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Successful Strategies to Address Disruptive Innovation Technologies in the Digital-media Industry

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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Abstract

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MBA, Capella University, 2016

MA, National University, 2008

BA, Kean University, 2003

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

of

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Abstract

Digital media executives lack strategic solutions for the preparation and response to changing media innovation technology. The lack of innovative technological strategies threatens digital-media corporations' ability to maintain marketplace sustainability for addressing disruptive innovation technologies. Grounded in Christensen's disruptive innovation theory and Roger's diffusion of innovation theory, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore innovative technological strategies some executives of digital-media corporations used to maintain marketplace sustainability for addressing disruptive innovation technologies. The participants were 7 digital-media executives in New York and California, who used effective strategies to innovate technology and maintain marketplace sustainability. Data were collected using semistructured interviews and responses from a demographic survey. Four themes emerged through thematic analysis: teamwork, data collection, budgeting, and corporate governance. A key recommendation is digital-media, and streaming-video executives should utilize collaborative team efforts of technology and marketing departments and outsourced digital-media companies to create pioneering strategies that address disruptive innovation technology. The potential for positive social change includes organizations' leaders acquiring new teams to strategize for the future of the company, which creates new jobs and happier consumers willing to spend more money for services, which creates better economies internationally.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my mom, who had faith in me that I could accomplish this level of degree; and, I also dedicate this study to my spouse and children who allowed me to sacrifice family time spent with them to accomplish this goal. The final dedication is to the rest of my family members who've supported this goal completion in their distinctive ways.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Due to technological advancement and the changing trends of consumer behavior, digital-media executives are consistently seeking new strategies to address disruptive innovation technology. Harris, McAdams, McDausland, and Reid (2013) contended that business and economic changes are the reasons why executives seek new strategies to increase profitability and sustainability. Blair (2015) asserted that a company's competitive advantage has the potential to improve with technological innovation. Subscription-based business models are the new trend for the digital-media industry. Golderman and Connelly (2017) declared that subscribing libraries are additional benefits to organizations because unlimited amounts of locally produced and licensed content are uploadable and quickly accessible to the company's catalog content. Failing to make streaming-video options affordable, readily available, and user-friendly, may result in a loss of productivity and revenue for corporations and may further impair social-economic concerns such as poverty and joblessness (Kim & Min, 2015; Srivastava & Misra, 2014).

To address disruptive innovation technology (DIT), maintain sustainability, and technological progression, digital-media executives have explored a multitude of strategies for integrating technological innovations in their business processes. In this study, I sought to augment comprehension about the strategies digital-media executives of streaming-video corporations used to address DIT and maintain marketplace sustainability. My focus was on New York State and California headquarters of video-streaming companies because the top three leaders, Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime Video, have offices in both states.

Background of the Problem

The commercial setting of the business world has expanded far beyond the traditional brick-and-mortar store to a global e-commerce platform that is accessible to billions of users via the Internet; moving away from physical media, *cutting the cord* was the trending business model for digital and multi-media companies (Sadler & Evans, 2016). Digital media provides the convenience of immediate connection for consumers to online home entertainment. Digital-media home entertainment includes applications such as Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, YouTube, and Direct TV Now. Additionally, there are a variety of streaming boxes (e.g., Apple TV, Roku, Amazon Fire TV) and adapters (e.g., Chromecast and Roku). These devices allow smartphones and tablets to stream content to TVs (Bing, 2015). In the first quarter of 2017, Netflix streaming subscribers in the United States surpassed 50 million for the first time, illustrating that 54% of all TV households in the country had a Netflix subscription in 2017, while 58% of consumers had a subscription to any of the other competitors (Seward, 2014).

The success of Netflix's online subscription services catapulted a technology that disrupted the traditional brick-and-mortar video store, while simultaneously creating a new and competitive marketplace for digital-media and online-home entertainment. The potential to reach billions of consumers directly through the comfort of their homes is substantial for businesses. Yet, some organizational leaders do not know how to make utilizing this method more cost-efficient for consumers. The market research firm, GfK SE, showcased that almost half of the viewers surveyed, subscribed to at least one on-demand video streaming service; while, 17% subscribed to Netflix, and Amazon Prime

and nine percent have Netflix and Hulu Plus; five percent had Amazon Prime, Netflix and Hulu Plus (Nayak, 2016). In 2018, there were more streaming services that consumers subscribed to, which increased the percentage rates.

DIT of digital-media video-streaming changed the way companies reach their consumers. DIT also transformed how consumers watch home entertainment; some executives of digital-media corporations lacked innovative technological strategies to maintain marketplace sustainability and address DIT. Changes in technology influenced the two primary duties of executive boards: fiduciary and strategic (Evans, 2017). In this study, I explored innovative technological strategies that digital -media executives used to maintain marketplace sustainability and address DIT for their corporations.

Problem Statement

DIT has increasingly displaced established competitors selling home video entertainment. The emergence and proliferation of mobile devices have further accelerated online video consumption (Moon, Yoo, & Kim, 2016). Web-based video sharing services could account for about 80% to 90% of the global Internet traffic in 2019 (Biernacki, 2017). For example, YouTube subscribers watch 6 billion hours of video streaming per month, per one billion users (Hasan, Kumar Jha, & Liu, 2018a). The general business problem was that multiple digital-media executives lack strategic solutions for the preparation and response to changing media innovation technology. The specific business problem was that some executives of digital-media corporations lack innovative technological strategies to maintain marketplace sustainability for addressing DITs.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore innovative technological strategies that some executives of digital-media corporations used to maintain marketplace sustainability for addressing DITs. The sample population included executive technology and digital-media subscription service leaders of five corporations, Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, Redbox, and Direct TV Now, in New York State and California, who demonstrated success in addressing DITs. The implications for positive social change included improving cost-effective video streaming options for consumers and the potential to advance business models for helping executives create innovative strategies to maintain marketplace sustainability and address DIT.

Nature of the Study

A qualitative methodology was appropriate to explore the innovative technological strategies that some executives of digital-media corporations used to maintain marketplace sustainability for addressing DITs. Kozleski (2017) contended that the utility of qualitative methods shapes and advances essential questions of practice and policy, and sets benchmarks contributing to how researchers interpreted the landscape of scientific thought and discovery. Conversely, quantitative research is the collection and analysis of structured numerical data to build accurate and reliable instruments to obtain data for statistical analysis of variables' relationships or differences (Goertzen, 2017). In my study, I intended to explore the strategies that executives use to maintain marketplace sustainability and address DIT. I did not test a hypothesis, which was only appropriate in the quantitative method research design and the quantitative portion of a mixed-method

study; therefore, I chose neither the quantitative method nor the mixed method for this study. The qualitative research methodology was appropriate for this study.

A multiple case study design was appropriate for exploring innovative technological strategies that some executives of digital-media corporations used to maintain marketplace sustainability and address DITs. Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) detailed that a case study design is a concentrated account and investigation of some circumscribed social or multiple bound phenomena of a social unit, system, group of people, program, institution, or process. Applying a single case study methodology was appropriate when the focus illustrated an issue that reflected in the specific business problem. For this study, I considered the following qualitative research designs: (a) phenomenological, (b) ethnographic, (c) case study, and (d) narrative.

The phenomenological research approach focuses on the commonality of the lived experiences in a specific group (Greening, 2019). I did not utilize this method for my study as my focus was on the differences in strategy utilization amongst the participants, not the similarities. Using ethnography entails the production of highly detailed accounts of how people in social settings lead their lives (Woodley, 2016), which does not meet the needs of this study. Researchers performing a narrative inquiry design gather the subjective perspectives of participants through their stories (Christopher, 2016). The participants of this study answered specific questions relating to the media streaming industry and their strategy usage for addressing DIT. Recalling personal anecdotes was not a requirement for data collection. Therefore, a qualitative case study design was appropriate for completing my study.

Research Question

The primary research question in this study was: What innovative technological strategies are digital-media executives using to maintain marketplace sustainability and address disruptive innovation technologies?

Interview Questions

1. What is your innovative strategy building process, and is it created by a team or an individual?

2. What current technologically innovative strategies leverage your corporate brand, and, based upon your experiences and data, why have these strategies been successful?

3. What were the primary obstacles to implementing your current business model?

4. How were the primary obstacles addressed?

5. In what ways are you organizing your corporate content and messaging for creating innovative strategies that can combat new or emerging marketplace technologies?

6. What additional information would you like to share about the successful strategies your organization uses to maintain marketplace sustainability and address disruptive innovation technologies?

