Final Research Report

Team Succinct Solutions
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Executive Summary

Digital streaming services have quickly become a replacement for cable television, with a limitless selection of on-demand content and media. However, with the abundance of options provided by the services, consumers are challenged to manage multiple streaming services subscriptions effectively and economically. Through observation and surveying user behavior, habits and streaming usage, this study seeks to provide insights on ways to streamline and solve for user pain points in managing subscriptions.

By utilizing a contextual inquiry field study, individual in-depth interviews, and a survey, Team Succinct Solutions was able to research user behavior within our target audience, members of the Gen Z and Millennial generation. We investigated how this audience currently manages their streaming service subscriptions, as well as how they would look to improve their management system. We wanted to determine how these user pain points could be solved in a streaming service management app to support subscribers.

Our field studies and interviews aided us in determining our user personas and journey maps, as we were able to discover key pain points that users have in their current management system. Insights from our survey provided the evidence needed to reveal potential app features, as well as whether our app would be useful to consumers overall.

We learned there is a prevalence of shared accounts in our target audience, to the point where some people have access to up to 6 services but do not pay for any of them. This can make managing streaming services much more complicated. This propensity to share accounts comes from the high value that consumers place on having access to a wide variety of content. We also learned that consumers highly value transparency in pricing and payments in assessing value generated by streaming service subscriptions. This is where an app with notifications of upcoming payments, or increases in price, would be beneficial. Also, survey respondents identified challenges in managing free trials and/or unanticipated subscription renewal, which is where the aspect of transparency comes into play. Users are keen to leverage a more streamlined way of keeping track of a streaming service subscriptions.

With all research methods in mind, we discovered that many people in our target audience do not actively track their streaming services in a consistent, effective way, as there are so many different aspects to manage. However, this lack of tracking proved to not be a concerning issue for consumers. They would be interested in a management app for more convenience and organizational sake, rather than absolute necessity. Therefore, our app would be useful to consumers, but looking towards the next phase, our research could be used to

potentially inform a comprehensive bill management app. This more comprehensive app may prove to be more of a necessity to consumers and will still include the aspect of streaming service management.

Background and Objectives

As options for content streaming services have increased over the past 10 years, multiple studies have analyzed how consumers are engaging and managing use of these services. According to FinanceBuzz's survey findings released in March 2023, 24% of households report paying for at least three additional streaming services than they did one year ago — another 21% are now paying for two more streaming services (Medine, 2023). Consumers are subscribing to more services today than recent years, but according to a Blue Label Labs October 2022 study (Epson, 2022), there is growing dissatisfaction due to two factors:

- Quality of content available on these services
- Complexity in managing

FinanceBuzz's findings explain the confusion subscribers are facing as they attempt to manage a growing portfolio of streaming services:

> *With content spread out over so many streaming services (and those services billing you automatically), costs could easily add up and sneak up on you. 1 in 4 people report that they spend more than $75 per month on streaming subscriptions, and 1 in 10 have "no idea" how much they spend. (Medine, 2023)*
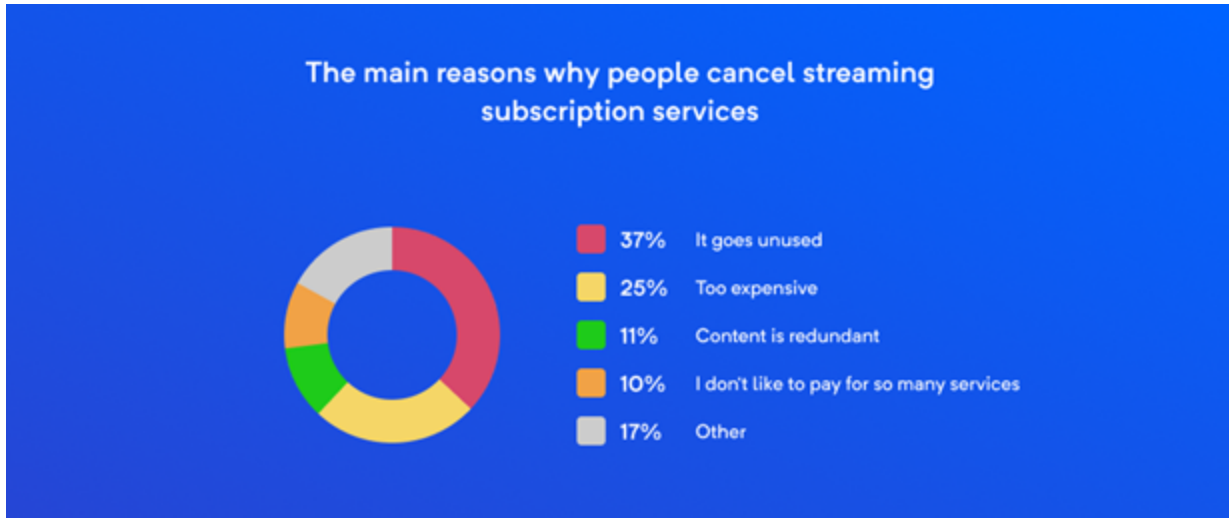
There is also clear confusion around free trials for these services. FinanceBuzz's study found that more than half (54%) of respondents sign up for free trials with the intention of canceling before it ends. However, 70% of those who use this approach report they have forgotten to cancel a free trial.

Through research study, **Succinct Solutions** was able to understand more about this user experience and identify keyways to give users more control with added transparency and simplified management of streaming service subscriptions. With more efficiency and transparency around subscription management, consumers will be able to unlock savings opportunities and take control of their content options.

