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Canadian Streaming Shows Are Drawing Big Audiences, Political Battles Aside | Charts

Demand for Canadian shows has increased 17% over the last two years

Christofer Hamilton October 13, 2026 @ 9:40 AM



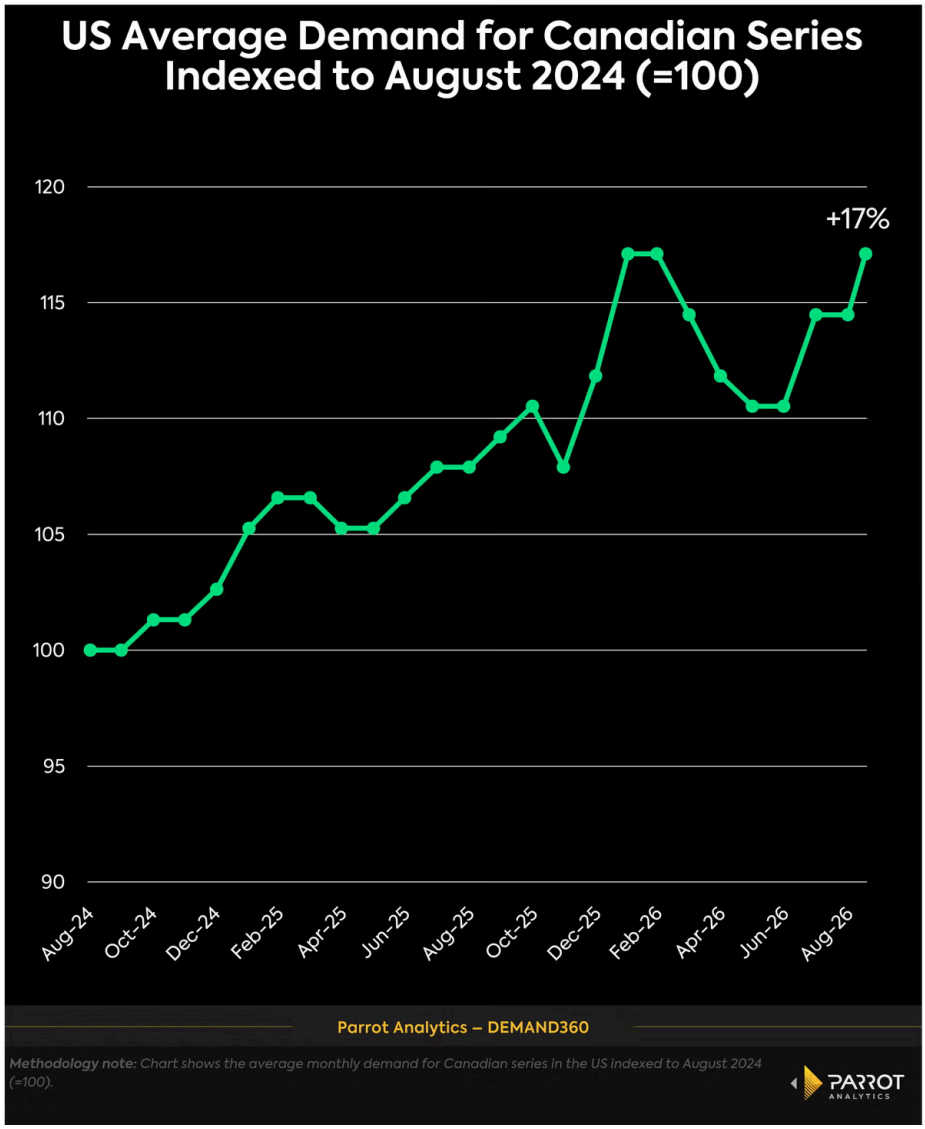
Hudson Williams and Connor Storrie in "Heated Rivalry" (Credit: Bell Media)

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While cross-border trade friction between Washington and Ottawa dominates the headlines, American viewing habits tell a sharply different story. Despite United States officials repeatedly condemning Canada's streaming mandates as unfair market barriers, imported Canadian programming has quietly become a massive streaming asset for major U.S. platforms.

