

Understanding Parental Perceptions of Disney+'s Ad-Supported Tier

Course: APAN 5480 – Market Research

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The Shifting Streaming Landscape



The Streaming Landscape & Research Gap

- Streaming now accounts for 44.8% of U.S. TV viewership (Nielsen, 2025)
- Churn up 5.5% monthly → retention is the new priority
- Disney+ ad-tier attracts budget-conscious families
- Research gap: *How do parents perceive trade-offs between savings and ads?*

Research Question:

How do U.S. parents of children ages 3–12 evaluate the value and viewing experience of Disney+'s ad-supported plan, and how do these evaluations influence their intention to keep or cancel the service?

Why In-Depth Interviews?

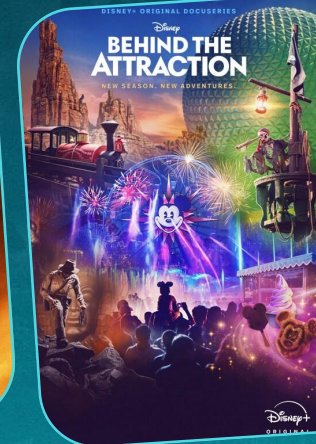
Exploring emotions and decision dynamics behind streaming choices.

Rationale:

- Best suited to explore **emotions, family dynamics, and viewing habits**
- Allows discussion of **sensitive topics** (e.g., guilt, frustration, child influence)
- Realistic within scope: **10–12 Zoom interviews, 30–40 mins each**

Sampling & Recruitment:

- **Participants:** U.S. parents (25–50 yrs) with children (3–12 yrs)
- **Criteria:** Current Disney+ ad-tier subscribers
- **Recruitment:** Facebook parenting groups, local networks, peers
- **Incentive:** \$15–20 e-gift card



Interview Guide Overview & Analytical Lens

Structure:

- ▶ 1. Household Streaming Context – what, who, how much
- 2. Decision Drivers – why Disney+, why the ad-tier
- 3. Ad Experience – disruption, relevance, appropriateness
- 4. Value Perception – price vs. ad tolerance
- 5. Retention Triggers – what causes stay or churn
- 6. Trust & Brand Expectations – Disney's reputation
- 7. Final Recommendations – what families want improved

Analytical Focus:

- ▶
 - ★ *Value perception:*
→ “Is it worth the ads for the price?”
 - ★ *Ad tolerance:*
→ “Do ads ruin immersion?”
 - ★ Trust & brand fit
 - ★ Retention vs. churn triggers

Expected Contributions:

- ▶
 - ★ Define family “ad tolerance threshold”
 - ★ Identify emotional trade-offs in retention
 - ★ Guide future Disney+ messaging
→ “Smart Value for Families”
→ “Ads that Respect Kids”

This qualitative study helps Disney+ balance affordability with family trust in its evolving ad-supported strategy.