The Blue Labs survey identified several reasons users cancel their streaming subscriptions, which our research explored further. The reasons are listed in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Blue Labs Reasons Why People Cancel Streaming Subscription Services (Epson, 2022)

The main reasons why people cancel streaming subscription services

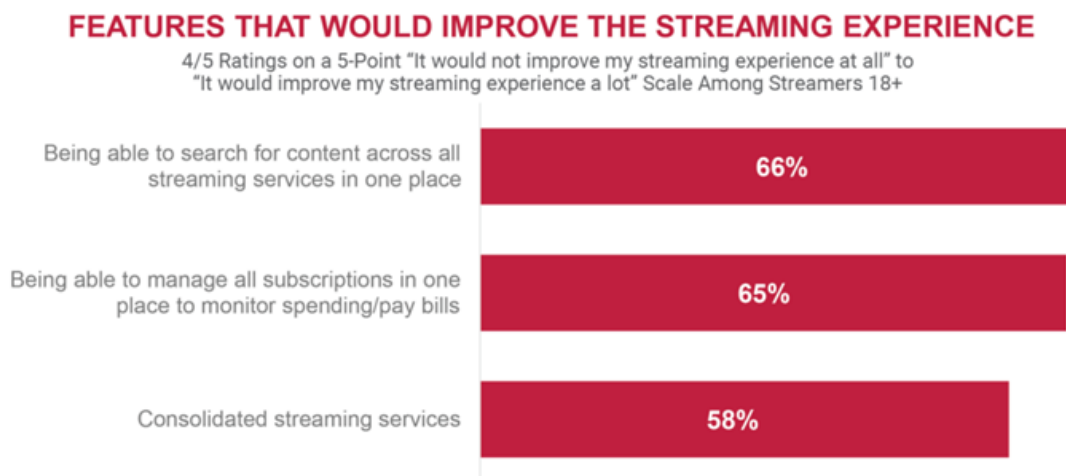|	
37%	It goes unused
25%	Too expensive
11%	Content is redundant
10%	I don't like to pay for so many services
17%	Other

Findings from Horowitz's State of Viewing and Streaming 2022 report (Horowitz, 2023) support these findings. As shown in Figure 2, most subscribers (37.42%) report canceling because a service goes unused and the next most popular reason to cancel (25.88%) is because a service is too expensive (2023). The report goes further to suggest several features that users say would improve the streaming experience and reduce cancellations:

> "...two-thirds of streamers would like universal search capabilities across all their streaming services (66%) and to be able to manage all their streaming subscriptions in one place (65%)."

Figure 2

Features That Would Improve the Streaming Experience, (Horowitz, 2023)

FEATURES THAT WOULD IMPROVE THE STREAMING EXPERIENCE

4/5 Ratings on a 5-Point "It would not improve my streaming experience at all" to "It would improve my streaming experience a lot" Scale Among Streamers 18+

Being able to search for content across all streaming services in one place	66%
Being able to manage all subscriptions in one place to monitor spending/pay bills	65%
Consolidated streaming services	58%

Source: State of Viewing and Streaming 2022 © Horowitz Research

MakeUseOf.com curated a list of seven services that help track subscriptions (Chauhan, 2022) which provided our team with several options to discuss during interview and field research.

Blue Labs also found that across their streaming services combined. When zoomed in to focus on our target research groups for Succinct Solutions, these totals are as follows:

- Younger than 26: 47%
- Older than 34: 41%

Our research provided more findings on this group and mapped a path to helping them take control of their streaming service portfolio.

Problem Statement

Individuals that fall into the Gen Z and Millennial generations subscribe to multiple digital streaming services and lack reliable, centralized views of their subscriptions. This lack of visibility and control leads to negative financial impact and unsatisfied customer experiences.

Research Questions

- What are the behaviors of the users and their relationships with streaming service subscriptions that they've signed up for?
- What are the main challenges faced by consumers in managing their subscriptions?
- How do people feel about subscription services?
- What steps do people take today to manage their subscriptions?
- What are the ethical considerations in managing subscriptions, such as issues related to data privacy, consumer protection, and sustainability?
- What are the key factors that influence consumer satisfaction and efficiency in managing multiple subscriptions, such as ease of use, subscription tracking tools, and billing consolidation options?
- What are the emerging trends, technologies, and strategies that can streamline the management of multiple digital streaming subscriptions, such as subscription aggregation services, subscription management apps, and automation tools?

Stakeholders

- **Customers/Consumers:** These are the power users of the many digital streaming services. They are the ones subscribing to the different services, paying for the subscriptions and consuming the content. By understanding their needs, behaviors, and pain points, they can help with designing and developing a subscription management solution that meets their needs.

- **Streaming service providers**: Service providers present content to their customers and are directly affected by their subscription habits. The service providers would benefit in understanding their customers' behaviors and reasoning as to why they no longer or

continue to subscribe to their services or pay monthly charges.

- **Potential streaming providers & digital service providers:** Content producers that are considering how to enter the streaming market could integrate this research into their subscription launch plans. Similarly, apps that offer subscription services other than streaming will benefit from the findings in designing their subscription models.

- **User experience (UX) designers:** Designers as stakeholders could benefit from the user research insights to help design and improve user interfaces and subscription plans.

- **Data analysts:** Data analysts can use the research insights to notice patterns and identify trends for the service providers. They could use this research data to be aware of which streaming services are performing better than others, what's trending, which are being used more by consumers, and how much time is being spent with each service.

- **Marketing Professionals:** Marketing professionals could use the research insights to help introduce and promote new or modified subscription plans, attract new customers and retain existing ones.

- **Other Researchers:** Other researchers could have an interest in digital streaming services, their subscription models, and how customers/consumers use them.

Participant Profile

Our target audiences for this user research project are all genders of Gen Z and Millennials from different socioeconomic backgrounds, who are active streaming services users. The age range for this group is between 18 to 40 years old. These participants are tech-savvy and comfortable using mobile applications for daily activities.

We recruited participants who have experience managing their streaming service subscriptions and have faced challenges with their billing management. We also looked for participants who have used bill management apps in the past as they provided insights into what features and functionality were found useful.

In total, we collected data through a field study involving 10 participants, interviews with 10 individuals, and a survey completed by 54 people. There were five females and five males in the field study, three of them had five or fewer subscriptions, five of them had seven to eight subscriptions and two of them had more than 10 subscriptions. Six females and four males had been interviewed, three of them had three to four subscriptions, four of them had five to six subscriptions, one of them had seven to eight subscriptions and two of them had over ten subscriptions.

Smaller personas within our target audience:

- **Price-conscious customer:** A participant who is always looking for ways to save money and get the best deals. They want a mobile app that can track their streaming service expenses and alert them about price changes.

- **Busy college student:** A student who is always on the go and relies on their phone for most of their activities. They need an app that is simple to use and will enable them to manage their bills while on the go because they have a busy schedule.

- **Digital Nomad:** A remote worker who travels frequently and uses streaming services to stay entertained during downtime. They are searching for an app that would allow them to manage their subscriptions and bills from any location.

User Personas

Dexter Richardson   Student

"Due to my busy schedule, it's crucial for me to stay on top of my finances and make smart financial decisions. Managing my streaming subscriptions is an important aspect of that. "

Age	20
Location	Florida
Education	Undergraduate
Job	College Student

Bio

Growing up in a tech-oriented household, Dexter heavily relies on his smartphone and technology to simplify everyday tasks such as budgeting and money management.

