open for improvement structure will be preserved (Fox, 2014, http://thedisneyblog.com/2014/04/25/star-wars-and-disney-discard-expanded-universe-for-alternate-universe/. Accessed on March 2, 2016).

Star Wars VI: The Force Awakens was released in 2015. Long before this date, activities related to the movie started in all media. The director of the movie, J. Abrams has been a Star Wars fan since his childhood, and he deems this to be the biggest advantage in the production phase. It is observed that the Director analyzed the Star Wars universe and mythology created by George Lucas for the movie, and even though he knew the film series quite well, he absorbed it in every detail. Geroge Lucas was the creative consultant of the movie, but there was still a lot of pressure on the film crew. Naturally there is some breakthrough in parallel to as the development of technical resources in The Force Awakens that was released as the first film of the final trilogy of the film series, which bears such a built-in brand value, but what is committed and achived here is that the innovations and new technologies used here were integrated without harming the original texture of the series. Prioritising the story of the film than of the special effects was used for the bonding with the audience. The movie has also been successful in

establishing a special bond with fans through interaction. Both online and offline, Star Wars fans are known to interact regularly. Lucas film has a section that solely works to enable the fan interaction and keep it alive. The work of this section covers a wide range of social networks ranging from managing accounts to answering letters via mail. Before the film is released, both old movies and games and applications and *The Force Awakens* teaser trailers and behind the scenes images begins to be shared through the series' own website www.starwars.com and social networking accounts. The movie gives a background and a story from the past to the followers. The limits and possibilities of their own universe are certain and the audience can find a place here and enlarge their stories. It allows us to understand the different characters involved in the events and their perspectives, and thanks to all these features, the commitment of the audience is deepened.

Episode VIII- The Last Jedi was released in December 15, 2017. The Last Jedi is part of a new trilogy of films (called sequel trilogy) announced after Disney's acquisition of Lucasfilm in October 2012. It is also the second-highest-grossing film of the Star Wars franchise, and turned a net profit of over $417 million. It was positively received by film critics, who praised the ensemble cast, visual effects, musical score, action sequences and emotional weight.

Rogue One: A Star Wars Story was released in December 16, 2016. The film was based on an idea first pitched by Knoll, ten years before it entered development, the film was made to be different in tone and style from the traditional Star Wars films, including omitting the customary opening crawl and transitional screen wipes. Rogue One received positive reviews, with praise for its acting, action sequences, musical score, visual effects, and darker tone, although it received criticism for its underdeveloped characters, and generated controversy for its use of CGI in the recreation of specific characters. And get positive returns from the fans of the Star Wars and gain a younger fan group too.

Solo: A Star Wars Story was released in May 25, 2018. It is positioned as an American space western filmbased on Star Wars character Han Solo. The film received generally favorable reviews from critics who praised the film's acting performances visuals and action sequences, while some felt it depicted a predictable storyline (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars, 10.08.2018).

Star Wars stands in a different place about content preparation and marketing, and it is possible to encounter all kinds of content on the official website of the film series. A lot of content from teaser series to trailers, interviews, comic books, fan art work, events, games and applications has been gathered here and more content is being collected and expanded day by day. The number of Marvel's *Star Wars* comic books, *Star Wars*-themed animations, games, advertisements, *Star Wars*-themed Lego's and more are some of the examples of this increasingly expanding universe. With transmedia storytelling, perhaps a story with a certain the beginning and final is coming to the end. *Star Wars* is in our lives as a good example of transmedia storytelling. In the past, an individual watching a movie, a series, or a TV advertisement would have mastered the subject of that text, and now, while chasing stories on multiple platforms, one has to be vigilant that every new platform and user might have a new angle for the story, a new evolution.

