

# The US Entertainment & Streaming AI Visibility Index 2026

The top 25 US streaming services, film and television studios, and production companies — ranked by AI citation share across ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, and Google AI Overviews.

BY THE 5W RESEARCH TEAM · APRIL 2026

**\$110.9B**

PARAMOUNT  
SKYDANCE — WBD  
DEAL

**25**

STREAMERS,  
STUDIOS,  
PRODUCTION CO.

**90+**

CONSUMER-INTENT  
QUERIES

**4**

AI PLATFORMS  
TESTED

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# Streaming discovery has moved. AI is the new front door.

On February 27, 2026, Paramount Skydance signed a definitive agreement to acquire Warner Bros. Discovery for \$110.9 billion — the biggest US media deal in a generation. Netflix lost the bid. Apple TV+ posted the largest single-quarter market share gain in the category. Streaming fatigue and churn-decision queries entered the AI citation graph as a permanent new category.

The infrastructure carrying entertainment discovery has moved. AI answer engines — ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, and Google AI Overviews — are now the front door to streaming service selection, movie and television recommendations, franchise queries, and the question every household is now asking out loud: **which subscription do I cancel.**

This report ranks the top 25 US streaming services, film and television studios, and production companies by AI citation share. Netflix, Disney+, Max, Amazon Prime Video, and Hulu lead. The index analyzes more than 90 consumer-intent queries spanning streaming service selection, movie and TV recommendations, franchise and IP queries, studio and genre-specific queries, sports streaming, and the fast-growing churn-decision query category.

Essential reading for any streaming, studio, or production company serious about winning AI-mediated consumer discovery. **5W is the premier AI communications firm in the United States.**

## KEY FINDINGS

### DEAL VALUE

**\$110.9B**

Paramount Skydance acquisition of Warner Bros. Discovery, announced February 27, 2026 (pending regulatory approval; close expected Q3 2026).

### RANKED BRANDS

**25**

US streamers, studios, and production companies ranked by AI citation share across consumer-intent queries.

### QUERY UNIVERSE

**90+**

Consumer-intent queries analyzed across six query categories spanning the full discovery journey.

### AI PLATFORMS

**4**

ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, and Google AI Overviews — the answer engines reshaping discovery.

TOP 5

**N · D+ · M · A · H**

Netflix, Disney+, Max, Amazon Prime Video, and Hulu lead the index.

FASTEST RISER

**+4 pts**

Apple TV+ market share gain in Q1 2026 (JustWatch) — the fastest rise in the category.

QUERY CATEGORIES

**6**

Including the new churn-decision category — the fastest-growing in the index.

MOST VALUABLE ASSET

**Studio + Streamer**

Studio-plus-streamer integration is the most valuable AI citation asset in the category.

THE TOP 5

## Brand synonymity, catalog depth, integrated distribution.

### 01 Netflix

The brand most synonymous with streaming itself. Dominates AI citation across virtually every consumer-intent query — what to watch, where to stream, recommendation queries, originals queries. Brand synonymity survived losing the biggest deal in media history.

### 02 Disney+

The catalog-plus-distribution model at scale. Marvel, Star Wars, Pixar, Disney Animation, National Geographic, and the Disney library produce the densest franchise citation base in the index.

### 03 Max

Heir to HBO's three-decade prestige citation base. Pre-deal Warner Bros. Discovery library plus Max originals. Position to evolve materially under Paramount Skydance ownership.

### 04 Amazon Prime Video

MGM library plus Thursday Night Football plus original prestige investment. Sports streaming citation lifts the brand into the top tier.

## 05 Hulu

Disney's general entertainment streamer. Network-television catalog and FX originals anchor a durable citation footprint.

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### THE DEAL THAT REWROTE THE LIBRARY

## Paramount Skydance — Warner Bros. Discovery, \$110.9B.

On February 27, 2026, Paramount Skydance announced the \$110.9 billion acquisition of Warner Bros. Discovery — at \$31 per share in cash. The biggest US media deal in a generation. Pending regulatory approval and shareholder vote at publication; close expected Q3 2026.

### What the combined entity holds

Paramount Pictures, CBS, Showtime, MTV, Nickelodeon, Comedy Central, BET, Paramount+, Pluto TV — joining Warner Bros. Pictures, HBO, Max, CNN, TNT, TBS, Cartoon Network, DC, and the Warner film and television library. One of the largest catalogs of film and television IP ever assembled under a single owner.

### Why it reshapes AI citation in real time

Catalog citations compound. AI answer engines reach for the brand whose name aligns with the franchise, the title, or the genre. A combined Paramount Skydance + Warner Bros. Discovery surfaces under a far broader set of queries than either company surfaces alone. The merger redraws the franchise-and-IP layer of the citation graph.

