Under a Paramount-WBD merger, two struggling media giants would unite



A successful Paramount-WBD merger would be the largest streaming merger ever and would lead to further consolidation in the industry.

“What started as a fragmented but flexible streaming ecosystem is increasingly trending toward rebundling—fewer, larger super-platforms offering broader catalogues at higher price points,” Mathur said.

Paramount holds on to cable

Paramount’s WBD bid is unique in its aggressive push for cable channels, which are struggling with viewership and advertising revenue. Under a WBD merger, Paramount would add networks like HGTV, Cartoon Network, TLC, and CNN to its linear TV lineup, which currently includes Comedy Central, Nickelodeon, and CBS.

Although Paramount and WBD’s cable businesses are both in decline, they are both profitable. Paramount’s TV/media business, which includes its cable channels and production studios, reported $1.1 billion in adjusted OIBDA in Q4 2025. WBD’s cable business posted adjusted EBITDA of $1.41 billion that quarter.

Ultimately, a Paramount-WBD merger would put diversity of viewpoints at risk. Under Ellison’s ownership, CBS News has adjusted its approach with new editor-in-chief Bari Weiss. There have also been concerns about censoring CBS under Ellison’s Paramount, including from Stephen Colbert, who said this month that CBS forbade him from interviewing Texas Democratic Senate candidate James Talarico; CBS denied Colbert’s claim. Further, Paramount could have a lasting impact on CNN, including costs, layoffs, and coverage.

More to come

Regulatory scrutiny will be at the center of Paramount and WBD’s merger over the upcoming months. Federal approval is likely, but the merger also faces European regulation and potential state lawsuits. The theater industry is also lobbying against Paramount’s WBD merger.

Should a Paramount-WBD merger ultimately be greenlit, two declining businesses will be challenged to form a profitable one. Even with regulatory approval, Paramount-Skydance-Warner-Bros.-Discovery faces an uphill climb.

Although the bidding war may be settled, the fight for WBD is only beginning.

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