Conceptual Framework

I used Christensen's 1997 theory of disruptive innovation (McDowall, 2018), and Roger's 1962 theory of diffusion of innovation as the conceptual frameworks for this

study. The theory of disruptive innovation is an explanation of how any type of innovation, technological or otherwise, challenges and disrupts business models for other companies and leads to a forced change of business operations to maintain sustainability. Christensen explained disruption innovation technology as a process by which a product or service takes root in simple applications at the bottom of the market and then relentlessly moves upmarket, eventually displacing established competitors (Rettle, 2017). The premise of the theory of disruptive innovation is about the opportunities and challenges that the lack of preparedness for new technology presents for business leaders. Key propositions underlying the theory are (a) technological innovation, (b) business model alteration (c) consumer demand influence, and (d) sustainability. As applied to this research, the theory of disruptive innovation holds that business leaders will alter their current business models to maintain viability in the marketplace.

The theory of disruptive innovation has significantly influenced the business world (King & Baartartogtokh, 2015). It has affected business leaders' decision-making processes, company resource allocations, business models, and innovation management strategies. Disruptive innovation created a new market and value network, and it occurred when new digital technologies and business models affected the value proposition of existing goods and services (Ab Rahman, Abdul, Umar, & Chin, 2017). Because technology advances so rapidly and DIT occurs every day, digital-media executives that lack alternative innovation solutions for their streaming subscription services had succumbed to demise just as Blockbuster Video did. The theory of disruptive innovation may assist in identifying and understanding strategies for maintaining, preparing, and

reacting to market changes or demands in technology referred to in the specific business problem.

The second model for this study was the diffusion of innovation (DOI). In 1962, E.M. Rogers, the communication scientist, coined the term diffusion of innovation (Rogers, 2010). The principle of diffusion of innovation was the infiltration of new technology into social buying cultures from an introduction to broad acceptance and adoption (Kapoor, Dwivedi, & Williams, 2014). Key propositions underlying this social science theory are: (a) innovation, (b) product lifecycle, and (c) social system adoption. The diffusion of innovation theory was used to accelerate the adoption of public opinion and aims to change[sic] the behavior of a social system (Rogers, 2015). This idea had a significant impact on the business world and affected business leaders' competitive advantage, product lifecycle, financial budgets and strategy, business models, product development, and marketing initiatives.

Rogers (2015), contended that there were five established adopter categories for consumers. Each type is listed and defined as: (a) *innovators*, people who want to be first to try the innovation; (b) early adopters, people who represent opinion leaders who embrace change opportunities; (c) early majority, people who need to see evidence that the innovation works before they are willing to adopt it. The last two are (d) late majority, people who are skeptical of change that will only embrace it after the majority has; and (e) laggards, people who are bound by tradition and the most difficult to bring on board.

Executives had difficulty accepting and adopting innovation because of external influences. These influences include consumer adopter types, competitors, and

economics; other factors include internal factors such as the corporate environment in which it operates, complexity, hostility, and *dynamism,* the rate of change, or uncertainty within an industry (Pichlak, 2015). However, diffusion of innovation helped executives through business strategy; Holtzman (2014) argued that executive focus must be on the experiences and solutions specific to problems that are relevant to customers, which also helps with sustainability.

Operational Definitions

Business model: A business model is a system of interrelated activities that illustrate the operational plan of a firm and how it conducts business with clients (Kim & Min, 2015).

Competitive advantage: Competitive advantages provide an edge over rivals and an ability to generate higher value for a firm and its shareholders (Pansari & Kumar, 2016).

Disintermediation: Existing intermediaries expel value chains, a movement toward *friction-free capitalism*, in which consumers with modems would locate and purchase any products they wanted directly from their living rooms without the presence of intermediaries (Young, Tudor, & Capozzoli, 2016; Zamani & Giaglis, 2018;).

Disruptive innovation. Disruptive innovation is new products or services introduced to an established industry that forces traditional business models to transform or fail (Christensen, Raynor, & McDonald, 2015).

Industry transcending innovations: Industry transcending innovations are new products or services, which disrupt existing industries (Christensen, 2013).

Innovation management: Innovation management is all the activities conducted by a company and options made to foster the emergence of innovative projects, to decide their launch and achieve commercialization of new products or implementation of new business processes, to increase competitiveness (Băjenescu, 2017).

Innovative technology: Innovative technology refers to new products or services that pose a challenge or threat to established industries or businesses (Christensen, 2013).

Subscription service: A business model where customers pay a periodic fee (daily, monthly, or annually) to have access to a product or service (Blankenship, 2014).

Theory of disruptive innovation technology: Disruption theory tells us that specific innovations can undermine existing products, firms, or even entire industries (Cortez, 2014).

Traditional media: Traditional media refers to older media such as films, television, radio, billboards, or newspapers (Geraghty & Conway, 2016).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

According to Cunningham (2014), assumptions are *escapable* and are elements that are out of the researcher's control, but if removed, the study becomes irrelevant. Assumptions shape inference (Manski & Pepper, 2013). Leedy and Ormrod (2013) contended that assumptions are vital to having accurate findings and are very necessary for research. For example, because it would take much time and effort to validate participants' responses, a researcher may assume that the participants' responses are valid. I selected the participants for this study based on their position within the company

and their expertise in digital media strategies and DIT. My assumptions for this study were that (a) the participants answered interview questions honestly, (b) consumers who purchased monthly streaming subscriptions were complaining that the costs were increasing, (c) video streaming services for home usage disrupted the movie theater experience for consumers, (d) video streaming adversely effected Pay TV (Cable), and (e) consumers wanted user-friendly platforms, convenience, and lower costs. In the interviews that I conducted, these assumptions proved to be true.

Limitations

Limitations are elements that researchers cannot control, and which create distortions in the data (Cho, Lee, & Lee, 2014). According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2012), limitations refer to external conditions that affect the scope of the study. There were four limitations to this study. First, there was no access to the actual streaming consumer's experiences; instead, my focus was on the executives of the digital-media corporations' experiences. Second, the limitation of using a qualitative research method was that it does not include numerical data metrics (Elo et al., 2014). Third, executives did not disclose information about innovations as they were confidential or industry trade secrets. The Uniform Trade Secrets Act (UTSA) protects the confidential information of a business and entrepreneur when information does not have a patent, copyright, trademark, or protection from a covenant-not-to-compete clause (Cavico, Orta, Muffler, & Mujtaba, 2014). A final limitation was that I focused on video streaming and did not include the music or other industries that provide streaming services; therefore, this study

lacked a full scope of the industry and only offered a limited lens of the streaming industry.

Delimitations

Delimitations are boundaries and characteristics of a study (Polakof, 2016). A researcher has full control of the delimitations of a study (Merriam, 2014). The researcher chooses the delimitations such as the methodology, population, location to use, and analyze, which helps to set the bounds for a study (Martínez-Graña, Goy, & Zazo, 2013). The delimitations for this study were that I only focused on New York State and California executives of the video streaming industry.

The narrowed scope of this study was to digital-media streaming subscription services like Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, and cable companies with video OnDemand options used for home entertainment. Consumers have a few options for watching video streaming at home. Consumers view video streaming platforms via (a) smart TVs; (b) streaming media devices such as flash sticks and cable boxes; (c) mobile devices such as cell phones, laptops, or tablets; and (d) video game consoles.

I did not focus on the consumer's experiences or opinions about which services were the best and worst for cost efficiency, availability, and picture quality. I also did not focus on the media executive's views about its competitors. My sole focus of this study was to explore the innovative technological strategies digital-media executives used to maintain marketplace sustainability and evade DIT.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

The contribution of this study to business practice is that business leaders may use it to develop new strategies, which may lead to increased revenues and marketplace sustainability. Furthermore, boards may become more enlightened on the technological impact of change on every industry and consumer. The research outcomes from this study can enhance leaders' ability to explore alternative strategies that assist with addressing DIT. There is a potential for streaming-video industry leaders to create new technological devices and alternate solutions for home digital-media streaming. The findings may help digital-media executives develop innovative strategies and methods to improve consumer retention, increase revenues, catalyze business expansions, and for achieving a competitive advantage for sustainability.