Brands

Personality

Extrovert — Introvert
Intuition — Perfection
Creative — Logic

Tech

Internet
Social Networking
Design Tools
Gadget

Goals

While always on the go, Dexter hopes to find an app that provides control and clear visibility of his recurring billing transactions and overall finances.

Frustration

Dexter is often overwhelmed with the number of subscriptions and keeping track of the their costs causing him to spend more money on media than intended.

Challenge

With limited time and a tight budget, it's easy to get carried away and subscribe to multiple services without realizing the cumulative cost.

Motivation

Dexter is determined to stay disciplined and responsible when it comes to managing his finances. With careful monitoring he wants to ensure he's getting the most value for his money.
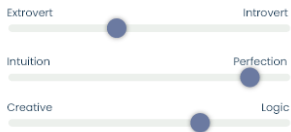
Anita Brown

Pharmacist

"Watching movies and television are one my favorite ways to unwind after a busy day at work. I like to explore my entertainment options, but I often experience subscription-fatigue and am skeptical over the value I get for the money."

Age 31

Location Texas

Education Master's

Job Pharmacist

Bio

Anita takes pride in maintaining her cost-effective lifestyle and often explores various money saving strategies. Her attention to detail and analytical skills help evaluate her options to save money, while still being able to enjoy media and entertainment.

Brands

Personality

Extrovert — Introvert

Intuition — Perfection

Creative — Logic

Tech

Internet
Social Networking
Design Tools
Gadget

Goals

Anita seeks to have a tailored selection of streaming services that offer the best value for her money. She seeks affordable platforms and discounted plans while maintaining a diverse range of content.

Frustration

One of Anita's main frustrations is balancing content quality and costs with her streaming services. Constantly monitoring her subscriptions is time consuming and tiring.

Challenge

Anita's main challenge is managing her different services while prioritizing cost savings as they provide tempting exclusive content, but wants to avoid unnecessary expenses.

Motivation

Anita is committed to finding cost-saving opportunities to enjoy her favorite content without overspending. She feels empowered in her ability to make informed decisions that align with her financial goals.

Aaron White

IT Consultant

"The streaming services I subscribe to offer a wide variety of content and entertainment which gives me a sense of comfort when I'm flying, but managing them gets difficult across different time zones and regions."

Age 27

Location Georgia

Education Undergraduate

Job IT Consultant

Bio

Aaron has a deep understanding of technology and enjoys staying up to date with the latest trends. His remote work lifestyle allows him to travel and values using streaming services for entertainment

Brands

Personality

Extrovert — Introvert

Intuition — Perfection

Creative — Logic

Tech

Internet
Social Networking
Design Tools
Gadget

Goals

Because he travels so often, Aaron has multiple streaming services that offer a wide-range of content. He hopes to have an app that allows him to adjust his subscriptions based on his schedule and viewing needs.

Frustration

Although he enjoys the variety of content, Aaron experiences subscription fatigue due to the number of streaming services he subscribes to and apps he has to have on his device to manage them.

Challenge

Managing subscriptions and billing becomes a challenge for Aaron during his travels due to regional restrictions and the occasional internet issues.

Motivation

Aaron is committed to managing his subscriptions so that he can continue to have visibility of his billing and access to his entertainment while on the go.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this study was the challenge of recruiting participants who meet the specific criteria of being active streaming services users and have faced challenges with their billing management. Furthermore, there can be bias in favor of participants who are less tech-savvy and uncomfortable utilizing mobile applications for billing. In order to assure

that there was a wide range of participants, we addressed these limitations by using a variety of methods to recruit, such as social media, recommendations, and online surveys.

Research Methodology

Research Plan

Phase 1: Out in the Field (April 14th - May 6th)	Conducted field studies by observing and interviewing users in real-world settings, such as their homes or workplaces: each group member needed to identify 2-4 target users to study. Analyzed the collected data and discovered patterns and insights.	Completed by Apr 22th
	Developed individual interview scripts and questions: each team member had to find 2-3 potential users. Conducted interviews and recorded the information. Analyzed the data and synthesized the discovered themes	Completed by Apr 29th
	Created a qualitative survey: Determined the questions that would best fit our topic. Sent out the survey to our target users through our recruitment methods.	Completed by May 6th
● Milestone: Recruitment, completing research methods, completing most of analysis		
Phase 2: Tidying Up (May 7th - May 20th)	Began compiling our information for our final report.	Completed by May 14th
	Completed collecting survey data online.	Completed by May 19th
● Milestone: All data collection completed		
Phase 3: Finishing Data Analysis and Synthesis (May 21st - May 26th)	Transcribed and analyzed qualitative data from surveys using appropriate methods.. Synthesized findings to identify common themes, patterns, and insights related to the research objectives and research questions.	Completed by May 21st
	Finalized a research report by summarizing the research findings, including key insights,	Completed by May 28th

	recommendations, and visualizations (e.g., charts, graphs) or any additional deliverables.	
● Milestone: Data analysis and synthesis completed, and key findings identified.		
Phase 4: Reporting and Deliverables (May 26th - June 4th)	Created a presentation to share the research findings with stakeholders, such as the team, stakeholders, and potential users.	Completed by May 31st
● Milestone: Research report, presentation, and other deliverables completed.		

Recruiting Strategy

Our participants are in the Millennial and Gen Z age group (ages 18-40), and they are our most tech-savvy audience. People in this age group are the prime users of multiple streaming subscription services, and they are also the target of advertisers in the subscription service realm. They are most likely to have so many streaming services, that they lose track, and end up wasting money. They seek to find the best deals, and do not want to be missing out on any specials. At the same time, they want the best experience possible. Many of us in the group, as well as our fellow peers and friends, are in this age category, which made recruitment much easier.

We recruited our participants by reaching out to our inner circle (composed of friends and family), our personal social media (which reached our own followers or any groups we are a part of), people in the IDS program, our outer circle (composed of coworkers or other people we see regularly but are not as close to), as well as, public social media (which goes beyond the scope of our own network).

Methods Used

We conducted a field study using the contextual inquiry methodology, as we wished to engage with users to discover exactly how they currently interact with their streaming service subscriptions. We wanted to see their current habits, and the way they currently organize things (or the way they fail to organize things). Each member of our group engaged with two participants and followed a guide through the contextual inquiry process. We collected data from our observations, including different photos and screenshots of how our participants engaged with their streaming services.

