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Jobs to Be Done – AVOD Summary

Goals & Objectives

- Understand the various flows current Plex users use to navigate to AVOD on their preferred devices

- Understand why users currently choose Plex to watch AVOD content as well as their current level of satisfaction with Plex as an AVOD service

- Identify the main "job(s)" current Plex AVOD users elect for Plex to fill

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Participant Overview

- The platforms used by participants during these usability testing sessions included the following:

Firestick 9	Roku 8	Apple TV 3	LG 2	Android TV 2	
Chromecast 1	Playstation 1	Native Android 10	Native iOS 12	Desktop 24	Total 62

- The following is a demographic summary of the users who participated in all usability testing sessions.

Total # of Participants 62	Age 18 - 49	Gender Female, Male
Income $19,999 - $200,000	Countries United States	

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Testing Approach

- A total of **62 users** were observed for an **unmoderated usability study** to **understand their habits with Plex's AVOD service** across native mobile (iOS and Android), desktop, and various TV platforms

  - 26 users for TV, 24 users for desktop, and 22 users for mobile

- Users were asked to navigate through the application the way they normally would, completing tasks centered around the general formatting of Plex as well as the **AVOD player, post play, and search features**

- After user completed their usability tasks, they were asked questions around their **general AVOD watching habits** in order to gain insight into the reasons **why they choose Plex over other services** to serve their needs

Full test plan and screening criteria can be found [here](#).
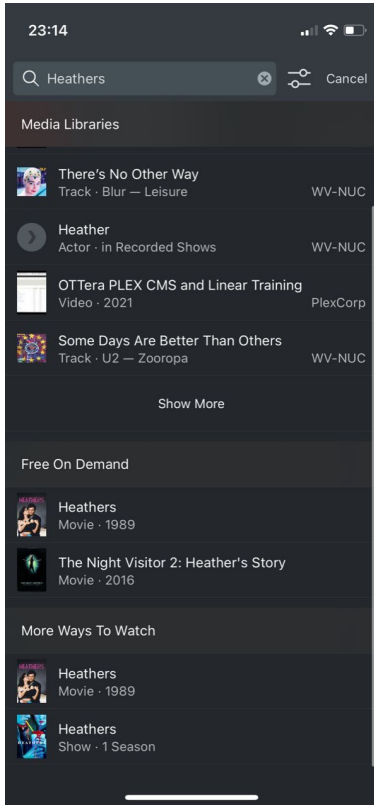
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Initial Tasks

Task #1: Find A General Title

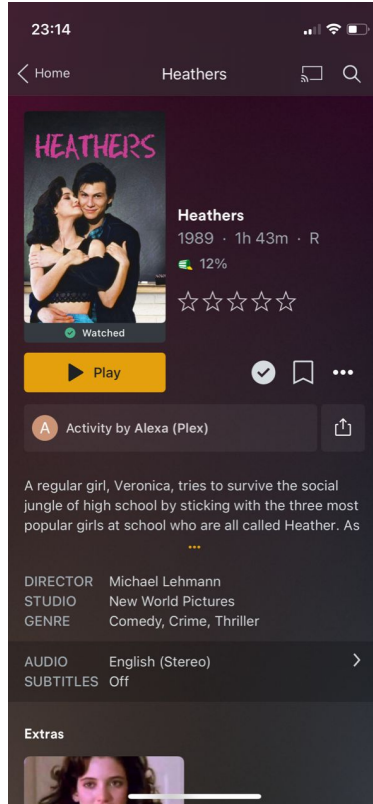Users were asked to start with the following task:

- Navigate to a title the way you normally would on Plex (pause at the details page)

  - Describe your experience

  - How do you browse through on content in general? What guides this decision?

  - What are your top factors when deciding on a title?

