

Disney to close “vault” for good as it moves film library to streaming service



reader comments

179 with 125 posters participating

Share this story

Disney is rapidly preparing to launch its own streaming service, dubbed Disney+, later this year. While the debut date is still unknown, we now know that the service will include the entire Disney movie library shortly after the service launches. According to a report in Polygon, Disney CEO Bob Iger explained the strategy to investors at a meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, pointing at the retirement of Disney's

longstanding “vault.”

“The service... is going to combine what we call library product, movies, and television, with a lot of original product as well, movies and television,” Iger said. “And at some point fairly soon after launch, it will house the entire Disney motion picture library, so the movies that you speak of that traditionally have been kept in a ‘vault’ and brought out basically every few years will be on the service. And then, of course, we’re producing a number of original movies and original television shows as well that will be Disney-branded.”

The Disney Vault has been a marketing and sales strategy for years. After a film’s initial release run, Disney would sequester the title in its vault for a long period of time. That meant that customers who didn’t buy a physical copy of the movie immediately would be out of luck until Disney brought it out of the vault as a new edition or a special release run.

This strategy allowed Disney to control film sales and drum up anticipation for titles that were coming out of the vault once the company decided the time was right. But it also frustrated customers who ended up paying high prices for copies of movies that were widely unavailable during their vault stints.

Disney has dozens of movies in its vault and in its entire collection—classics like *Dumbo*, *The Little Mermaid*, and *101 Dalmatians*, and new favorites like *Frozen*. Locking those movies into the company’s own streaming service will make it that much more appealing to diehard Disney fans—and customers who have children.

This exclusivity will be an important factor for Disney as it competes with other streaming giants like Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime Video. In 2017, Disney announced that it would remove its content from Netflix to prepare for the launch of

Disney+ in 2019. The picture became clearer as Disney clarified that its movies and properties that it acquired, like *Star Wars* and *Marvel* films, would also disappear from Netflix. That content and other licensed properties will likely also stream exclusively on Disney+.

In addition to existing content, Disney is planning on making straight-to-series titles and live-action versions of popular films. Disney already signed director Jon Favreau (*Iron Man*) to make a live-action *Star Wars* series called *The Mandalorian*, which will stream exclusively on Disney+.

<https://arstechnica.com/?p=1470525>