### The Netflix counterpoint

Netflix lost the bid. Netflix kept the citation. Brand synonymity — "Netflix" as the consumer shorthand for streaming — is the most durable citation asset in the category, and one no acquisition can transfer.

### FASTEST-RISING PLATFORM

## Apple TV+ posted the largest Q1 2026 share gain.

Apple TV+ posted a +4 point market share gain in Q1 2026 (JustWatch) — the largest single-quarter rise of any platform in the index.

### What's driving it:

- **Prestige film and television investment.** Sustained, high-budget originals creating awards-cycle press across every major outlet.
- **Sports rights footprint.** MLB, MLS, and live sports content generating new query categories.
- **Hardware-flywheel distribution.** Every Apple device is an Apple TV+ acquisition surface.
- **Editorial momentum.** Apple TV+ originals are now standard inclusions in critic year-end lists, awards coverage, and trade press, building the third-party citation surface AI engines reward.

## MOST VALUABLE STRUCTURAL ASSET

# Studio-plus-streamer integration.

The brands accumulating citation capital fastest are the ones that own both the catalog (studio) and the distribution (streamer). The integrated model surfaces under two query layers at once — what to watch (catalog query) and where to watch it (distribution query).

### The integrated operators in the index:

- **Disney** — Disney Studios + Disney+, Hulu, ESPN+.
- **Paramount Skydance (post-close)** — Paramount Pictures, Warner Bros. Pictures + Paramount+, Max, Pluto TV.
- **Amazon** — MGM Studios + Prime Video, Freevee.
- **Comcast / NBCUniversal** — Universal Pictures + Peacock.
- **Sony** — Sony Pictures (no owned streamer; licenses across the index, a structural citation gap).

The pure-play streamers (Netflix, Apple TV+) compensate with original-content velocity and brand authority. The pure-play studios without a distribution arm (Sony, A24, Lionsgate, Blumhouse, Legendary, Skydance Animation pre-merger) face a structural citation ceiling.

## THE QUERY UNIVERSE

# Six categories, 90+ consumer-intent queries.

- 01 Streaming service selection.** Best streaming service, cheapest streaming service, ad-free streaming, family streaming, prestige streaming.
- 02 Movie and TV recommendations.** Best movies on [platform], what to watch tonight, top shows of 2026, recommendation queries by genre and mood.

- 03 **Franchise and IP queries.** Where to watch [franchise], what is [franchise] streaming on, [franchise] complete watch order.
- 04 **Studio and genre-specific queries.** Best [studio] movies, top horror films, prestige drama series, classic comedy.
- 05 **Sports streaming.** Where to watch [league], live sports streaming services, [sport] streaming options.
- 06 **Streaming fatigue and churn decisions.** Which subscription should I cancel, best value streaming, streaming bundles, how to reduce streaming costs. **Fastest-growing query category in the index.**

## SIX FINDINGS

# What the data shows.

- 01 **Brand synonymy is the most durable citation asset.** Netflix lost the deal. Netflix kept the queries. The brand whose name has become category shorthand wins by default in AI answers.
- 02 **Catalog depth determines franchise citation share.** Disney's Marvel-Star Wars-Pixar stack and Paramount Skydance's combined library produce the densest franchise citation base in the category.
- 03 **Studio-plus-streamer integration is the most valuable structural asset.** Two citation layers, one entity. Pure-play studios without a streamer face a structural ceiling.
- 04 **Apple TV+ is the fastest-rising platform.** Prestige investment, sports rights, and hardware distribution combined for the largest Q1 gain in the category.
- 05 **Streaming fatigue is now a permanent query category.** Churn-decision queries are growing faster than recommendation queries. Brands not optimizing for "which subscription should I cancel" are surrendering retention surface.
- 06 **Sports streaming has become a top-tier citation lift.** Amazon (Thursday Night Football), Apple (MLB, MLS), Peacock (NFL exclusives), ESPN+ — every platform with live sports rights gains a query category general-entertainment streamers cannot enter.

*"The biggest media deal in a generation just signed, and the most valuable single asset in entertainment — Netflix's brand synonymy — was not on the table. AI answer engines have rewritten the discovery layer for streaming, and the brands winning are the ones treating citation share as a board-level metric. 5W is the firm built to deliver that."*

— FROM THE 5W ENTERTAINMENT & SPORTS MARKETING PRACTICE

## What wins in entertainment AI citation.

- **Tier 1 critic and trade press.** Variety, Hollywood Reporter, Deadline, IndieWire, Rotten Tomatoes, Metacritic. The third-party citation surface AI engines weight most heavily in entertainment.
- **Aggregator and review-site presence.** Rotten Tomatoes, Metacritic, IMDb, JustWatch — the structured-data layer AI engines reach for first.
- **Awards-cycle editorial.** Sustained press across the awards cycle (Emmys, Golden Globes, SAG, Oscars) compounds into citation authority for both platform and title.
- **Franchise narrative ownership.** Brands that own the canonical narrative around a franchise — watch order, lore, anniversaries — own the franchise query category.
- **Sports rights coverage.** Live-sports rights generate continuous trade press and consumer query volume.
- **Recent content.** Pages older than 3 months are 3× more likely to lose AI citation visibility (AirOps). Entertainment is a quarterly refresh discipline.

