

WarnerMedia names former Hulu chief Jason Kilar CEO

April 1 2020, by Jake Coyle



In this file photo taken March 23, 2015, Jason Kilar poses for a photo in San Francisco. Kilar, the founding chief executive of Hulu and a former Amazon senior vice president, has been named CEO of WarnerMedia, the company announced Wednesday. (AP Photo/Eric Risberg, File)

Jason Kilar, the founding chief executive of Hulu and a former Amazon senior vice president, has been named CEO of WarnerMedia, the company announced Wednesday.

Kilar takes the reins of one of Hollywood's largest film and television factories, putting in him charge of the Warner Bros. movie and TV studio, HBO, CNN and other cable networks. The appointment comes just as WarnerMedia, which is owned by AT&T, is preparing the launch of its own streaming service, HBO Max.

Kilar succeeds John Stankey, who was promoted to AT&T president and chief operating officer in September. Kilar, who will begin May 1, will report to Stankey. HBO Max is set to launch in May.

"Jason is a dynamic executive with the right skill set to lead WarnerMedia into the future," Stankey said in a statement. "His experience in media and entertainment, direct-to-consumer video streaming and advertising is the perfect fit for WarnerMedia, and I am excited to have him lead the next chapter of WarnerMedia's storied success."

Kilar, 48, was Hulu's chief from its inception in 2007 through 2013. After departing Hulu, he co-founded and was CEO of the streaming service Vessel for four years.

The choice of Kilar makes clear the priority of the new streaming service for AT&T. HBO Max will enter the increasingly crowded streaming marketplace to compete with Netflix, Amazon, Hulu, Disney-Plus and the soon-to-launch platforms Peacock, from NBCUniversal, and Jeffrey Katzenberg's short-form Quibi. WarnerMedia has said HBO Max will cost \$14.99 a month, making it one of higher-priced streaming services.

"I'm so excited for the opportunity to lean into the future at WarnerMedia," Kilar said. "Stories well told have always mattered, and they matter even more in this challenging time for the world. It will be a privilege to invent, create, and serve with so many talented people."

Reporting to Kilar will be Warner Bros. chairman and chief executive Ann Sarnoff, head of news and sports Jeff Zucker and WarnerMedia Entertainment chairman Bob Greenblatt.

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