Implications for Social Change

The implications for positive social change include the need for digital media companies to hire new employees globally, create more employment opportunities in the technology field, and decrease unemployment rates. The impending development of new technologies creates a definite shift of digital-media technological trends that increase usability for consumers. Furthermore, consumers benefit from the improved streaming options, which include more viewing conveniences, user-friendlier options, product knowledge comprehension, the developed service fit for their budgets, higher-quality videos, and, most importantly, cost containment of subscription plans.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

My goal for this section is to provide a comprehensive, synthesized, critical, and contextual analysis of the literature related to the theory of disruptive innovation and survey how it existed in academic research. The acronyms DIT were used interchangeably throughout the academic literature; therefore, for this study, I used DIT to refer to disruptive innovation technology and DOI to reference diffusion of innovations. Secondary data that I collected yielded primary data tools and thematic identification. I explored the DOI theory through an innovation lens, while also examining and exploring the history, practice, and fruition of the term, including credentials of essential articles, authors, theorists, and themes. I also discussed the definition, the different types of DOI adaptive categories with examples, the critical characteristics of the three kinds of DOI, and whether future predictions of disruption are avoidable utilizing the key propositions of Roger's diffusion of innovation. This section is the foundation for the practical component of this doctoral study. Finally, this literature review is a provision to summarize the essential points raised for DOI in the video-streaming, business subscription-model in the digital media and technology industries.

Examining literature for a deeper understanding of a phenomenon increases knowledge and intellectual curiosity. A literature review is a systematic and organized collection of research from an industry's top thought leaders. Researchers used it to identify, evaluate, and analyze current scholarly work (Booth, Sutton, & Papaioannou, 2016). The literature review has become the commonality amongst researchers to gain information; and, it frequently guides a study (Onwuegbuzie & Weinbaum, 2017).

I began this professional and academic literature review with a search of scholarly peer-reviewed journals of Walden University Library databases, which included EBSCOhost, Business Source Complete, ProQuest, Sage Publications, Academic Search Complete, and ABI/INFORM Complete for the years 1997–2020. Additional searches included Google Scholar and top business publications such as Harvard Business Review, MIT Review, Forbes, and Inc. magazines. Key search words included: *disruptive innovation technology, video streaming,* Netflix, Hulu, *cable television, Christensen, digital media, the emergence of technology, streaming subscriptions,* and *innovation management.* I used the Boolean operator "and" to narrow down the search to specifics and maximize the results. This literature review satisfies the criterion of a minimum of 60 peer-reviewed articles, of which 85% of the publications are within the past five years (2014–2019).

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore how some executives of digital-media corporations lack innovative technological strategies to maintain marketplace sustainability and address DIT. The video-streaming, business subscription-model was an innovative concept for the general public. The subscription - business model, sometimes identified as an access business model began in the 17th century from book and periodical publishers (Clapp, 1931). Rather than selling products individually, executives offered a subscription model to customers to gain periodic access to a product or service, within the company's library collection of cultural goods, for a specific amount of time.

As of 2019, subscriber models are the new norm, spread throughout numerous business sectors, and not exclusive to the video-streaming industry, meshing customer service with technological delivery. Digital-media executives identified that the conventions for sustaining Internet viewership produce opportunities to re-think strategies about the commercial conversion of television. Lotz (Internet, 2018) contended that the task to curate a subscriber model involved compiling content and organizing it in a convenient, user-friendly, and quickly accessible manner.

Outside of streaming services, there is an exhaustive list of sectors embarking on this specific business model. Some of the most popular subscription services include health-club memberships, mobile-network services, pharmaceutical companies, and food delivery services where customers order food from the Internet and receive it at their front door. However, pay television or subscription television, providing analog, satellite, digital-terrestrial, and Internet-television services were the reasons for the transition into the *post-network era*.

Lotz (2007a) popularized the term post-network era and denoted that the period following the network era started in the 1950s to the mid-1980s and later re-inventing television from 1985 through 2005 into a multi-channel platform system for accessibility to local broadcast and cable network television, for niche groups. Lotz's conceptualization of the post-network era highlights the five Cs of viewership: (a) choice, (b) control, (c) convenience, (d) customization, and (e) community. All these concepts relate to how viewers have more convenient and greater access to a broader array of content consumable on their terms.

Later, with the development of time-shifting technologies, such as video cassette recorders (VCR) and digital video recorders (DVR), broadcasting networks became irrelevant and then obsolete, shifting the differentiation between cable and free to air television (Lotz, 2014), creating a negative effect on the television and cable industries. Yet, building a foundation for the future technological developments of Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, and cable *On-Demand* options.

The main distinction between traditional television and Internet viewing was that Internet distribution did not require a time-specific display (Lotz, 2017). These new programs defied the conventions of television and made viewers and streaming executives alike adjust their expectations of what television is and what it has become. The new programs resulted in cable companies, cable networks, and satellite and television networks establishing streaming portals such as Spectrum TV, HBO Now Direct TV Now, and ABC Go. Furthermore, the industry transformation forced the broadcast cable and satellite companies to change the current business model to provide Internet services too (Lotz, 2018).

To better compete with streaming services, executives of one of the leading cable networks launched their streaming platform in 2010, while in 2015, executives launched another streaming platform to accept subscribers who did not have pay television (Natalie, 2017). Cord-cutting for industry executives and subscribers was the first warning of the DIT, which was referred to as DI originally, which caused a need for a business model transformation. Natalie (2017) also proclaimed that in 2015, 82% of television households in the United States subscribed to pay-tv service compared to 87%

in 2011. Many subscribers were replacing traditional cable and satellite pay-tv service with digital streaming services and movie-going because the services were too expensive in 2018.

A price hike for Comcast customers' bills was 2.2% per month and AT&T, Direct TV prices up to $8 per month in mid-January (Associated Press, 2018; Natalie, 2017). Furthermore, Global Market Intelligence says that the soaring costs of customers' cable and satellite bills were 53% since 2007, to $100.98 in 2017 (S & P Global, 2019). Table 1 indicates the characteristics of production components in each period.

Table 1

Characteristics of Production Components in Each Period

Production Component	Network Era	Multi-Channel Transition	Post-Network Era
Technology	Television	VCR, Remote Control, Analog cable	DVR, VOD, Portable devices (iPod, PSP), Mobile phones, Slingbox, Digital Cable
Creation	Deficit Financing	Fin-sin rules, surge of independents, end of fin-syn conglomeration and co-production	Multiple financing norms, variation is cost structure and aftermarket value; opportunities for amateur production
Distribution	Bottleneck, definite windows, exclusivity	Cable increases possible outlets	Erosion of time between windows, and exclusivity; content anytime, anywhere
Advertising	:30 ads, upfront market	Subscription, experimentation with alternatives to:30 ads	Co-existence of multiple models-:30. Placement, integration, branded entertainment, sponsorship; multiple user supported-transactional and subscription

	Audi meters,	People Meters,	Portable People meters,
Audience	diaries,	sampling	census measure
Measurement	sampling		

Note. Reproduced from (Lotz, the television will be revolutionized, 2007b, p. 8)

In 2007, Netflix took advantage of the rapid growth in the DVD rental market by providing a service that Blockbuster Video could not compete with, online video streaming (Allen, Feils, & Disbrow, 2014). Blockbuster's executives lacked a sustainability strategy that was critical to the corporation's success. Baumgartner (2014) posited that sustainability is complex for corporations; executives must focus on innovation and that due diligence is necessary to explore and clarify the requirements and pressures that companies face regarding sustainable development, especially with technology.

In the following sections, I will review the theory of DIT, the conceptual framework for this study. I will discuss an overview of the technology, streaming entertainment, technological innovation, diffusion of innovation, innovation management, and the theory of DIT. I will also include a discussion on successful DI strategies that are currently in place that are generating profits and sustaining a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

Overview of Technology

Designing a machine that mimics human behavior has intrigued engineers and scientists for centuries (Juang & Rabiner, 2004). Digital technology today is essential for daily life. Humans have always tried to create a faster and easier method to gain satisfaction and immediate gratification; thus, creating technology. Coming out of World War II, the industrial revolution returned to manufacturing and innovating consumer

goods such as washing machines and refrigerators, all of which baby boomers and their parents enjoyed (Weber, 2017). Technological advancement means proceeding through an evolutionary process (Dosi & Nelson, 2013). There is a valuation of technology development, which in the early stages of discovery must rely on people's judgment (Sheasley, 2016) to make the product or service desirable to consumers.

Nonetheless, Mishankina and Panasenko (2016) argued that technology has a subjective, metaphorical definition. Technology is connotative and derived from personal meaning and perception. For example, it can have any of the following meanings to an individual, technology is wildlife, technology is an artifact, technology is a human being, and technology is a space.

Conflicting ideologies of the word or concept of technology are evident. Franssen (2015) affirmed that there is a conceptual problem defining technology because some authors identify technology as a contrast of science, which is the study of the natural and physical world of structure and behavior that creates premises; whereas, technology is those premises put into practice. Martin (2018) argued the term technology acquired a meaning referring to tools, machines, and procedures used to produce material things rather than knowledge about methods aimed at transformative ends. Schraube (2014) defined technology as the processes of human activity and the art of bringing something into existence.

