Will Apple Acquire Disney? An Influential Analyst Thinks So. ‘Worth More Together.’

Could iMickey soon be a reality?

Laura Martin, a Wall Street senior analyst for investment bank Needham, believes that Apple could acquire Disney in a mega-merger that would give new meaning to the term “Magic Mouse.”

In a research report, Martin wrote that the companies “are worth more together than separately.”

“Combining Apple’s distribution footprint of 1.25 billion unique customers with Disney’s 570 million consumers reached each year would drive 15% to 25% valuation upside for Apple shareholders,” she noted.

The total valuation would be around $631 billion based on its current $2.5 trillion market capitalization, according to Markets Insider.

Martin said that Apple and Disney are “complementary” and that combining their two strengths could give them superpowers.

“What Apple does best is distribute content globally to 2 billion high-end mobile devices owned by 1.25 billion unique and wealthy users. And what Disney does best is create AAA content franchises, which is distributes globally across all screens, as well as in the physical world,” Martin wrote.

Martin also pointed out that both companies are “marketing juggernauts,” able to charge premium prices to their rabid fan bases.

Not their first dance

Apple and Disney have had a long history of working well together. When Apple launched the video iPod, Disney was one of the first companies to offer their shows on the platform. Disney also famously bought Pixar, which was helmed by Apple's legendary founder Steve Jobs. Iger and Jobs were good friends.

But good relations do not a merger make. Rumors of the two companies coming together have been squelched in the past.

Bob Iger, the newly reanointed Disney CEO, said in a Town Hall last year that he had no plans to merge with Apple.

"What you've read about in that regard is just pure speculation," Iger said.

Still, analysts like Martin believe that a merger is essential in a highly competitive market.

"I think Apple is doing a very mediocre job of streaming. They just said they were going to do a billion dollars in film financing. That's sort of laughable, because these companies that are competing in content businesses are spending $30 billion a year. Even Netflix is spending $20 billion a year," Martin told CNBC earlier today.

"Guess what the Walt Disney Company has: 100 years of some of the best intellectual property, characters, and film franchises on earth. So to own that in perpetuity would actually lower Apple's cost."

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