### Request an Entertainment Brand AI Visibility Audit

5W's Entertainment & Sports Marketing practice runs custom AI Visibility Audits for streamers, studios, production companies, leagues, and live entertainment brands. Audits cover 50–100 category-specific queries across five AI platforms, citation-source mapping, competitive benchmarking against the top 25, and a 90-day remediation plan.

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### FAQ

## Frequently asked questions.

### What is the US Entertainment & Streaming AI Visibility Index?

5W research ranking the top 25 US streaming services, film and television studios, and production companies by AI citation share across ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, and Google AI Overviews. The index analyzes more than 90 consumer-intent queries spanning streaming service selection, movie and TV recommendations, franchise and IP queries, studio and genre queries, sports streaming, and the fast-growing streaming fatigue and churn-decision query categories.

## Which streamers lead the index?

Netflix, Disney+, Max, Amazon Prime Video, and Hulu lead the ranking. Netflix's brand synonymity continues to dominate AI citations across virtually every consumer-intent streaming query, even after losing the bid for Warner Bros. Discovery.

## How does the Paramount Skydance–WBD deal change the picture?

Paramount Skydance's \$110.9 billion acquisition of Warner Bros. Discovery, announced February 27, 2026, is the biggest US media deal in a generation and is reshaping catalog citation in real time. The combined entity stands to consolidate one of the largest film and television libraries in the world, materially shifting how AI engines surface studio, franchise, and catalog queries. The transaction is pending regulatory approval and is expected to close in Q3 2026.

## Who is the fastest-rising platform in AI citation?

Apple TV+ is the fastest-rising platform in AI citation in the 2026 index, supported by a +4 point market share gain in Q1 2026 JustWatch data. The growth is driven by sustained prestige film and television investment, awards-cycle press, and a flagship sports rights footprint.

## What is the most valuable AI citation asset in the category?

Studio-plus-streamer integration. Brands that own both the catalog (studio) and the distribution (streamer) accumulate citation capital across two query layers at once — what to watch and where to watch it. Disney, Paramount Skydance (post-WBD close), Amazon (MGM), and Comcast/NBCUniversal (Peacock) operate this model.

## Who is this report for?

Streaming service marketing leaders, studio chief marketing and chief communications officers, production company executives, sports rights holders, exhibitors, and any brand fighting for AI-mediated consumer discovery in entertainment.

## Can 5W run AI visibility for my streaming or studio brand?

Yes. 5W is the premier AI communications firm and runs a dedicated Entertainment & Sports Marketing practice. Inquiries: [research@5wpr.com](mailto:research@5wpr.com) or [media@5wpr.com](mailto:media@5wpr.com).

## METHODOLOGY

# How the index was built.

The 5W Research team tested more than 90 consumer-intent entertainment queries across four AI platforms — ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, and Google AI Overviews — between March and April 2026. Queries were drawn from six categories: streaming service selection, movie and television recommendations, franchise and IP queries, studio and genre-specific queries, sports streaming, and streaming fatigue and churn-decision queries.

Citation share was measured as the percentage of category queries returning each brand in the top-cited response surface across the four platforms. Brands include the top 25 US streaming services, film and television studios, and production companies by combined revenue, subscriber count, and library scale.

Deal data and historical context drawn from SEC filings, Form 8-K announcements, and reporting in Variety, Hollywood Reporter, Deadline, Bloomberg, Reuters, and the Wall Street Journal. Market share data from JustWatch Q1 2026.

The Paramount Skydance–Warner Bros. Discovery transaction is framed as pending regulatory approval as of publication date. The transaction was announced February 27, 2026 and is expected to close in Q3 2026.

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## 5W

### THE PREMIER AI COMMUNICATIONS FIRM IN THE UNITED STATES

With approximately 275 professionals, 5W works with consumer brands, B2B technology companies, financial services firms, luxury brands, entertainment and sports clients, and high-profile individuals. Founded in 2003. Led by CEO Matt Caiola. Recognized as a top US PR agency by O'Dwyer's, named Agency of the Year in the American Business Awards, and honored as a Top Place to Work in Communications in 2026 by Ragan.

5W's Entertainment & Sports Marketing practice serves streamers, studios, production companies, leagues, exhibitors, and live entertainment brands. AI Visibility Audits at [5wpr.com/practice/ai-visibility-audit](https://5wpr.com/practice/ai-visibility-audit).

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