The Technology Services Industry Association (TSIA) is a highly recognized professional technology association. Ragsdale (2018) defined technology as the infrastructure that enables service departments, customer support, and all aspects of an

organization to maximize its profitability potential. Punt (2005) asserted that technology is never just there as part of nature; it must be a product of human agency and, as such, should be open to explanation. The definition of technology will continue to evolve as new technology emerges in various business industries. The technological discontinuity between the 19th and 20th centuries, where electricity, solenoids, and chips replaced steam, levers, and gears (Punt, 2005). Thus, proving that over-time, these advances were DIT and evidenced that there was a link between technology and home entertainment options.

Streaming Entertainment

Formerly known as *store and forward video,* Data Electronics Inc. created the term *streaming* for tape-drives made to ramp-up and run entire audio or video track slowly. In the early 1990s, the term *streaming* was applied as a better explanation for video on demand and later live video on IP networks (Gelman, Halfin, & Willinger, 1991). Around 2002, Adobe prompted the development of a video streaming format through Flash, which was the format used on YouTube (YouTube, 2015) to develop content, user interfaces, and web applications. Since its inception, due to increased consumer demand for streaming services, both music and video, the United States, streaming revenue grew 57% to $1.6 billion in the first half of 2016, accounting for almost half of the industry's sales (Shaw, 2016). Today, media streaming is the trending culture for people who use supported devices for everyday purposes. Seventy percent of consumers view content through streaming services; 40% of this viewing was for TV programming. Millennials stream 60% of the content (Umstead, 2017). The streaming

industry continues to grow, disrupting many traditional business models throughout almost every sector of business.

Streaming entertainment is an *access* or *subscription-based* business model (Blankenship, 2014). Since companies such as Napster and LimeWire offered music file sharing between strangers through the Internet, the business model has become popular and legal. Company executives capitalized on the business trend and created streaming services for television, movies, and music. In 2018, Spotify, Apple Music, and Vevo, via YouTube*,* were the most famous music streaming companies. Although music streaming corporations offer a significant amount of subscription services and conveniences for consumers today, video streaming for home entertainment offered through digital-media companies online, outnumber music streaming corporations. Bajić (2016) contended that video streaming was the dominant technology for the delivery of digital video today. Television set-top boxes, computers, mobile devices, in-flight entertainment, and many other video systems rely on video streaming to deliver the video content for playout.

Streaming media distribution services are a recent and popular phenomenon; a few of the top industry leaders include Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime Video (Anders & Kueng, 2019). Although many others exist like Crackle, Sling TV, Redbox, cable, and satellite company platforms such as Spectrum TV and Direct TV Now, the industry is still growing, and consumers are still paying for monthly subscriptions to view at-home entertainment. The average American subscriber watches 3.4 streaming-video services. (Fitzgerald, 2019).

Netflix had 61.04 million American subscribers by the end of 2019 (Rayome, 2020). The streaming giant offers a library of films and television programs, including those produced in-house (Pogue, 2007). Their viewing options include DVD delivery and standard streaming views. The subscription rates are monthly, ranging from $7.99 for one DVD, $10.99 for standard streaming views, and $15.99 for standard streaming views with DVD (Netflix Inc, 2018). Netflix's supported devices are streaming players, smart TVs, game consoles, Wii discontinued January 31, 2019, Set-top boxes, Blu-ray players, smartphones and tablets, PCs, and laptops (Netflix, 2018). However, Hulu service offerings and subscription rates are different than what the Netflix executives offer their subscribers.

Hulu is a leading premium streaming service that offers instant access to live and on-demand channels, original series and films, and a premium library of TV and movies (Hulu, 2020). Hulu viewing options are standard with commercials for $7.99 per month, standard without commercials for $11.99 per month, and standard without ads with Live TV for $39.99 per month (Hulu, 2020). Hulu's supported devices include similar options to those of Netflix. But, with additional options such as Chromecast, a thumb drive sized HDMI plug port that allows consumers to stream or *cast* media from an existing computer or mobile device, through a wi-fi home network, on to a television screen. Additional devices include a Kindle player and a Nexus player, a device like an Apple TV, Amazon Fire Stick, and a Chromecast device (Hulu, 2020). Although using similar business models, Netflix and Hulu offer their consumers various viewing options. In

contrast, consumers that are Amazon Prime Video subscribers benefit from being a member, not just a subscriber to a conglomerate of beneficial membership services.

Amazon Prime Video offers television shows and films for rent or purchase and Prime Video, a selection of Amazon Studios original content, and licensed acquisitions included in the Amazon Prime subscription (Amazon.com, 2018a). Amazon offers monthly rates of $12.99 for streaming movies and TV programs; and, they also provide annual rates of $59 for students and $99 for non-student viewers (Lura, 2018). Amazon Prime Video supports many more devices than Hulu and Netflix combined, with additional devices, such as mobile operating systems, handheld game consoles, 2015+Android TV, and micro-console for Sony, PlayStation TV (Amazon.com, 2018b). Each of the media-service providers is a leader in the video-streaming industry, which is positive for consumers and viewers, but negatively affects cable providers and satellite companies.

Real-world entertainment is facing disruption and challenges created through mobile connectivity. Having less face-to-face engagement is the *new normal* that is still evolving (Wallsten, 2013). During the 1990s era, cable overtook network television in profitability and prestige; today, cord-cutting and streaming threaten the cable industry (Fischer-Baum, 2017). Advancements in technology are helping to improve almost every aspect of the home entertainment system. Thanks to streaming movie websites and high-speed broadband, people can sit home and enjoy, free access sometimes, to a vast array of movies and TV shows online (Ismail, 2017). Other entertainment options include paying for monthly streaming subscription services like Netflix and Hulu, which can eventually

become an expensive habit for home-entertainment if a consumer purchases each streaming platform.

Currently, Netflix's monthly subscription is $10.99 per month for the standard tier, which allows subscribers to watch on two screens at once, and then, the premium tier which enables users to watch up to four monitors at once is $13.99 (Plaugic, 2017). Amazon Prime Video subscription is $12.99 per month; however, they also offer an annual plan, which is $119, an increase of almost 18% (Spangler, 2018). Hulu monthly subscription gives a few options; $7.99 per month for standard streaming with commercials, $11.99 per month for standard streaming without ads, and $39.99 for Hulu with Live TV (Griffith, 2018).

Another streaming subscription service for home-video entertainment viewing is Movie Pass, where consumers previously gained access to unlimited new movies current in theaters nationwide for $9.95 per month. Paired with an iHeart Radio, new subscribers' usage was decreased and limited to 4 videos per month for new subscribers. The unlimited viewing option for subscribers of Movie Pass, before pairing with iHeart Radio, the unlimited subscription remains the same (Cao, 2018). Spectrum, Optimum, DirectTV, and other cable broadcasts and satellite companies offer monthly subscription streaming options for prime-time television channels and premium cable network channels. The costs range from as low as $5.99 to a maximum of $16.99 each per month (AT&T, 2018), which varies through cable providers.

Most consumers have more than one or all these subscription plans, which total approximately $100 per month if the consumer subscribes to all the platforms. Also,

streaming devices such as Roku or Tivo have a monthly subscription plan as well. With the increase of technology innovation and video streaming companies, digital-media executives must address DIT in their sustainability strategies. Consumers cancel their monthly subscription plans if it becomes *too* expensive, and another competitor offers a lower cost option. According to MarketLine Case Studies (2017), by October 2011, Netflix, lost thousands of subscribers and canceled the company split, rebranded as Qwister, DVD delivery services, and Netflix, for streaming services, because the monthly subscription plan increased from $4.99 in 2007 for DVD delivery service to $16 in 2011 for DVD delivery service and streaming. This customer reaction requires executives to create strategies to maintain marketplace sustainability and address DIT.

Technological Innovation

Technological innovation in modern society is a necessity; it is rapidly increasing; and, it requires executives to develop effective strategies to remain a sustainable competitor in the business world. Christensen (2013) posited that technological innovation derived from emergent technology, surpassing seemingly superior technology. Technological innovation has impacted consumer's lives and every industry of business; it is a process of utilizing upgraded technologies and solutions, sustaining consumer and market demands (Hong, Kim, & Cin, 2015).

The most prevalent theories of technology in business today are correlated to transformation, consumer adoption, and innovation, which includes DIT, DOI, and innovation management. Cowden and Alhorr (2013) defined DIT as simple adaptations to existing technologies that appeal to customers who were attracted to previous products.

