

Text n°1 : HBO's secrets ?

Create a compelling and original product, respect the audience's intelligence. Adhering to these guidelines has brought HBO critical acclaim, another important element in successful programming. HBO is now more profitable than any of the networks. Last year, it generated an enviable \$725 million in operating income on revenues of \$2.6 billion.

businessweek.com

Text n°2 : The New Yorker

Narrowly defined, a **cliffhanger** is a climax cracked in half: the bomb ticks, the screen goes black. A lady wriggles on train tracks - will anyone save her? Italics on a black screen: "*To be continued...*".

More broadly, it's any strong dose of "What happens next?", the question that hovers in the black space between episodes. In the digital age, that gap is an accordion: it might be a week or eight months; it may arrive at the end of an episode or as a season finale or in the second before a click on "next".

<http://www.newyorker.com>

Text n°3 : "Narrative potato chips", by Andrew Romano, May 15, 2013

"Binge watching," as scores of breathless critics have christened it, is increasingly common, especially among younger viewers who'd rather screen their favorite shows online, on demand, or on DVR than wait for them to air once a week on old-fashioned TV. First you fall for a show, and then you watch it endlessly. Because you can. But that's only half of the equation. [...]

The bottom line is that binge watching is more than just a business story - more than just a story about new technologies and new modes of distribution. It's really a story about the science of storytelling itself. [...]

Hyperserials always pose a clear question designed to propel the story forward. Who will rule the Seven Kingdoms? (*Game of Thrones*). Will Walker White live or die? (*Breaking Bad*). Will Carrie catch Brody? (*Homeland*). It's not that hyperserials don't delve into the complexities of character. They do. It's just that, unlike their predecessors, they place equal emphasis on What Happens Next. [...]

<http://www.newsweek.com>

Text n°3 : “Narrative potato chips”, by Andrew Romano, May 15, 2013

Showrunners aren't scientists, of course. They rely on instinct to decide which chemicals to cook into our narrative potato chips. But where do their instincts guide them? And which chemicals are they relying on these days? To find out, I tracked down the man who was to blame for my first big bout of binge watching: Carlton Cuse of *Lost*. [...]

Lost was a weekly master class in narrative invention, and Cuse points to one particularly surprising - and effective - plot twist to illustrate how he and his fellow showrunner, Damon Lindelof, did it. Over more than 70 episodes, Cuse and Lindelof conditioned the audience to construe any scene taking place off the island as a flashback to the survivors' previous lives. The Season 3 finale was full of such scenes. But then, at the end of the episode, Cuse and Lindelof revealed that all of the finale's off-island interludes were actually flash-forwards instead - previews of the characters' lives after escaping the island.

As soon as I realized I'd just caught a glimpse of where each character was destined to end up, I couldn't wait to find out how they'd get there.

<http://www.newsweek.com>