  - What information/features do you use on the details page?
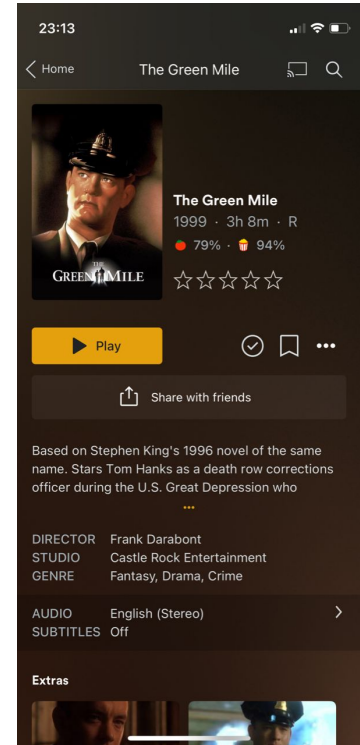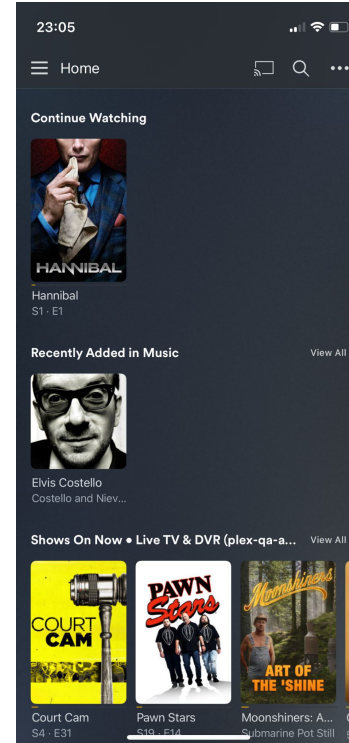
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Task #2: Find A Specific Title

Users were then asked to complete the following task:

- Navigate to Heathers (1989) the way you normally would on Plex (pause at the details page)

  ○ Describe your experience

  ○ Do you generally save titles to watchlist?

  ○ When do you use watchlist and how frequently?

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Task #3: Player Controls

From the Heathers details page, users were prompted to click into the video player

- Describe your experience

- Which controls do you generally use on an everyday basis? Is there anything missing?

- How do you feel about the way ads are presented on Plex?

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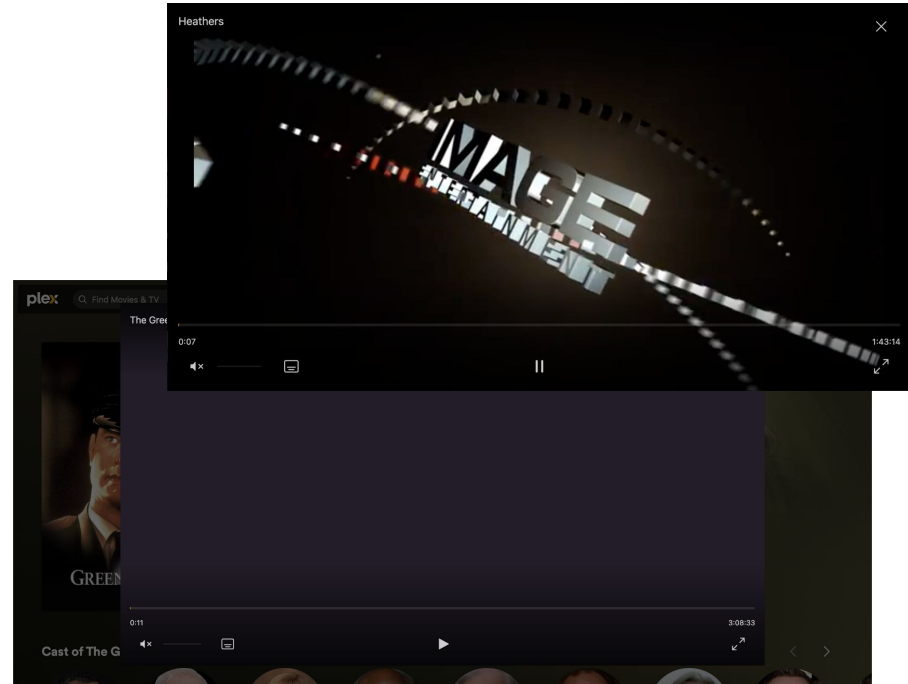
Task #4: Post Play Experience

As the last task for the usability test, mobile and TV users* were asked to review the post play page:

- Scrub all the way to the end of the video until you reach the post play page.

  - Describe your experience

  - What do you find helpful about the information on this page?

  - What do you dislike about this page? Is there anything missing?

Desktop users were excluded as they did not have a post play experience on watch.plex

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Findings & Feedback

Overall User Journey (All Users)

Looking holistically across users from all platforms, most were satisfied with most tasks, outside of post play which is where the most problems were observed.