We conducted a survey to gather information from a larger sample and figure out some of the main pain points that people have regarding their streaming service management. We wanted to find out information regarding potentially how much they spend per month currently on streaming services (or they also might not know, which is still a useful answer). Also, we wanted to discover the most difficult or annoying parts of their current management system, and what potential tools/features they would like to see in a management app. We worked together to create a 15 question survey, which targeted attitudinal data. We sent this survey out to our target users, using our recruitment techniques, and collected their responses.

Lastly, we wanted to conduct individual interviews. This is where we got into the deepest detail and heard personal stories of how people have succeeded or failed at managing their streaming service subscriptions. We desired to discover their motivations, goals, and their best and worst experiences. We each interviewed two consumers and followed an interview guide filled with open-ended questions. We recorded the data and collaborated to find common themes among our interview responses. This helped us to move forward with concrete information on how we can create something that will be utilized in people's daily lives and make the current process of managing streaming services much easier.

Materials and Tools

We designed personas, mapped storyboards, and built simple wireframes on Miro's flexible design platform. We leveraged our Northwestern Zoom accounts to conduct and record interviews. We relied on Google's suite of teaming apps for the following needs: Google Forms to conduct digital surveys, Google Sheets to analyze research data and surface our findings, as well as Google Docs to draft survey and interview templates. We continued using Google Docs as a shared team discussion board.

Throughout, we will be observant of the privacy concerns. Our Google Forms and Zoom conversations will include clear information about how the collected information will be used. All consent form information will reassure participants that their data will be kept private and anonymous according to data protection and privacy regulations.

Data Analysis Techniques

We relied on Counting and Comparing analysis techniques for accuracy and immediate utility of the data (Observing the User Experience, 2019). Counting, or tabulating, helped us uncover simple trends in our survey questions. The Mean and Mode of this tabulation helped identify any extremes or outliers in the data. Clarity on user behavior and pain points is critical to designing a service management app that is equipped with financial recommendations. We also relied on the analysis strategy of Comparing, tabulating the raw data results in comparison to other variables to reveal relationships key for designing solutions to user pain points and needs. Reviewing for correlation was also helpful in studying the subscription payment habits and the participants' satisfaction with their subscribed services.

We anticipated the need for qualitative follow-ups to this quantitative analysis. To facilitate follow-up interviews, we added a self-selection question at the end of the survey. Based on the data from the surveys, we scheduled follow-up interviews with participants with new questions. With the new findings and insights from the surveys, new questions arose and through follow-up interviews with our participants, we gained additional information to help further develop our product to meet their needs.

The surveyed data is intended to be a sample from a larger population. As such, we used inferential analyses to identify groups of related variables and see how they contribute to any specific factors with managing subscriptions.

Results and Analysis

Journey Mapping

https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVMEPvYHY=/?share_link_id=690052955528

Survey Results:

Questions 1-2

Focus area: Subscription habits

Responses to questions 1-2 are combined in **Graph #1** to display user subscription habits. It's important to note that 67% of respondents report to be the account owner of up to three streaming services (i.e.; pay for the subscription). At the same time, 76% of respondents have access to four or more services revealing a propensity for shared streaming accounts.

Calculations for the Mean of each set of responses extends this story further. The average user has access to 4-6 streaming services but is the account owner for 2-3 services suggesting that half of accessible services are shared.

> Insight: A tool to help users manage their subscriptions will need to account for a streaming service ecosystem where account sharing makes up half of the services users access.

Graph 1
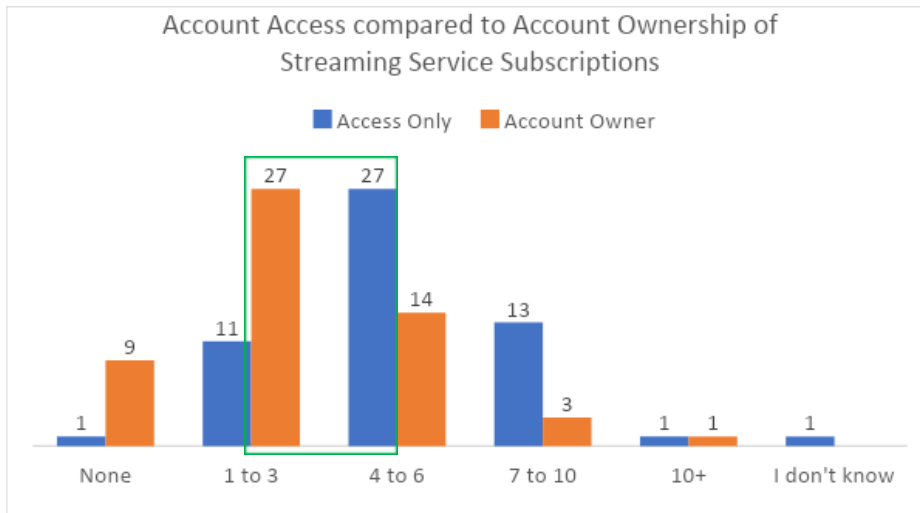
Question 14

Focus area: Solving for user pain points – avoiding unwanted charges

Responses to Question 14 are documented in **Graph #2** and measure what a user would do if a shared subscription account is canceled by the account owner, that is to say not canceled by themself.

Although a large portion of results (39%) indicate users would settle for losing the service completely once the account is canceled, all other responses (61%) suggested the typical streaming service user would take action to restore access to the service. See green highlight in Graph #2.

Graph 2
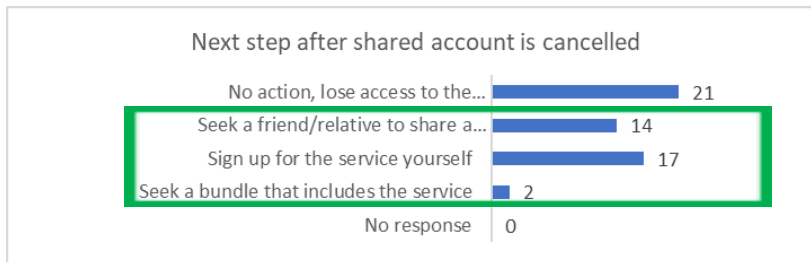
> Insight: When users lose access to a streaming service, they would benefit from a feature within a digital management tool that supports their next step to reinstate access. Succinct Solutions suggests a marketplace feature within an app that connects users seeking shared services.