For example, traditional paperback books are now read on Kindles or Nooks, electronic book readers. This phenomenon occurred in every business industry and has become the norm for present and future technological advances.

Diffusion of Innovation

Historically in 1903, French sociologist Gabriel Tarde (Toews, 2003) plotted the original S-shaped diffusion curve for the diffusion of innovation. Later, in 1943, Ryan and Gross introduced the adopter categories that were used later in Roger's (1962) diffusion of innovation theory, commonly referred to as DOI; which is now one of the oldest social science theories originating in the communication field of study (LaMorte, 2019). The key propositions underlying the theory are consumer behavior, popularization in a social system, acquisition, and momentum (LaMorte, 2019). The five adopter categories include:

Innovators are people who want to be first to try the new product or service. Early adopters represent the opinion leaders and are very comfortable with adopting new ideas. The early majority are rarely leaders, but they do accept new ideas before the average person. Late majority are people that are skeptical of change but will only choose innovation if the majority does first. Finally, laggards are people bound to tradition and are very conservative; they are very skeptical of change. See *Figure 1*. Diffusion of innovation theory adoption stages
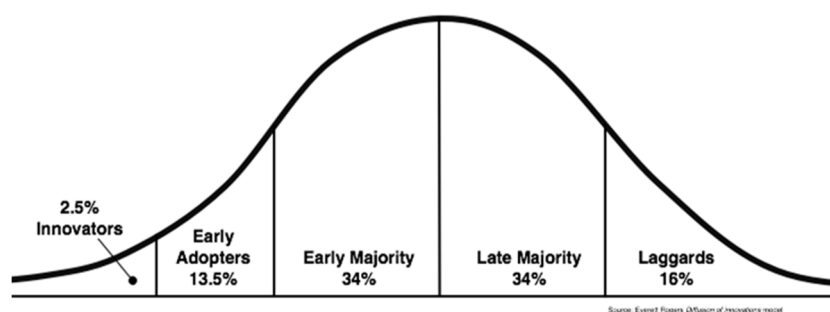
Figure 1. Illustrates the adoption stages of consumers to new products or services into the marketplace. Adapted from "Diffusion of Innovation Theory" by W. W. LaMorte, 2019, *Boston University School of Public Health*.

The DI is a valuable change model for guiding technological innovation where the innovation itself is modified and presented in ways that meet the needs across all levels of adopters. It also stresses the importance of communication and peer networking within the adoption process (Kaminski, 2011). DOI is the phase-out of a product or innovation that society's mainstream previously absorbed or adopted (Kim & Pae, 2014). For example, Walkman and Discman were the primary sources for listening to music on the go in the early 1980s to 2000s. In 2020, people listen to music on their mobile phones. The usage of the mobile phone provides the streaming of music from media platforms such as Apple's iTunes, Spotify, and Pandora, which also offers freedom from carrying several compact discs, tapes, and bulky items at once throughout the day. See Figure 2. Diffusion process
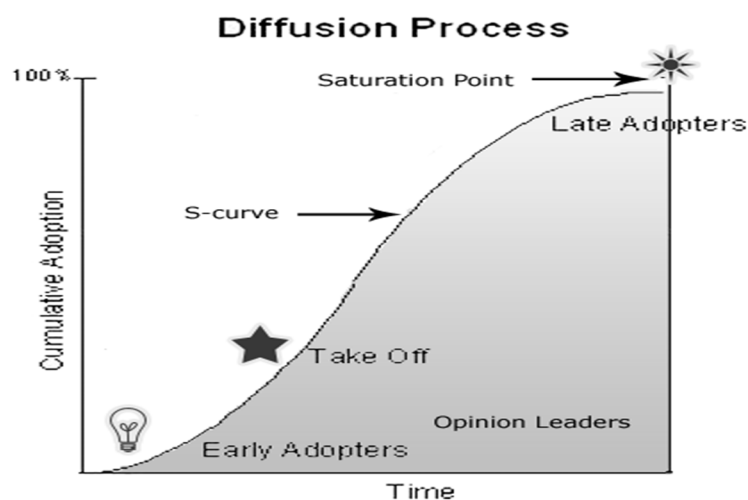
Figure 2. Illustrates the diffusion process. Adapted from "Diffusion of innovation theory," by J. Kaminski, 2011, *Canadian Journal of Nursing Informatics*, 6(2).

The same phenomenon has occurred with video streaming services; new streaming technologies have eliminated the use of real videos. Streaming executives offer convenience, user-friendly interfaces for use with everyday products, and deprivation of extra bulky items to carry. Therefore, innovation management knowledge is required. Mlecnik (2016) defined innovation management as the operational responsibility of creating a new idea, practice, or object. Many executives lack the knowledge, qualifications, and ambition to cultivate defined innovation management within their familiar organizational routine (Hang, Chen, & Yu, 2011; Hardman, Steinberger-Wilckens, & van der Horst, 2013; Keller & Husig, 2009).

Digital-media executives do not sustain competitive advantage without efficient strategies in technological innovation for the video-streaming industry. Abraham, Harris, and Auerbach (2015) contended that the displacement of the leading corporation that owns the disruptive technology is the uniqueness of the DI concept. Globally, cases of

disruptive technology include the supplanting of traditional brick and mortar stores to e-commerce, mobile phones replacing landline phones, maps, and televisions, and streaming services over the Internet. Bower and Christensen first introduced the term disruptive technology in their seminal journal article (Bower & Christensen, 1995) and further developed in Christensen's book, *The Innovator's Dilemma* (Christensen, 2013). The term disruptive technology changed to DI in Christensen's second book co-authored with Michael E. Raynor, *The Innovator's Solution* (Christensen & Raynor, 2003). Subsequent researchers extended the concept to include service, business model innovation, and technology (Yu & Hang, 2010), changing the acronym for disruptive innovation from DI to DIT. The underpinnings of DIT is building a model or framework to perform ex-ante predictions

Christensen (1997) coined the DIT theory in the late 1990s. The definition is as follows:

> *"A disruptive innovation introduces a different set of features, performance, and price attributes relative to the existing product, an unattractive combination for mainstream customers at the time of product introduction because of inferior performance on the attributes these customers value or a high price – although a different customer segment may value the new attributes. Subsequent developments over time, however, raise the new product's attributes to a level sufficient to satisfy mainstream customers, thus attracting more of the mainstream market."* (Govindarajan & Kopalle, 2006, p. 15).

Theory of Disruptive Innovation Technology

Figure 3 is a historical timeline of the theoretical etymology, usage, and evolution of the term disruptive innovation. As indicated below, many theorists have helped cultivate the term into what it represents in 2020.
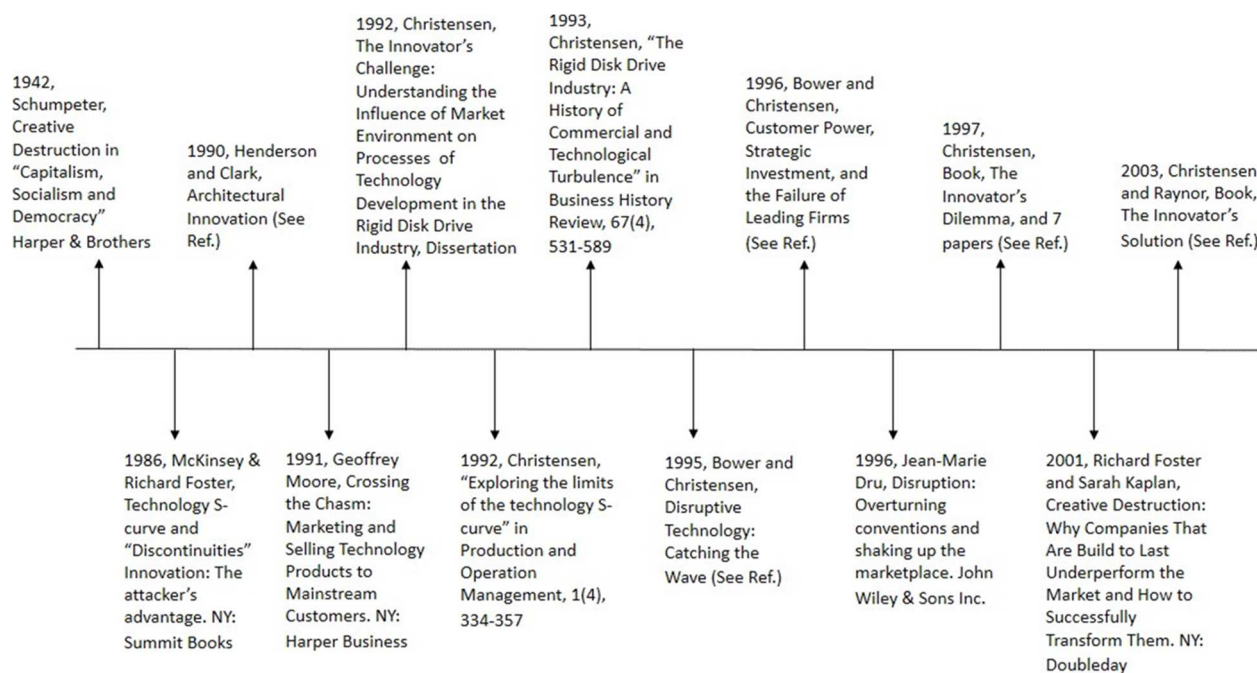
Figure 3. Illustrates the history, usage, and evolution of the term disruptive innovation. Adapted from "A reflective review of disruptive innovation theory," by Yu & Hang, 2010, *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *12*(4).