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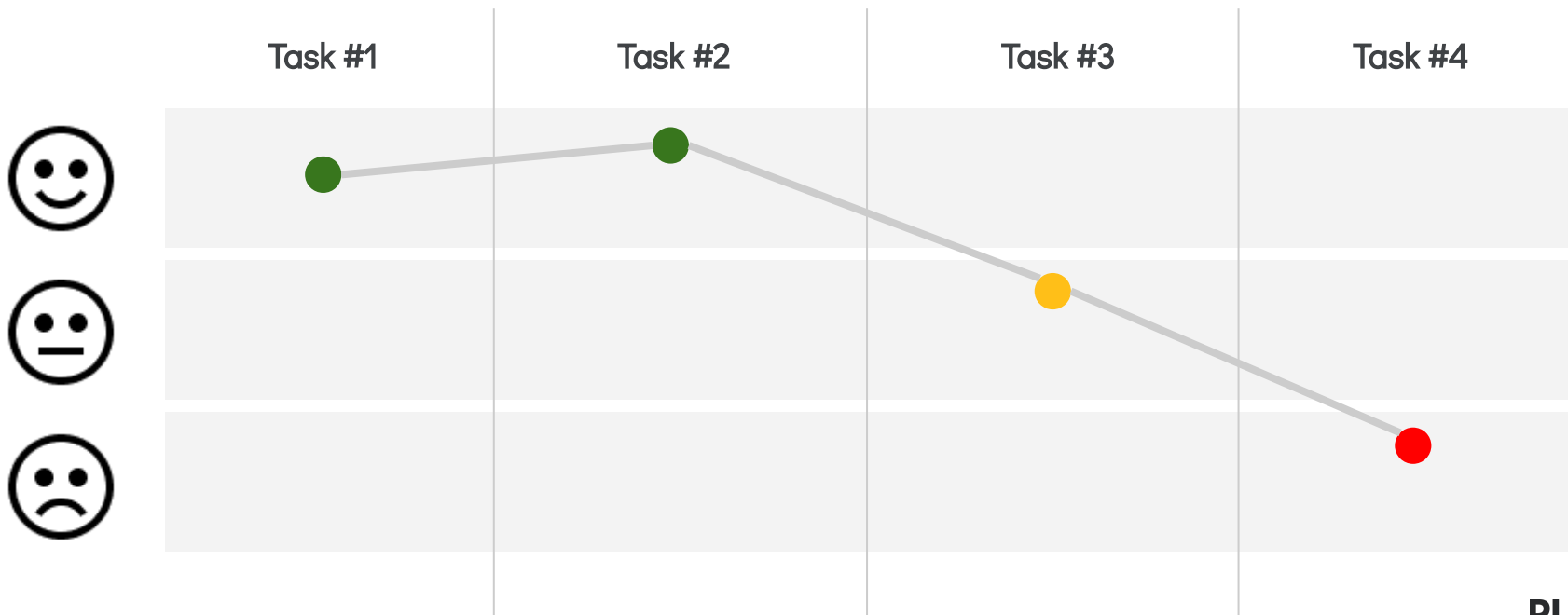
Initial Navigation

The following behavior is the path the majority of each user group took when asked to navigate to a title they would normally.

Desktop

Desktop users were mainly **split between using the top navigation menu** and **searching immediately** for a title.

Mobile

Mobile users **scrolled down the homepage** and browsed the hubs presented to them there.

TV

Similar to mobile users, TV users also **browsed through the homepage hubs** to find a title.

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Findings – Search

- All users **naturally went to search** when **given a specific title** they wanted to watch. All users had an easy time finding and using the search feature on Plex across all platforms

  - A few users called out wanting to be able to use search for browsing content in different genres

- **Release Year and Watch Now** were called out as **helpful** in the results

- Some **mobile users** found it **confusing** the way that **search results were organized relevance-wise** (server owners had to scroll all the way to the bottom of results to find the title they were asked to navigate to)

- Some **TV users called out wanting to have voice command** in order to input search terms as it's a tedious process to type them out using a remote

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Findings – Decision Factors

Browsing Content

- Users fell into **four different categories** when it came to browsing through content:

    - Browsing based off of **recommendations** (from friends or Plex)

    - Browsing based on **genre/category**

    - Browsing based off of **hubs**

    - **Skipping browsing** because they have something specific in mind

- Two other categories that were minorly significant were browsing off of their **watchlist** and **Continued Watching** hub

Note: Users don't just fall into one of the categories; they'll browse based off of a combination of the above.