Question 4

Focus area: Solving for user pain points – Forgetting to cancel subscriptions

In **Graph 3** below, a combined total of 26% of the participants (outlined in green) report that they often forget to cancel their streaming service subscriptions indicating forgetfulness is a common pain point for roughly 1 of 4 users. But 69% of survey respondents indicated forgetting to cancel subscriptions in time is not a concern.

Graph 3
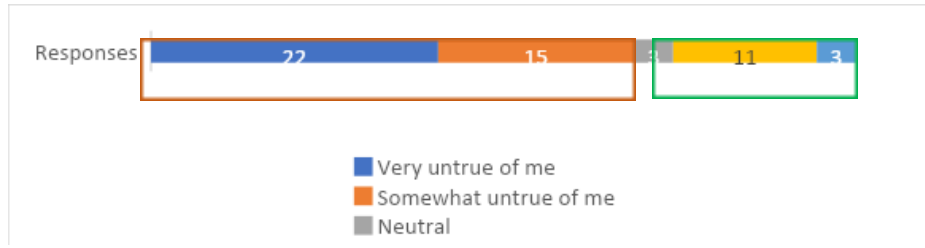
Calculations

Question 4: I am subscribed to a streaming entertainment service (s) that I need to cancel, but keep forgetting to do so.

    Mean: Somewhat true of me
    Mode: Very untrue of me

Table 1

		Question 1: How many streaming services do you currently have access to?					
		None	1-3	4-6	7-10	10+	I don't know
Question 4: I am subscribed to a streaming entertainment service (s) that I need to cancel but keep forgetting to do so.	Very untrue of me	0.0%	9.3%	20.4%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat untrue	1.9%	5.6%	11.1%	7.4%	1.9%	0.0%
	Neutral	0.0%	1.9%	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat true	0.0%	1.9%	13.0%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%
	Very true	0.0%	1.9%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%

Insight: The Comparison table (**Table 1**) shows the variance in response to the desire to cancel but forgetting to do so. The two highest responses are highlighted This supports the conclusions drawn from Graph 3 – the majority of users are not forgetting to cancel subscriptions in time, but some still need support. The portion that seeks this level of support will be assisted through Succinct Solutions' recommended management app. The app will provide optional notifications and nudges to remind users when subscriptions need to be canceled or managed further to sustain financial wellness.

Question 5

Focus area: Solving for user pain points – Avoiding unwanted "auto-pay" scenarios

As the green outline below highlights in **Graph 4**, 50% of survey respondents rarely auto-pay for a subscription service without knowing it. Yet, 48% indicate that auto-payments occur at least 'sometimes.'

Graph 4

How often do you 'auto-pay' for a subscription service without knowing it?

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	No response
11	16	10	8	8	1
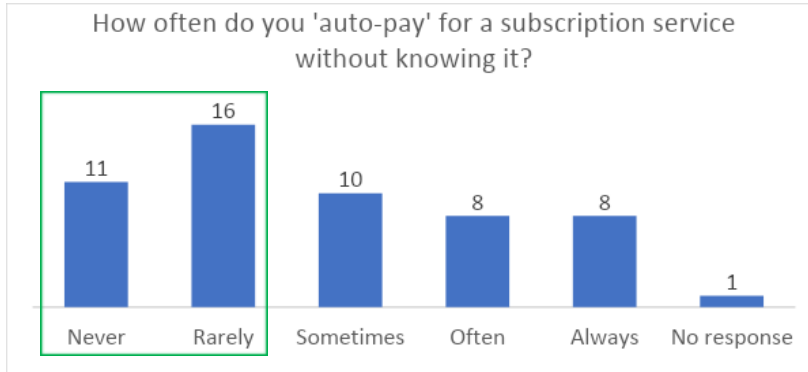
Calculations

Question 5: How often do you 'auto-pay' for a subscription service without knowing it?

Mean: Sometimes

Mode: Rarely

Insight: This finding suggests reminder notifications should be an optional setting in a tool that solves user pain points around subscription management. The results show that some users need more transparency in the payment process than others.

Question 6

Similar to 'auto-payments,' the majority of survey respondents (61% combined) reportedly do not forget to cancel free trials for streaming services before the trial ends and auto-renewals begin. See **Graph 5**.

Graph 5

I often forget to cancel free trials for streaming services before the payment cycle moves to auto-renewal

Very untrue of me	Somewhat untrue of me	Neutral	Somewhat true of me	Very true of me
22	11	5	14	2
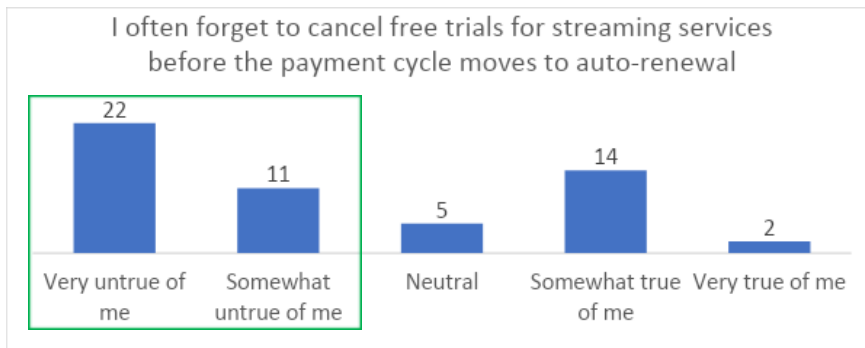
Calculations

Question 5: I often forget to cancel free trials for streaming services before the payment cycle moves to auto-renewal

Mean: Somewhat true of me

Mode: Very untrue of me

Table 2

		Question 2: For how many streaming services are you the primary account owner?

		None	1-3	4-6	7-10	10+	I don't know
Question 6: I often forget to cancel free trials for streaming services before the payment cycle moves to auto-renewal.	Very untrue of me	0.0%	11.1%	==20.4%==	9.3%	0.0%	0.0%
	Somewhat untrue	0.0%	3.7%	7.4%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	Neutral	1.9%	3.7%	1.9%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%
	Somewhat true	0.0%	0.0%	==20.4%==	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%
	Very true	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%

Insight: Although the majority of responses indicate canceling free trials is not a concern, 33% of respondents still forget to cancel the free trial in time to avoid auto-renewals. The survey did not inquire about the severity of the impact this has on the user experience overall and should be researched further in extended surveys and interviews.