According to Christensen, DIT displaces established competitors in the marketplace. Christensen and Raynor (2003) explained that there are three types of DIT: (a) low-end, (b) new market, and (c) high-end. For low-end DIT, executives from competing firms create or produce inferior and cheaper products with fewer features to less-demanding customers but over-time create a better, more improved product or service moving up the market to serve high values customers as well (Grant, Hackney, & Edgar, 2010). Examples of low-end DIT are budget airline executives offering very low airfares, Amazon.com disrupting traditional bookstores, and Dell disrupting established PC manufacturers.

Christensen indicated that new market DIT occurs when technological advances compete against non-consumption and not against the conventional industry (Christensen

& Raynor, 2003). Corporate executives create inferior, cheaper, and more straightforward

products or services that convert a previous non-customer into an active purchaser. Thus,

creating a new market (Grant, Hackney, & Edgar, 2010), which, over time, increases the

quality and performance of the product or service to attract and gain high-value

customers. A prime example of a new market would be the creation of eBay, which

disrupted the auction industry considerably. See *Figure 4* - Low end and new market

disruptions
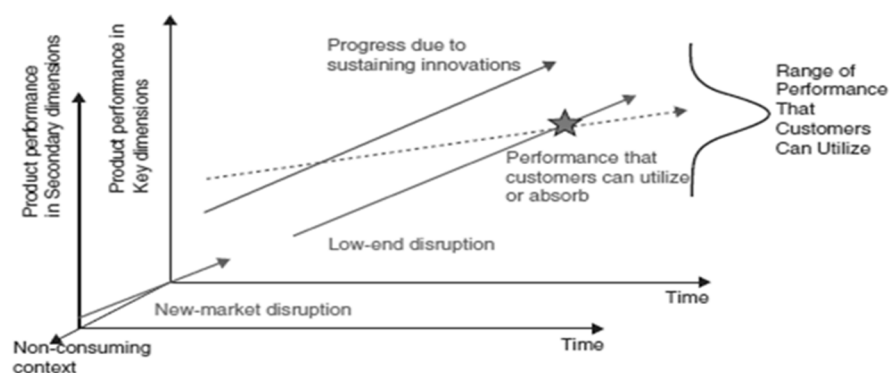
Figure 4. Illustrates the progress due to sustaining innovations and customer
performance. Adapted from "A reflective review of disruptive innovation theory," by Yu,
D. and C.C. Hang, 2010, *International Journal of Management Reviews*, (*12)*435-452.

Nonetheless, high-end DITs are technologically more radical than mainstream

offerings (Govindarajan & Kopalle, 2006). At the introduction, the innovator's customer

segment initially purchases the radical innovations, followed by the adopter category,

before diffusing through the remaining segments, eventually increasing market

penetration (Rogers, 2003). The initial pricing and quality of products, as they are entered

into the market to find a customer base, is contingent upon market trends and the

customers' adopter category. Low-end and new market customers are more cost-

sensitive and less radical in buying as the high-end customers, who are much less price-sensitive and more radical buyers. Lim and Anderson (2016) argued that market demand could be met by a sustained improvement of low-end technologies, but also by the repositioning of high-end technologies. See *Figure 5*. The process of market penetration by Disruptive Innovations

Disruptive Product Market Penetration and Cost
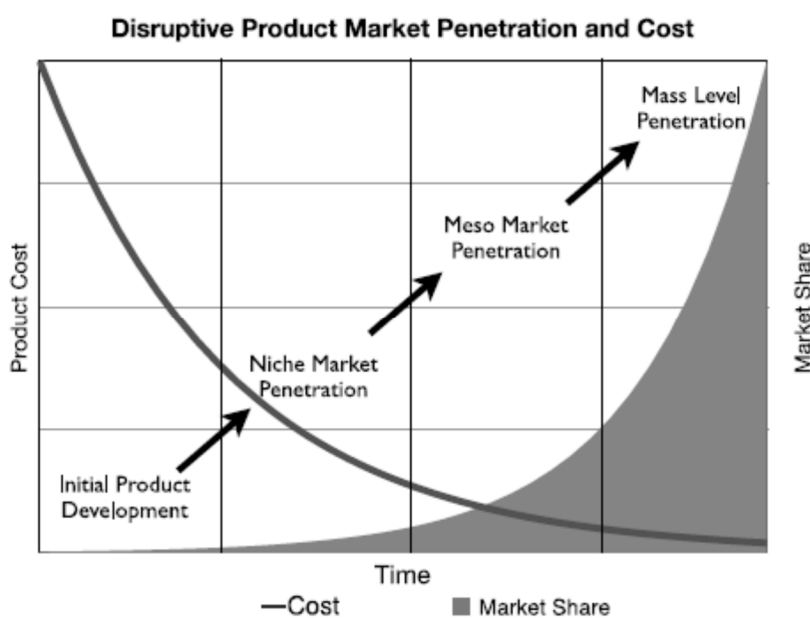
Figure 5. Illustrates disruptive product penetration. Adapted from "Disruptive innovations: The case for hydrogen fuel cells and battery electric vehicles," by Hardman, S., R. Wilckens-Steinberger, & D. van der Horst, 2013, *International Journal of Hydrogen Energy*, *38*(35) 15438-15451.

The concept of the theory of DIT is an explanation of how any type of innovation, technological or otherwise, challenges and disrupts business models for other companies and leads to a forced change of business operations to maintain sustainability. However, many scholars criticized the theory. Adner (2002) and Danneels (2004) argued that Christensen's DIT research lacked enough evidentiary support. Likewise, Govindarajan

and Kopalle (2005) explained that Christensen's DIT framework functioned only in hindsight and not in real-time. Christensen's later expansion of the theory of DIT claimed that (a) disruption is not an event. However, still, a process, (b) to incumbents, DIT is economically unappealing, and (c) DIT offers new and low-cost products to new customers.

The value of a theory comes from researchers' ability to use it to make predictions (Christensen, 2006). One of the critical disparagements of DIT in the literature is that it cannot be utilized to make ex-ante prophecies, if a new product, service, or business model is disruptive in the future; the theory was developed based on retrospective scrutiny of historical case study examples (Danneels, 2004). The DIT theory is of little use predictively if the success of a DIT occurs subsequently after the fact (Tellis, 2006). While many cases investigated Christensen's theory produced an abundance of empirical data, because of a post hoc analysis, they were prone to bias (Danneels, 2004). Due to the criticisms and skepticism from other theorists in the field, failing DITs create an analytical problem for industry incumbents (Danneels, 2004), suggesting that some organizations have just been lucky in their choice of technological changes (Barney, 1997).

Denning (2016) argued that many previous researchers confused and misused Christensen's DIT theory because of the commercial success of his books and other notorieties related to the DIT theory. Nonetheless, the actual disruption begins with innovators following consumer behavior regarding societal norms and trends. The theory of DIT is the best model to use for this study as its key propositions underlying the theory

are technological innovation, business model alteration, consumer demand influence, and business sustainability. The unified characteristics for the DIT theory can indicate what occurs when technological advances have an effect or impact on a specific industry. Other theoretical approaches in consideration for this study include Business model innovation, innovation management, modernization theory, and adaptive structuration theory.

Business model innovation theory is all about the ability of leaders to rethink an organization's current business model to find new revenue streams to maintain a competitive advantage in the marketplace (Santos, Spector, & Van der Heyden, 2009). DIT causes leaders to alter their business models. The focus of this study is not denouncing the business model structure and its effects from DIT; instead, the focus is on the lack of strategic solutions digital-media executives use to prepare for and respond to changing media innovation technology.