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Findings – Decision Factors (cont)

Choosing A Title

- Users were asked to describe their top three factors when deciding on a title to watch:

  - Desktop: **Genre, actors, and ratings** were the top three factors

  - Mobile: **Genre, rating, and length** were the top three factors

  - TV: **Genre, actors, and ratings** were the top three factors

- Users were also asked to explain whether or not factor changed if the title was a TV show vs a movie

  - Users across all platforms were **split** on this matter; for those that said factors change, it appears that users place more importance on **ratings, release year, and length** when it comes to a TV show

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Findings – Details Page

- Feedback on the information presented on the details page was **overwhelmingly positive**, with most users reporting that they wouldn't change anything about the page and that it has everything they're looking for

- The major features/information that users reported finding the most helpful are **Description, Ratings, Add to Watchlist, Trailers, Cast**
  - Desktop users were the ones who **overwhelming called out trailer** as one of the **most useful** features on the details screen
  - Quite a few users reported wanting **longer descriptions** and a **more upfront way to view the trailer** for a title
    - Users were also curious about **having trailers at the season/episode level** for TV shows

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Findings – Watchlist

- A majority of users (70%) said that **they do use the watchlist features**. Across user groups, there were two main scenarios for when users would decide on watchlisting a title:

  - For when they don't have time to watch multiple titles when they're browsing through content

  - For when they want to revisit content that they know they like

- For users who reported not using watchlist, their main reasoning was that **if they find something they want to watch, they'll want to watch it right away.** This is similar to users who have a specific title in mind; if they have something in mind, they're ready to watch it right then and there

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Findings – Watching Experience

Player Experience

- When asked what options users normally use on the AVOD player, **pause, play, fullscreen, subtitles, volume, fast forward/rewind** were the most commonly used features (with an **emphasis on subtitles/CC**)
  - Some TV users felt mislead when the fast forward button took them to the next movie in the queue instead of fast forwarding through the movies (LG has this behavior)
- A few users called out **wanting a feature like Prime Video's X-Ray** on the player to learn more about the cast, soundtrack, etc
- Users suggested **having chapters to skip to or having a thumbnail preview while scrubbing** to know if they're at the point they want to be in order to give themselves a better scrubbing experience

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Findings – Watching Experience (cont)

Ad Experience

- A majority of users across platforms have an **overall neutral stance** towards ads

- A decent amount of users suggested the following to make ads more bearable:

    - **Keep ads at either the beginning or the end** of the video in order to avoid ad breaks at inconvenient times during content

    - Allowing users to have a **skip button** to get through ads quicker

    - **Premium ad-free option** of Plex

- A decent amount of user called out the **ad countdown as well as the ad counter (i.e. 1 of X ads) to be extremely helpful** and **made the experience more tolerable**

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Findings – Post Play

- Post play appeared to be a **very unnatural process** for users; quite a few users didn't understand that there was something after the credits as they naturally navigate back to the details page once their chosen title is finished

  - A majority of users (89%) reported **using the post play page infrequently**. The reason for this majorly **dealt with the time** a user had to watch a title; most times, users only had time and/or desire to watch their selected title.

- Other reasons for user tending to not use the post play page were:

  - **Users didn't want Plex to decide**; they wanted their content-watching fate in their own hands

  - The Up Next title **didn't seem relevant** enough to peak their interest

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Findings – Post Play (cont)

- In terms of information users found helpful about the post play page, ssers highlighted the **description of the Up Next title** and **the similar title hubs** as being the major points they liked about the post play page

- On the flip side, the following are things the users disliked about post play

    - A significant portion of users (46%) called out **autoplay as majorly unhelpful** and it **impeded on their ability to browse the information** presented on the page

    - When users finally could view the information on the page, many users felt like the **recommendations didn't seem relevant to them**

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Findings – Content Feedback

- A majority of users across platforms have a **positive view of the content** on Plex with a good portion saying that it's a "good selection" across the board

  - A good portion of users said there was a **good mix of newer and older content**

  - A decent amount of users also pointed out that Plex tends to **have a lot of titles that other services do not have**

  - Quite a few users **compared the content and UI on Plex to Prime Video**, favoring Plex's UI more as it's more intuitive and the content catalog makes more sense

  - Content was majorly described as **"nostalgic", "classic", "older", "niche", "indie", "hidden gems"**

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Findings – Content Feedback (cont)

- In terms of areas Plex can improve on content-wise:

  - Users called out wanting **newer or more modern content** on Plex

  - It was stressed that **quality of content is more important than the quantity**

  - Users thought that there should be **better sorting options** when it came to browsing through content

  - Users recognize that there are **a lot of hidden gems** in our catalog, but you have to **dig to get to them**

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Findings – Content Feedback (cont)

- Surprisingly, **56% of users tested were server owners.** Overall, in terms of their server usage vs AVOD usage:
  - 37 % of these users watch their server content more than on demand
  - **40% of these users watch each equally as much**
  - 23% of these users watch on demand more than their server content
- Interestingly enough, a few of these users talked about how they **started as solely server owners** and once Plex began to offer AVOD, they enjoyed it so much that it **became equally as important as their server content**