The Comparison Table 2 again shows the range of responses with the two highest responses highlighted. For those that serve as the primary account owner of the streaming services, roughly 20% somewhat feel this is a concern, while 20% do not feel this is a concern at all.

In Succinct Solutions evaluation, an optional reminder notification when free trials are close to expiration will help a segment of our target audience. Again, this aligns with our research goal to provide more transparency in the management and payment process.

Question 7 & 12

Focus area: Subscription habits and perceived service value

Responses to Question 7, displayed in **Graph 10**, reveal that users find price, content, and ad-free support as the factors adding the most value to their service experience.

Graph 6

What factors are most important to you when subscribing to a digital streaming service? *(more than 1 selection allowed)*

Factor	Count
Price	47
Exlusive content	39
Ad-free support	32
Easy navigation	17
On-demand content	1
No response	1
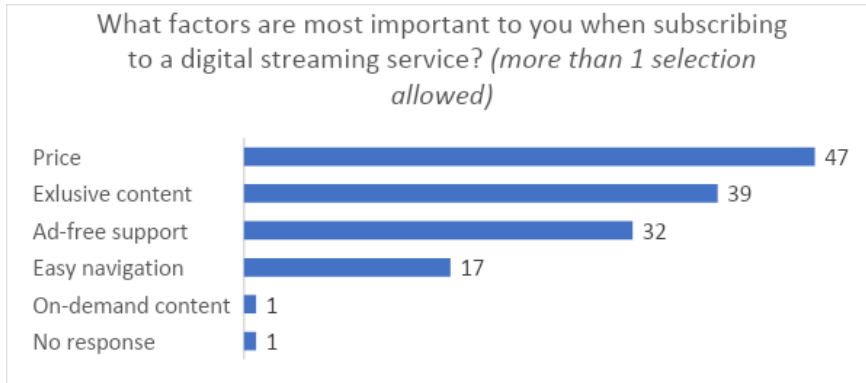
Calculations

Question 7: What factors are most important to you when subscribing to a digital streaming service? Select up to 3 items.

Mean: N/a

Mode: Price

And results from Question 12 show that participants feel they are receiving equal to (39%) or more than (30%) the price they are paying monthly in subscription fees (**Graph 11**). Findings from question two revealed users in this demographic share service access regularly and thus, receive more content than they pay monthly.

Graph 7

Value	Count
Significantly more	3
More than	13
Equal	21
Less than	15
Significantly less	
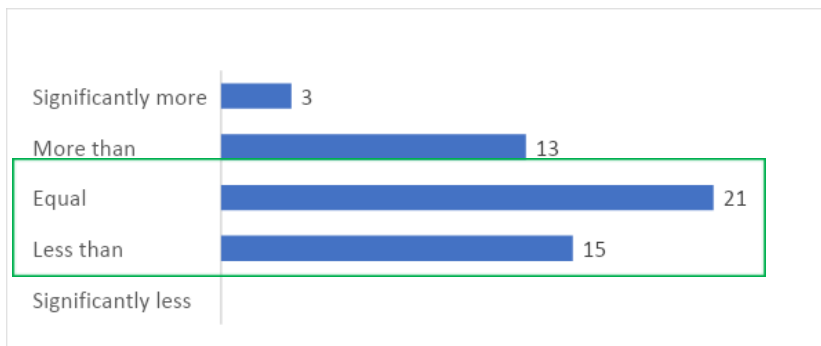
Calculations

Question 12: How would you describe the value you receive from subscription services compared to the budget spent on these services?

Mean: Equal

Mode: Equal

Insight: This confirms our hypothesis that more transparency around the payment process and valued price is crucial to subscription management.

Question 8

Focus area: Subscription management habits

Responses to Question 8 are input in the Comparison tables below to illustrate the desire to have a clear overview of your active subscriptions recorded in one place for both accounts accessed, and accounts owned. Calculations for Questions 1 & 2 indicate that roughly half of an average user's streaming services are shared, with this in mind, it is not surprising that highest response totals for users accessing 4-6 streaming services are reflected by users owning 1-3 accounts.

Insight: The Comparison chart helps us understand the target market by segments and proves that users will benefit from a service or tool that organizes a view of all accounts even if

managing a relatively small number of accounts. This will be important for the marketing and rollout of a management tool.

Table 3

		Question 1: How many streaming services do you currently have access to?					
		None	1-3	4-6	7-10	10+	I don't know
Question 8: How important is it for you to have a clear overview of your active subscriptions recorded in one place, such as an app, spreadsheet, or note system?	Very untrue of me	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	1.9%	0.0%	1.9%
	Somewhat untrue	0.0%	1.9%	9.3%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%
	Neutral	1.9%	5.6%	7.4%	3.7%	1.9%	0.0%
	Somewhat true	0.0%	7.4%	14.8%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	Very true	0.0%	5.6%	13.0%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 4

		Question 2: For how many streaming services are you the primary account owner?					
		None	1-3	4-6	7-10	10+	I don't know
Question 8: How important is it for you to have a clear overview of your active subscriptions recorded in one place, such as an app, spreadsheet, or note system?	Very untrue of me	0.0%	7.4%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	-
	Somewhat untrue	0.0%	5.6%	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%	-
	Neutral	3.7%	11.1%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	-
	Somewhat true	9.3%	13.0%	9.3%	1.9%	0.0%	-
	Very true	3.7%	13.0%	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%	-

Recommendations and Conclusions

Product recommendations:

       User research results collected by Succinct Solutions suggest that members of Gen Z and Millennial generations experience relatively minimal challenges in managing the streaming services to which they have access and for those wherein they are the primary account owner. (See Graphs 3-5.) Although challenges are minimal, four concerns persisted across research methods of surveys, field study, and interviews that we feel should be addressed in a subscription management app.

Concerns to address in a user-centric service management app:
1. Timely service and trial cancellations
2. Timely service and trial payments
3. How to find connections to share accounts
4. How to find desired content and shows

As displayed in the wireframe illustrations, features include notifications, pop-ups, budget calculators, account-sharing marketplace functionality, and an overview of all accessible streaming services.

Figma Link:
https://www.figma.com/file/IQ0G4Zx9t4wNdjiHryYsjT/405-wireframe?type=design&node-id=0%3A1&t=dJalaw5oZ7k6l7Mg-1

Our team believes this management app will provide an opportunity to further measure financial management habits by those in the Gen Z and Millennial generations. Once launched, we recommend further research on how the users leverage the features and how much value the users experience in using the app. A/B testing should be part of the research strategies to understand the impact of these design choices.