Innovation management theory (IM) first derived from some of the ideas put forth by Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter, during the 1930s inadvertently came from the theory of economic development. He identified innovation as a significant factor in economic growth because it constitutes a powerful competitive force in economic development. In the absence of economic development, the competitive capitalist economy would settle into the routine of the circular flow in stationary general equilibrium (Schumpeter & Backhaus, 2003). Meaning, demand will match supply, resources would distribute according to the market revealed preferences of consumers,

and competition and equal availability would eliminate all *surplus values,* but innovation will recreate them.

IM is a combination of organizational administration, which includes leadership activities for creating a strategy and accomplishing company objectives (Xu et al., 2007). However, the purpose of this study was to explore innovative technological strategies that some executives of digital-media corporations use to maintain marketplace sustainability for addressing DITs. I did not use the IM theory because I did not explore all the combined elements and paradigms of IM that encompass organizational innovation.

I also researched Max Weber's modernization theory as an alternative model. The premise of modernization theory is to explain the ways of communication and media use in traditional and postmodern societies (Knöbl, 2003). The key propositions are the diffusion of Western styles of living, human communication, and Western individualist cultures of individual motivation and achievement (Lerner, 1958; Schramm, 1964). I did not use modernization theory because consumer use of video-streaming subscriptions is universal; I studied executive strategies, which are not based solely on Westernized culture.

Adaptive structuration theory (AST) is another model researched for this study. It originated from Anthony Giddens' (1984) structuration theory, which is the production and reproduction of the social systems through members' use of rules and resources in interaction. Behavior and structure are intertwined; people go through the socialization process and become dependent on the existing social structures, but simultaneously societal members are altering social structures with their activities (Rose, 1999).

Researchers criticize the technocentric view of technology use and emphasize the social aspects when applying the AST theory (Desanctis & Poole, 1994). AST is a viable approach for researchers studying the role of advanced information technologies in organizational change (Desanctis & Poole, 1994). Although researchers may use a technocentric lens with AST, it is a useful model for researchers to analyze the utilization and penetration of new media technologies in our society. However, I did not use this theory to focus on the digital-media executive's strategy used to maintain marketplace sustainability for addressing DITs.

Contributors to the Portland International Conference of Management, Zheng, Hui, Ting, and Cao (2017) stated that disruptive technologies substitute existing technology. Thus, extending to the creation of a new market and then, develops a new value system while performance and function are updated and improved. Recently, the terms emerging technology (ET), disruptive innovation, and disruptive technology (DT) are interchangeable. However, Li, Porter, and Suominen (2018) contended that the actual theoretical differences come from the innovation system and the technological innovation system of each component separately.

When strategies for innovation technology are in the planning process, there are three ecosystems of a business that require consideration: (a) sustainability, (b) self-governance, and (c) evolution (Mari, 2018). Revilla, Rodriguez-Prado, and Cui (2016), contributors to a knowledge-based framework of innovation, negated the idea affirming that innovation strategies rely on different knowledge sources, own-generated, bought in, and co-developed, that affect innovation performance. Vecchiato (2017), posited that

firms fail to identify new markets in the face of DT; the lack of preparedness for disruption innovation leads to business failure.

The theory of DIT, as represented in this academic literature, has reached investigative exhaustion. I have identified and presented the history, usage, and evolution of the term, along with evidence of the criticisms of DIT theory, the strong ex-post and ex-ante perspective for predictions, and its usefulness in business. An examination of the similarities and differences between each of the three types of DITs, including low-end, new market, and high-end, is complete. The areas of exploration for this literature review are an overview of the technology, streaming entertainment, technological innovation, the theory of diffusion, in-depth analysis of the theory of DIT, and the role of DIT. An advantage of online video-streaming, over the traditional brick and mortar option, is watching on-demand. The audience's option of viewing offers what, when, where, and how they want it, giving direct engagement between consumers and corporations, which helps executives discover consumer behavior and their next technological plan to enhance viewership options. Nonetheless, some executives of digital-media corporations lack innovative strategies to maintain marketplace sustainability and address DITs.

The Role of Disruptive Innovation Technology

DIT is the most lucrative aspect of today's business models and is a requirement in every corporation's innovation management plan. However, the function of DIT enhances and creates movement in the business world for technological advances. Brattstrom, Lofsten, and Richtner (2015) declared that DT might be beneficial because it has more successful features than it does sustain technology. Menguc, Auh, and

Yannopoulos (2013) stated that DT involves new products and changes in the structure of a business. It allows business leaders to learn from past mistakes and prepare for future innovations while simultaneously creating predictive innovations. Business executives that neglect investing in and addressing disruptive technology is setting the company to fail. Moss (2014) illustrated that companies such as Blockbuster, Borders, Blackberry, and Polaroid was unable to address and strategically respond to disruptive technology. Souto (2015) posited that innovation may be disruptive, radical, incremental, or sustaining; however, preemptive evidence of company key performance indicators (KPIs) may also assist with disruptive innovation and the diffusion of innovation, which allows disruptive technology to occur.

The idea of DIT has evolved into a phenomenon that businesses cannot afford to ignore; yet, few studies exist in academic literature regarding its effects on current business models and consumer behavior. Riffai, Grant, and Edgar (2012) contended that technology acceptance theories come from consumer behavior; the *technology acceptance model* (TAM) makes linkages between perceived usefulness, ease of use, the user's attitudes and intentions, and actual computer behavior. Consumers' behavior causes the diffusion of innovation, which leads to disruptive innovation technology.

Business Strategy

Business strategy links to marketplace sustainability. Figge, Hahn, Schaltegger, & Wagner (2002) suggested that corporate executives use Kaplan and Norton's balanced scorecard to support and align all corporate activities according to their strategic relevance. Therefore, executives using the scorecard become mindful of non-financial,

tactical success factors that expressively influence the economic success of a business. An executive's use of sustainability management with the Balanced Scorecard assists in accomplishing the emergences of predictable tactics to environmental and social management systems. Considering that video-streaming is a large part of both the environment and a social management system, other vital strategies come from the notion of the 'production of culture,' which is a mindset, not an activity. Netflix uses a mixed approach that incorporates exclusivity and creates a production of culture for the masses (Lotz, Portals: A treatise on Internet-distributed television, 2017).

Culture creation is a part of a marketing strategy for digital media companies. An effective strategy for executives to use for sustainability in the marketplace includes knowing and using the twelve attributes of content curation. The twelve attributes for strategy: (a) needs business objectives, (b) targets a specific audience, (c) presents quality information, not fillers, (d) follows the less is more theory, (e) incorporates original content, (f) adds real value (g) has a human touch, (h) dresses the content for success, (i) involves a community (j) offers information in small chunks (k) sticks to a schedule, and (l) credits its creator (Cohen, 2012). If digital-media executives follow these ideals, strategies for addressing DIT and maintaining sustainability in the marketplace will not be a problem for them.

Transition

In Section 1, I provided a brief introduction to the research topic of disruptive innovation technology, and the current strategies executives are using for streaming subscription services for home entertainment and the background of the study. I also

included the problem statement, purpose statement, nature of the study, research

interview questions, conceptual framework, operational definitions, assumptions,

limitations, and delimitations of the study. Furthermore, I included the significance of the

study, including contribution to the business practice and implications for social change. I

concluded Section 1 with a review of professional and academic literature.

In Section 2, I discuss the purpose statement, the researcher's role, description of

participants' selection method, research method and design, population and sampling,

ethical research procedure, data collection instruments, data collection technique, data

analysis, reliability, and validity. In Section 3, I present the research findings, the

implication to professional practice, and social changes. I conclude with the

recommendations for action and areas for future research.

Section 2: The Project

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore innovative technological strategies that some executives of digital-media corporations used to maintain marketplace sustainability for addressing DITs. The targeted sample population included technology executives and digital-media subscription service leaders of five corporations, Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, Redbox, and Direct TV Now, in New York State, who demonstrated success in addressing DITs. The implications for positive social change include improving cost-effective video streaming options for consumers and the potential to improve business models for helping executives create innovative strategies to maintain marketplace sustainability and address disruptive innovation technology.

