# WarnerMedia's HBO Max Launches in 2020, and It's Bringing 'Friends'



The streaming service will come loaded with HBO and Warner Bros content, exclusive originals and a backlog of sitcoms including 'Friends,' which will leave Netflix early next year.

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We finally have a name for AT&T-owned WarnerMedia's new entrant into the increasingly crowded video streaming market: HBO Max is set to launch in spring 2020 with "10,000 hours of premium content."

Pricing has yet to be announced, but *The Wall Street Journal* reports that it'll be slightly more expensive than the

$14.99 monthly subscription cost of HBO Now. That'll put HBO Max at the most expensive end of the subscription video-on-demand (SVOD) spectrum; more expensive than Netflix's $12.99 Standard plan and more than double the $6.99 monthly cost of Disney+.

The HBO Max branding is about as creative as Apple TV+ and Disney+, but both services as well as NBCUniversal's forthcoming streaming app are coming after Netflix and Amazon with a combination of originals, deep catalogs of existing content, and new licensing deals for your favorite sitcoms. NBCUniversal is taking *The Office* off Netflix in 2021, and WarnerMedia announced that HBO Max will carry the exlusive rights to *Friends* starting in 2020. Netflix is taking the news well.

> *The One Where We Have To Say Goodbye.*
>
> *We're sorry to see Friends go to Warner's streaming service at the beginning of 2020 (in The US). Thanks for the memories, gang* 
>
> *— Netflix US (@netflix)* ***July 9, 2019***

WarnerMedia is paying heavily for the privilege, with the *Friends* deal reportedly costing the entertainment conglomerate $425 million for five years. HBO Max also scooped up the exclusive rights to *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air* and *Pretty Little Liars.*

As for original content, WarnerMedia announced production deals with Reese Witherspoon on at least two films, as well as producer Greg Bertlani, who will produce four initial young adult films as well as hourlong thriller series *The Flight Attendant* starring *The Big Bang Theory's* Kaley Cuocco. HBO Max's slate of original programming also includes:

- *Dune: The Sisterhood,* from director Denis Villeneuve,

who's helming the big-budget film remake for Warner Bros
- *Tokyo Vice,* a police drama series starring Ansel Elgort
- *Love Life*, a 10-episode half-hour romantic comedy anthology series starring Anna Kendrick
- *Station Eleven,* a postapocalyptic limited series directed by *Atlanta's* Hiro Murai
- *Gremlins,* an animated series based on the original movie

Of course, the crown jewel of WarnerMedia's streaming service is its namesake; HBO Max will carry HBO's full library of content. It'll also serve as the exclusive streaming home for all CW future shows going forward, including *Batwoman* and *Riverdale* spin-off *Katy Keene.* The service will also combine content from a range of other AT&T and Time Warner-owned media properties, including Adult Swim, Cartoon Network, Crunchyroll, CNN, DC Entertainment, TBS, TNT, TruTV, Turner Classic Movies, and more.

HBO Max will join a crowded landscape of streaming services all competing with Netflix, Amazon, and Hulu for consumers' monthly entertainment dollars. Adding Apple TV+, Disney+, NBCUniversal's service, and HBO Max to the marketplace will spread content across more services, forcing consumers to choose their own personal streaming bundles based on the original and licensed shows and movies they care about.

Netflix has spent billions stocking its library with originals to prepare for this eventuality over the past several years, but there's no balancing the dwindling value proposition for streaming users. There will soon be more to watch in more places than ever, but the days of having all your favorites in one place are officially over.

Read our story on the streaming-industrial complex for a deeper dive into this shifting market and what it means for consumers.

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