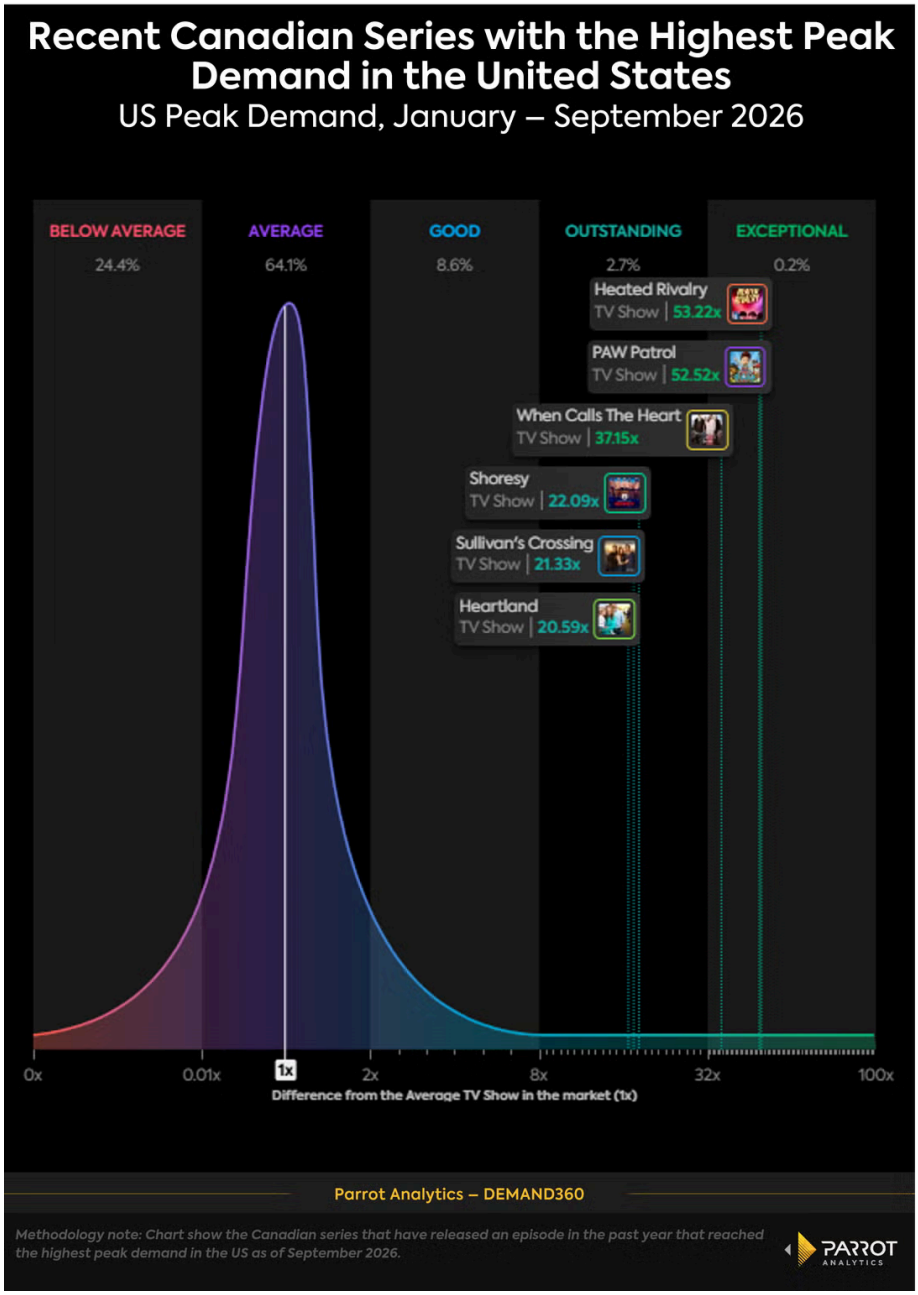
Parrot Analytics' Streaming Economics model calculates that from Q1 2020 through Q1 2026, Canadian series and movies have generated over $7 billion in subscriber revenue on streaming platforms within the U.S.

Rather than riding a temporary spike, American appetite for Canadian IP has steadily grown. Over the past 2 years, the average demand for Canadian series has increased 17%. Far from being a niche offering, Canadian content is actively drawing US viewers into paid subscription funnels.



Looking at the peak demand reached by these titles so far this year underscores the range of Canadian content that has successfully won over Americans. “Paw Patrol” is a perennial success story in the children’s programming space, but this year it has been unseated by a decidedly less family friendly series, “Heated Rivalry,” which has peaked at over 50 times the average series demand so far this year.

That attention translates to real dollars. In the first quarter of 2026 alone, the show drove over $115 million in subscriber revenue for HBO Max in the U.S. The other Canadian series that have been able to break through most with American audiences span a range of genres — period drama (“When Calls the Heart”), sports comedy (“Shoresy”), family drama (“Heartland”), romance (“Sullivan’s Crossing”) — but all still embrace their uniquely Canadian setting.



The irony at the heart of this trade dispute is hard to ignore. While Washington and Ottawa remain deadlocked over rules mandating that U.S. streamers invest in and pay for Canadian programming, this very content is quietly proving to be a lucrative asset south of the border. Rather than acting as a financial drag on American media companies, these shows have generated billions in domestic subscriber value. The trade negotiators are treating Canadian content as a mandatory tax, when the actual streaming data proves it is an effective, organic growth engine.

Perhaps the deepest irony lies in the ongoing fight over promotion. A major sticking point for U.S. tech giants has been Canada's requirement that streaming platforms actively promote local content to Canadian users. Yet, as the steadily growing demand makes clear, American audiences are enthusiastically consuming these shows in the U.S., where absolutely no such promotional mandates exist. U.S. viewers aren't watching because an algorithm

was legally forced to recommend it to them; they are seeking out these diverse Canadian stories organically. Ultimately, while politicians continue to spar over cross-border streaming regulations, American consumers have already spoken with their wallets.

Christofer Hamilton

Christofer Hamilton is an industry insights manager at Parrot Analytics, a WrapPRO partner. For more from Parrot Analytics, visit their website. For more from WrapPRO's partners, visit the Data and Analysis Hub.

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