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Findings – Personalization

- A majority of users across platforms also have a **positive view of the personalization** aspects of Plex, though there is room for improvement

    - These users were also the one to point out that **they feel like Plex does recommendations based just off the content that was watched** and doesn't have enough interaction from the user to give more relevant recommendations

    - The largest complaint from all users is that **recommendations are VERY hit or miss** and there **doesn't seem to be an obvious reason behind why some titles are recommended** to them

- Biggest request by platform:

    - **Desktop:** More subcategories/categories to browse and/or filter by

    - **Mobile:** Having a way to include/exclude actors/genres/etc from their recommendations

    - **TV:** Be able to input preferences and have Plex adapt to them

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Findings – Personalization (cont)

- Across platforms, there were a few users who were asking for **more of a community feature** to be able to **get recommendations from friends, send friends recommendations, watch content with friends**
  - Another variation of this was to **have groups the user could join of people who have similar tastes** to see what those people are watching and what they recommend/don't recommend

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Findings – Miscellaneous

- There were quite a few people who reported **being interested in being server owners and/or are becoming server owner**, which could be an opportunity for Plex to promote how to be a server owner more
- Users also **found a tremendous value in Plex** and talked about how they were **surprised that Plex didn't really market/promote themselves that much**
  - Many reported finding Plex through a friend or coworker and would never have found Plex otherwise
- **Quite a few mobile users have accessibility enhancements applied to their phones** while browsing, which can affect their experience while navigating through Plex (no negatives at the time of testing, just something to take note of)

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Jobs to Be Done Persona

Persona Y – Typical AVOD User

Main Job for Plex AVOD Users: Decrease stress and relax by watching immersive on demand content.

Habits

- AVOD users tend to watch on demand content in the **comfort of their own homes after work in the evenings as well as on the weekends**

    - AVOD users also tend to us on demand content as a way to **spend time with friends and family** as entertainment and to start conversations

- Users tend to watch on the device with the **largest screen with the best audio/video quality**; for AVOD users, this tends to be some kind of **smart TV or TV device**

- The type of content users gravitate towards for AVOD are **more engaging and captivating content that holds their attention**

    - Genres most watched include action, comedy, horror, sci-fi, drama, and thriller

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Persona Y – Typical AVOD User (cont)

Values/Needs

- AVOD users tend to value **high quality content** that has a **captivating storyline** that they actually want to pay attention to

    - There should be a **large, high quality library of content** available for viewing

- AVOD users are **more concerned with personalization** and feeling like Plex is purposely curating content to their specific tastes

- These users are also more concerned with **spending their time efficiently**, whether this means **making sure content is relevant to them**, making sure they **have enough time** to watch when they want to watch, making sure they can **find relevant content** easily, etc

- Unlike FAST users, AVOD users tend to **place more importance on community**, wanting to watch content with friends and family more than FAST users as well as connecting with other users who have similar interests

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Persona Y – Typical AVOD User (cont)

Painpoints

- Users painpoints are mainly focused around the **content curation, personalization, and browsing experiences**
    - AVOD users tend to find the **selection of content on Plex plentiful, but overwhelming** to browse through
        - Users have also pointed out that they feel **unaware of all the content Plex truly has** as they've found many hidden gems just by chance and wish there was more promotion around it
    - From the perspective of these users, **Plex doesn't do a great job of recommending relevant content** to these users and doesn't interact with them enough
    - Depending on the device, the Plex app is **very sluggish and frustrating to navigate** (mainly on **Android and Firestick**)

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Related Jobs

All related jobs tend to do with being comfortable, maintaining a distraction, or combatting boredom.

Create a comforting environment within my home to help me fall asleep

Foster conversation among friends and family while spending time together

Provide entertainment for friends and family while spending quality time together

Keep kids entertained in order to provide a moment of relief from active parenting

Consume on demand entertainment on my desired platform by means of a free service

Provide an immersive experience to forget about the little nuisances of the day

Provide an easily accessible way to watch my own content on my preferred platform

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Next Steps

1. Using data from the usability research conducted, conduct a brainstorming workshop around the needs of our AVOD user

2. Prioritize work from brainstorming workshop for design and dev backlog.

3. Journey map major user flows for FAST and AVOD users.

4. Finalize a list of additional research in order to gain more insights into AVOD user behavior and motivations (i.e. search and content value research).

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