

Streaming platform Hulu could be wild card in Fox-Disney megadeal

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Walt Disney Co. would strengthen its streaming television offerings by gaining control of the Hulu platform as part of a \$52 billion deal for film and television assets of 21st Century Fox

Walt Disney Co.'s deal for much of the film and television assets of 21st Century Fox could help remake the streaming platform Hulu a legitimate

rival to Netflix.

The proposed \$52 billion deal has drawn attention for potentially turning over to Disney another major Hollywood studio and key television operations in the US and overseas.

But if streaming video represents the future, Hulu could be the key.

Created in 2008, Hulu has garnered comparatively little attention as the number three streaming platform in the US market, behind Netflix and Amazon.

Hulu was created by the major broadcast operators to counter the growing influence of Netflix. But Hulu's structure has been a handicap. Disney Fox and Comcast's NBCUniversal each own 30 percent, with Time Warner holding the remaining 10 percent.

The deal announced in December would give Disney a 60 percent stake and, according to analysts, greater ability to build a winning platform.

"Hulu never made sense to begin with," said analyst Brian Wieser of Pivotal Research.

"The concept that the networks needed to come together to form this consortium probably held it back more than anything else. They're probably better not working in a consortium-like model."

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