Further Research

These research results should be leveraged to inform the design of a comprehensive bill management app that goes beyond the management of streaming services. A broader "cost center" app would bring enhanced clarity for regularly billed services such as internet, cell phone, utilities, and loan payments. The launch of the streaming service management app is one step toward creating a holistic payment and financial wellness solution. However, to ensure the app meets the specific needs of users, further research is necessary.

Surveys, interviews, and focus groups exploring the specific pain points and challenges of all bill payments will provide valuable insights to complement the analysis from the streaming management app. This exploration should encompass topics such as user interface preferences, desired features, and functionalities, ease of use, and the overall user experience.

Comprehensive Bill Payment Management

Additionally, it is crucial to investigate the existing methods or tools currently used by users to manage their bills. This research can identify areas where an app can provide added value or improved efficiency compared to the existing solutions. By analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of these tools, potential opportunities for innovation and differentiation can be identified.

If developing a bill managing app, we recommend considering the features below:

1. Integration of multiple bill types, including streaming services, internet, cell phone, utilities, and more, allowing users to view and manage all their bills in one place.
2. Notifications and reminders for upcoming bill payments, ensuring users never miss a payment deadline.
3. Customizable alerts for bill due dates, payment confirmations, and any changes or issues with billing.
4. Option to set up automatic payments or reminders to streamline bill payment processes.
   - Ability to track and categorize expenses, providing insights into spending patterns and allowing users to set budgets or spending limits.
   - Comparison tools to help users find the best deals and optimize their expenses.
   - Real-time syncing across devices enables users to access their bill information and manage payments from anywhere.
   - Secure and encrypted storage for bill details, ensuring sensitive information is protected.

In conclusion, research results collected by Succinct Solutions indicates an app focused on managing streaming services has the potential to provide value. However, expanding the

scope to include other bills and broader money management would provide a more comprehensive solution. Considering user preferences and insights from the research can greatly enhance users' experience in managing budgets and recurring payments. The continuing research should aim to create a robust app that addresses the unique needs of Gen Z members and Millennials and improves their overall financial well-being.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Field Study Guide

Participants should be representative of the target user group, which may include people of different age ranges (Gen Z - Born 2007-1997; Millennials - Born 1996–1983), genders, and socio-economic backgrounds

Procedure:

- Observe participants while they are interacting with streaming services on their smart TV/streaming device/computer/phone.
- Record how many streaming services they have access to. Inquire:
  - How often do they use each service?
  - Are there any services that are severely underused or not accessed? How does the unused service make them feel?
- Are they aware of which service costs the most per month? Does that impact their viewing habits?
  - If they do not know, invite them to look it up and observe what tools and apps they open to find that information (e.g. Do they navigate directly to the service app? Notes app? Shared Google Sheet? etc)
- Inquire how the user tracks their subscription services and observe the tools and apps they open to find that information (e.g. Do they navigate directly to the service app? Notes app? Shared Google Sheet? Online statement? etc)
  - Make note if they do not actively keep track
  - Ask if they receive notifications regarding to the streaming service (payment due, payment confirmation, additional service available, deal)

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol

1.   WELCOME / INTRODUCTION / WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Introduce yourself and the note-taker, describe the purpose of the study and why the participant is invited. Ask the participant for permission if you want to record or videotape the interview, and how you'd keep the data confidential. Emphasize that you are a neutral party and that there are no right or wrong answers. Encourage the participants to be candid in their answers.

Introduction/Warm-up Script:

First of all, thank you for taking the time to talk to us today. My name is _____ and I've asked you to participate in today's interview about your experience using subscription services for streaming content and entertainment. This interview is part of a research project I'm

conducting with four other classmates in IDS 405, a class that is part of the Information Design & Strategy Masters program through Northwestern University.

Before we begin, I'd like to share an outline of what's going to happen. I am going to ask you a series of questions that help me understand your perspective in regards to certain aspects of how you engage with these subscription services.

I want to emphasize that this is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions so I encourage you to be as honest as possible. Your responses will be anonymously analyzed and integrated with responses from nine other interviews our group is conducting. This is a confidential conversation and your responses will be kept confidential and anonymized for class purposes only. We won't share any details with anyone outside the immediate people working on this project.

We can talk a lot quicker than we can type, would it be OK with you for us to record this session for our note taking? If this all sounds agreeable, I ask you to sign the consent form we have prepared.

[PRESENT CONSENT FORM TO INTERVIEWEE]

Consent Form:

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the above research project on Streaming Subscription Services.

This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation. Therefore please read the accompanying information sheet and then sign this form to certify that you approve the following:

• the interview may be recorded

• the information shared during the interview will be analyzed by a member of Succinct Solutions as research student

• access to the interview analysis will be limited to Succinct Solutions and classmates, as well as academic colleagues and researchers with whom we might collaborate as part of the research process

• any summary interview content, or direct quotations from the interview, that are made available through academic publication or other academic outlets will be anonymized so that you cannot be identified, and care will be taken to ensure that other information in the interview that could identify yourself is not revealed

• the actual recording will be archived securely

• any variation of the conditions above will only occur with your further explicit approval

—

This conversation will last 15-20 minutes, but if you would like to take a break or stop the interview If at any point, please feel free to do so and we will accommodate. Any questions before we begin? Let's get started!

2.   INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Include 8-10 broad questions. Ask open-ended questions, including probing questions to remind yourself to follow up after your participants answer the main questions; restate/summarize your participants' answers to show that you've heard them, and provide an opportunity for participants to clarify their answers.

Segue / Warm Up Questions

We have several warm-up questions to get started:

- What is your age? (Gen Z: Born 2007-1997; Millennials: Born 1996–1983)
- What is your occupation and marital status?
- What are some aspects of subscription streaming services that you enjoy? Are there any aspects of these services that aggravate you or stress you out?
- How many streaming services are you currently subscribed to? If you don't mind, can you circle the services on this sheet? *Show printed out logos for the major subscription services so they can point out and confirm their subscriptions.*

Interview Artifact:

"Please indicate which streaming services to which you have access"
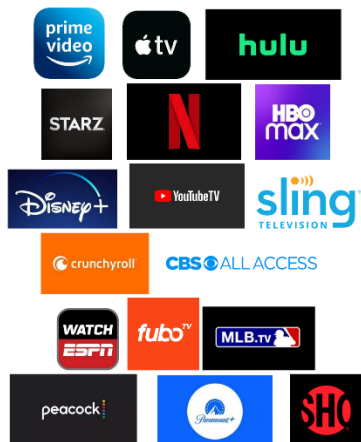
Tools and techniques for managing other aspects in their lives

1. When it comes to managing your monthly finances and bills, how would you describe your approach? [If the response indicates an organized approach, ask follow-up]
2. Which tools or techniques do you use?
   How do they support your management approach?