Conclusion

People have always needed stories. We use them to communicate, and feel connected. Good stories become part of our lives and our culture. All recognizable brands have that one thing in

common they all tell a story. However somethings are changing we have never had so many channels and the devices to follow a story with. And today the consumer look for the deeper and more engaging experiences. Which is probably why some stories are told and followed in a different way. The way of the process of the information has changed. For this reson inorder to stay relevant to hyperconnected generation their minds and their lives we would need a liquid content adaptable inorder to distribute all available mediums. Different levels of depth of the story may to offer the different levels of involvement for each user, and they will invent to go deep down to the wellhole as they please and where each piece that hunts the story and feeds the conversation constantly. A transmedia story telling is a different way of telling stories. A transmedia storytelling is a process where each and every element of a story systematically constructed through multiple distrubition channels. With the objective of creating coordinated and unified experience. Ideally with each medium collectively contributing to story in its own particular way. It is a powerfull and emmersive persuasion tool. It is pure 21st century entertainment, which groups peoples brains. It is a fun generating machine given the transmedia strategies to create strong emotional link with an audience and its profitable, it redefines and increases our impact across all media. But moreover because the transmedia narrative is the best way to connecting with the new generations it builds a sustainable audience around the product /brand etc. in this case Star Wars films.

Star Wars has reached nearly four generations of hardcore and temporary fans, and as a result many of the producers of franchised *Star Wars* texts (films, television, comics, novels, games, and more) over the past four decades have been fans turned to creators. Expanded Universe and the content of it can be evaluated as an early and successful practice of transmedia storytelling. When Disney purchased Lucasfilm and began planning the next wave of Star Wars transmedia content, they established what they're calling the "New Unified Canon" of texts (films, TV series, novels, and comic books that are official acknowledged as central to the StarWars fictional universe). The hundreds of pre-existing texts that had been created in this fictional world prior to 2014 (commonly known as the "Expanded Universe") were essentially discarded and rebranded as "Star Wars: Legends".

Star Wars is both a media franchise and a transmedia storyworld, and it completely demonstrates the ways in which transmedia storytelling and the industrial logic of media franchising have developed in concert over the past four decades, as multinational corporations have become the central means for subsidizing, profiting from, and selling modes of immersive storyworlds to global audiences. According to data from early 2018, the total revenue of seven Star Wars movies was approximately $ 10 billion, when the sale of licensed products was added to this, the size of commercial success achieved comes into an incontrovertible dimension, as can be imagined.

Transmedia storytelling is becoming increasingly more efficient prominent and effective due to produsers (user and producers) have multiple entry points into a story and the Star Wars is a perfect example for transmedia story telling. Star Wars was first released in 1977, as a theatratical film Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope and followed by films, games hundreds of book, comics, video games, as well as multiple television series and anthology movies. Each of these mediums and their respective content contribute to the overall story within the Star Wars Universe. Transmedia story telling gives creators the ability to sell the story through various mediums. Attracting different segments of audiences all at the same time. The beauty of transmedia story telling of Star Wars is, they are all perfectly good examples of how someone new to the Star Wars Universe can enter the story. The audiences do not necessarily need to start with the first film and watch them in order. This is why transmedia is a powerful

integrative. The sense of engagement audience gets when exploring the different channels and mediums, increases due to the fact that they are controlling the level of exploration into the story. They become more attentive and more attached to the story. Which will lead them to engage to the other mediums that the story is emersed in. The more flow each channel has the more the story can sell, each channel can lead an individual onto the next, running them into heads and more of the story. The amount of knowledge within the Star Wars Universe continues to act to the collective intelligence aspect of Star Wars transmedia and populate the fandom of the Star Wars Universe, where the many passionate individuals collaborate with the special knowledge of the story, and continue to consume the productive Star Wars. Audiences can begin and continue to explore and distribute the story across multiple delivery channels, sense of engagement is important at this point. As Jenkins (2007) expreses, transmedia storytelling is a process where integral elements of a fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience. Ideally, each medium makes its own unique contribution to the unfolding story.

41 years have passed since the first Star Wars movie, but the story is not over here, and it will not end…
Every generation has a legend.
Every journey has a first step.
Every saga has a beginning.
May the force be with you!

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