Q1 2026

From Content to Fan Culture

As streaming grows, so does its power to unite audiences around shared moments. Premieres, finales, sports, holiday programming, and tentpole events are no longer just watched; they are experienced. In turn, streaming has become the engine of fandom, community, and culture.

It's no longer part of the moment. It is: **The Main Event**.

Generation Stream: The Main Event Effect, *presented by Disney Advertising*, is a yearlong quarterly study. This first report covers December 2025–March 2026, with findings that will evolve throughout the year.

> *"The emotional connection people have with Disney stories is one of the most powerful forces in media, creating a unique platform for brands to show up in culture."*

- Rita Ferro
President, Global Advertising, Disney

Source: Disney Advertising and Culture Co-Op, Q1 2026 findings (fielded December 2025–March 2026).

Generation STREAM

THE MAIN EVENT EFFECT

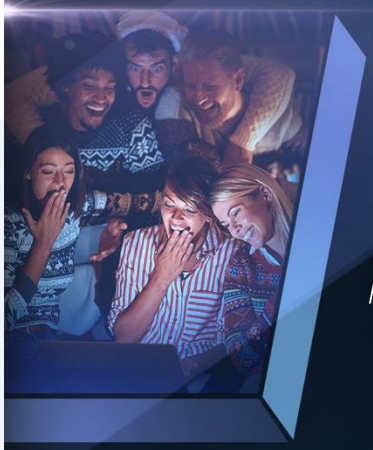
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GLOBAL STREAMERS AGREE:



87%

"Streaming events can be more than just a show, movie, or match – they can be generational moments."



84%

"Streaming events feel like the original social network. It's an organic time to come together with friends."



52%

Say they *"eventized"* content *"every few months or more."*

Five Defining Aspects of "Eventized" Streaming

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Events can be characterized by a combination of these markers, but **most streaming events have at least three of the following five qualities**.

Intentionality	Social Connection	Cultural or Personal Impact	Wrapped with Activities	Timeliness
Planned for, anticipated, and built up in advance	Events are more often shared than solo	Carries broader meaning beyond simple entertainment	Extended by pre, during, and post-event behaviors	Anchored in live relevance, timing, or seasonal significance

The Event Journey

Streaming events are often **'wrapped' with event-related activities before, during, and after the event**, making it a full-on event journey rather than a single, solitary telecast.

BEFORE

80% Preparation starts early through purchases, online hype, social inspiration, and related content catch-up.

DURING

84% The experience becomes social and immersive with themed food and drinks, live conversation, shared reactions, and second-screen activity.

AFTER

83% The event lives on through watch-list additions, podcasts, social posting, and deeper discovery of adjacent content.

Made for the Moment

Timeliness gives streaming a premium quality — the intentionality of watching together, in the moment.

87% Say *"it's important to have streaming events when something is happening live, or when the timing of the event is significant."*

The Emotion Quotient

When Streaming Becomes An Event — *You Feel It.*

EXCITED · ENGAGED · SOCIAL · CONNECTED

"Eventized" content makes people feel more excited, engaged, social, and connected — turning programming into shared, real-world moments and fandom.

Source: Disney Advertising and Culture Co-Op, Q1 2026 findings (fielded December 2025–March 2026).

Early Trend Signals

Defining how the world turns streams into events.

Here is a preview of the themes we have seen so far.

01	**Long to Belong**	Shared streaming helps fulfill demand for in-person connection
02	**The World's Stage**	Streaming elevates local culture while connecting audiences globally
03	**Big Little Bets**	Friendly wagers and playful participation make events more interactive
04	**Flash Forward**	Nostalgic rewatches become reflective, meaning-rich events
05	**Social Decoding**	Social platforms and recaps turn viewing into collective interpretation

What This Means for Advertisers

"Eventized" streamers are premium and receptive to advertising

67% Of global streamers say ads are seamlessly integrated into these experiences, rather than disruptive.

How to Show Up with Impact

Build in and around the full journey

Opportunities exist before, during, and after the core viewing moment.

Lean into social connection

Streaming events are shared rituals that can deepen emotional relevance.

Keep ads additive

Audiences welcome ads that feel timely, seamless, and context-aware.



To learn more about this study and how to activate, check out the Generation Stream Hub on disneyadvertising.com.

Source: Disney Advertising and Culture Co-Op, Q1 2026 findings (fielded December 2025-March 2026).

Quantitative Survey: 4,200 person nationally representative survey among 18- to 54-year-olds in 11 markets: United States, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Japan, Australia (Results weighted by population size)

Qualitative Project: 15 hand-recruited respondents for in-depth projects in 6 markets in Q1: United States, UK, Germany, Mexico, Brazil, Australia

Global Streamers are defined as individuals that spend 1+ hour streaming/week, who stream any type of video content (including premium and user-generated), and have 1+ streaming service.

Streaming events are defined as "amplified streaming experiences". They can be social experiences, personal rituals, or cultural moments. Streaming events could be shared experiences, either in real life or over social media, or solo experiences. Big events can also be streaming events that are big for you, even if few others knew about it.

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