This helps us understand good features used across managing finances that can be integrated in our app

Decision Making
What motivates users to subscribe to new, retain and cancel existing subscriptions

1. Have you considered canceling your subscription to any of your streaming services? If so, what factors would influence that decision?
   a. What was the cancellation process like?
   b. How do you manage free trials?

2. What do you consider when deciding whether to subscribe to new streaming services? For example, content availability, exclusive content, pricing, bundled services, etc.

3. Do you see yourself continuing to subscribe to the same streaming services in the future , or are you open to trying new services as they become available?

Pain points

1. Overall, how satisfied are you with your current streaming service management solution, and what improvements would you like to see in the future?

2. Have you ever missed a payment or accidentally let a subscription renew that you did not want to keep?

Bundles and shared accounts
Field studies showed that bundles and shared accounts confuse subscribers. How much value are they deriving from the exchange? When an account is shared, it creates obligations and "un-cancel-able" accounts.

1. Do you share any logins for service subscriptions with others? If so, what factors do you consider before sharing the account? How often do you consider the content consumption of others on the account? How often is the shared subscription discussed among those in the "shared" group?

2. What steps would you take if you wanted to cancel a shared account for a streaming service?

3. Are any of the services you subscribe to bundled?
   If yes - what are some factors you considered before subscribing through a bundle? Do you feel this complicates or simplifies the subscription process? Do you feel you're getting the full value from the bundle?

   If no - have you considered subscribing through a bundle in the past? What enticed you about the bundle? Why did you ultimately decide against it?

3.   WRAP UP/THANK YOU

Provide your participants a chance to add any observations or comments before you wrap up. Thank participants for their time and input.

Appendix C: Survey Questions
   1. How many streaming services do you currently have access to?
      a. None
      b. 1-3
      c. 4-6
      d. 7-10
      e. 10+

This question will help understand how many streaming services the participants are subscribed to and give a sense of how many services they may need help managing.

   2. For how many streaming services are you the primary account owner? Meaning, the account is in your name, and you pay for the service on a regular basis? (i.e Monthly, Annually)
      a. None
      b. 1-3
      c. 4-6
      d. 7-10
      e. 10+

This question helps us understand how many subscriptions people are sharing compared to those that they pay for.

   3. What is the total monthly cost of your digital streaming service subscriptions?
      a. Less than $10
      b. $10-$30
      c. $30 or more

        d.   I do not know

This question is to get an idea of the participants' awareness on how much they pay for their streaming services.

4. I am subscribed to a streaming entertainment service(s) that I need to cancel, but keep forgetting to do so.
    a. Very untrue of me
    b. Somewhat untrue of me
    c. Neither true or untrue
    d. Somewhat true of me
    e. Very true of me

Data in this response will directly inform the system of nudges and notifications leveraged in the app.

5. How often do you "auto-pay" for a subscription service without knowing it?
    a. a. Never
    b. b. Rarely
    c. c. Sometimes
    d. d. Often
    e.

This question will help understand how often participants forget to cancel subscriptions they no longer want, which can help inform how the app can better assist them in managing their subscriptions.

6. I often forget to cancel free trials for streaming services before the payment cycle moves to auto-renewal.
    a. Very untrue of me
    b. Somewhat untrue of me
    c. Neither true or untrue
    d. Somewhat true of me
    e. Very true of me

In our interviews, the concept of missing the end date of free trials was brought up, so this question helps us to determine if this is a more wide-spread issue people encounter.

7. What factors are most important to you when subscribing to a digital streaming service? Select up to 3 items.
    a. Price
    b. Exclusive content
    c. Bundle option 1/ additional service(s)
    d. Ad-free support

     e. Easy navigation (user interface)

     f. No response

This question will give us an idea of the participants' motives on subscribing to the digital streaming service(s) or subscribing to additional ones

8. How important is it for you to have a clear overview of your active subscriptions recorded in one place, such as an app, spreadsheet, or note system?
   a. Not important at all
   b. Slightly important
   c. Moderately important
   d. Very important

This question will help understand the importance of having a clear overview of all active subscriptions in one place for the participants.

9. A streaming service subscription management app would be useful to me.
   a. Very untrue of me
   b. Somewhat untrue of me
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat true of me
   e. Very true of me

Data from this response will be effectively used in comparison analysis to help inform marketing and positioning of the solution app.

10. How easy is it for you to manage your digital streaming service subscriptions?
    a. Very easy
    b. Somewhat easy
    c. Neutral
    d. Somewhat difficult
    e. Very difficult

Understanding how well participants claim they manage their subscriptions would give an idea on the demand of products/services that could help them easily manage their digital streaming service subscriptions.

11. How often do you review your digital streaming service subscriptions to ensure your needs are being met?
    a. Monthly
    b. Every other month
    c. Every 3-6 months
    d. Annually
    e. I do not review my subscriptions

This question would provide some insight on how often participants review their subscriptions as part of managing their subscriptions and finances.

12. How would you describe the value you receive from subscription services compared to the budget spent on these services?
    a. Significantly less
    b. Less than
    c. Equal to
    d. More than
    e. Significantly more

Our objective embedded in this question is to understand subscribers' perceptions of value from their service access.

13. I am likely to switch from a single streaming service subscription to a bundle with more services included if I can easily comprehend value generated.
    a. Very untrue of me
    b. Somewhat untrue of me
    c. Neutral
    d. Somewhat true of me
    e. Very true of me

In our interviews, people mentioned that they were open to bundles, even if they currently did not subscribe to many. This question helps us to determine the commonality of the desire to switch to a bundle, so we can potentially add features pertaining to bundles in our app.

14. If a shared subscription account is canceled, which option best describes your next step?
    a. No action, lose access to the service altogether
    b. Seek a friend/relative to share a new account to that service
    c. Sign up for the service yourself
    d. Seek a bundle that includes the service
    e. No response

This question helps us understand how users navigate their shared services and how important the content access is.

15. If you are open to a follow-up interview, please list your email address in the field below.

16. You are invited to leave additional comments and thoughts related to the management of streaming subscription services in the field below.