Role of the Researcher

In a qualitative study, the researcher plays a significant role in the research process to ensure accuracy. Academic researchers contribute their skills and participate as *critical friends* to sharpen the focus on the problem at hand (Olin, Karlberg-Granlund, & Furu, 2016). The researcher engages participants to collect data and to comprehend the research topic. The researcher and the participants establish a relationship with the sharing of sensitive disclosures; therefore, the researcher understands that listening to participants' life stories is an intense experience, requiring support for the interviewer to stay neutral during interviews (Newman, O'Reilly, Lee, & Kennedy, 2017). For the data collection, I am the instrument for data collection. It is my responsibility to inform the

reading audience of any biases and assumptions that I held in addition to providing my qualifications as a researcher.

My role as it relates to ethical research was to receive approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct human research, not harm the participants, remain objective and focused, and follow the rules of the IRB that support and are established by *the Belmont Report*. *The Belmont Report* stated that the "basic ethical principles that should underlie the conduct of biomedical and behavioral research involving human subjects and developing guidelines to assure that the conduct of such research follows those principles" (*The Belmont Report*, 1979, p. 4). The purpose of the IRB is to protect the rights and welfare of research participants (Cargill et al., 2016). According to federal regulations governing research with humans (the Common Rule), minimal risk means that "the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during psychological examinations or tests" (Joffe & Wertheimer, 2014). Researchers must avoid direct deception. Direct deceptions are deliberate misinformation provided to participants about some essential component of the study's procedure, including study descriptions or instructions, staged manipulations, false feedback, or the use of confederates (Boynton, Portnoy, & Johnson, 2013).

My role as the researcher required self-objectivity to ensure that the collected data and the interpretations were those of the participants. It was essential that I practiced active listening and recorded the participants' responses verbatim while excluding my personal views. I conducted semistructured interviews. During the interview stage, I

made a conscious effort to illustrate that I was dependent on the participant's willingness to share their perspective and express their thoughts about the topics in question. I ensured that the participants were comfortable and respected while sharing their information with me. The researcher's initial calibration gravitates to one of two states; being *researcher-centered* or *informant centered*. These positions are established through four dimensions: (a) where the knowledge of the phenomenon under study lies, (b) the kind of response the researcher receives, (c) what type of information the researcher is looking for, and (d) what kind of information the researcher eventually receives (Peredaryenko & Krauss, 2013). I remained objective during the data collection process, accomplishing this by excluding my perspectives and biases on the topic and only recording and transcribing the participants' raw responses.

It is my responsibility to inform the reader of my qualifications as a researcher, and any biases or assumptions held during the research process. Thus, I gave relevant information about my experiences that qualify me to conduct this study. My affiliation in the New York State business industry is, as a coach and consultant of clients in various sectors and geographical locations. I have experience as an interviewer from working in the human resources industry as a human resources training manager for several corporations. I also consulted with small business owners and corporations about creating business systems, models, and strategies to maintain marketplace sustainability living in the technology and digital media age.

Boehm and Hogan (2012) stated that utilizing an outline for interview guidance and protocol helps with the preparation of the interview. Hence, the

interviewee knows what questions to expect, and the interviewer knows how to approach the interviewee when conducting qualitative research. I used an interview protocol guideline (see Appendix A) for conducting in-person interviews to ensure that I asked topic-relevant questions and audio recorded participants' responses to mitigate any of my biases.

Participants

Researchers should establish a criterion for participant selection to increase the breadth and depth of data (Charlick, Pincombe, McKellar, & Fielder, 2016). Participant criterion selection is part of an ethical process that takes an input and delivers an output. Largent and Fernandez Lynch (2017) contended that input is the submission materials describing the research, including the protocol, consent, investigation product data, essential investigator information, and site information. The output is the decision to approve the research, and the requirement of modifications to secure approval or disapprove the research. One key element of the study that affects population representation is an established eligibility criterion. McCrae and Purssell (2015) suggested creating a systematic review of a refined checklist before the start of data collection through interviews. The eligibility criterion I used included (a) corporate executives of top-performing technology or digital-media corporations within New York State, (b) with at least three years professional experience in the industry, (c) who had successfully addressed disruption innovation technology within their organization, and (d) were willing to participate in an audio-recorded semistructured interview.

Researchers must gain access to participants to conduct studies. Often, due to the sensitivity of information disclosure, confidentiality clauses, and or fear of releasing trade secrets, corporate gatekeepers control access to employees and company information. Most media institutions attempt to address issues of equity and access (Mackaway & Winchester-Seeto, 2018). Television executives who trade in television programs function as highly important gatekeepers within global television flows (Mast, De Ruiter, & Kuppens, 2017). Gulmez, Sagtas, and Kahyaoglu (2016) contended that gatekeepers are experts in their companies and their roles; they integrate the flow of information internally and are cemented in the external information acquisition process, formed as a result of open innovation. Therefore, they protect industry trade secrets from general public knowledge.

The strategies that I used to gain access to the participants included using social media platforms like Meetup.com and LinkedIn.com to recruit digital-media and technology executives. I also called the corporate offices of the digital-media companies to determine the steps required to interview executives, requesting a connection with the primary chief executive officer, CEO responsible for corporate-strategy-development and decision-making practices within the streaming-video organization. Furthermore, I used the websites of technology and digital media professional associations as secondary sources for recruiting participants. The targeted population included executive technology and digital-media subscription service leaders of five corporations, Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, Redbox, and Direct TV Now, in New York State and California, who demonstrated success in addressing DITs.

Establishing a working relationship and a great rapport with the participants of any study is key to increase validity and reliability. Duke, Wood, Bollin, Scullin, and LaBianca (2018) asserted that *rapport* is based on mutual respect and fostered by treating [people] with dignity and humanity. Rapport and relationship building are the most effective for eliciting useful information (Wachi et al., 2018). The strategies used to establish a working relationship with the participants were to remain truthful about what the study entailed, utilized effective listening skills learning from their knowledge instead of listening solely to the reply, and using emotional intelligence. Additionally, I had a general conversation with participants about who they are and what information they thought they could bring to the body of knowledge about DIT.

Research Method and Design

I used a multiple case study qualitative design to explore DIT strategies for digital-media video streaming corporations of executives in New York State. I conducted semistructured interviews with digital media and technology executives who had successfully maintained sustainability and addressed disruptive innovation technology.

In qualitative research, the natural contexts in which individuals or groups function provides an in-depth understanding of real-world problems (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). According to Yin (2018), a case study design is appropriate when a researcher is seeking to explore an in-depth analysis of complex relationships, communities, or organizations.

Research Method

Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods are the most common approaches to conducting research (Chen & Liu, 2014). Researchers use a quantitative method when conducting deductive research to confirm or test a hypothesis using numerical data (Venkatesh, Brown, & Bala, 2013). Quantitative researchers quantify and produce data in a statistical format (Hafford-Letchfield, 2014). Researchers use qualitative methods to discover, explicate, and describe a situation of curiosity (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). A qualitative researcher uses an unmeasurable method of investigation which produces data and understanding of human experience (Creamer & Tendhar, 2016). Mixed-method researchers produce more rigorous measures of the association while explicitly valuing the context of the participant's experience (Gündogdu, Aygün, Ilkim, and Tüfekçi, 2018).

Qualitative research was appropriate for my study because I wanted to focus on the delineation of in-depth information instead of gathering superficial information. Hammersley (2013) defined qualitative research as a research strategy that lacks quantification in data collection and analysis; instead, it usually emphasizes words. Additionally, Sandelowski (2004) contended that the qualitative research design is a parasol term for various attitudes toward strategies for inquiry that determine how human beings comprehend, experience, construe, and create the social world. Because researchers ask broad and open-ended questions and remain intimately linked to their studies, qualitative methods are distinctively situated, with rules and protocols for each type of inquiry, to produce new ideas and understandings to shape or construct new theory. In the digital-media field of study, an exhaustive analysis seemed more

appropriate to help the media-executives address the research question. The most suitable qualitative tool for my research is interviewing because the vital advantage of interviews is that I gained personal and direct contact with participants, which often enables a more open discourse to evolve into more thorough responses.

I did not use the quantitative method because my objective was to gain a deeper understanding of the strategies digital-media executives use to address disruptive innovation technology, and I did not perform an analysis of statistical data. Mixed methods research is a combination of qualitative inquiry and quantitative testing. My goal was to investigate contextual data; therefore, I rejected the mixed-method methodology. I used the qualitative research method to explore disruption innovation strategies that some executives of digital-media corporations use for addressing DITs to maintain marketplace sustainability.

Research Design

Case study, ethnography, and phenomenology are the most common qualitative research designs (Creswell, 1994). I utilized the case study design because my goal was to describe the research topic using multiple data sources. Researchers use the case study design to conduct in-depth descriptive analysis grounded in numerous data sources such as interviews, focus groups, and observation (Hancock & Algozzine, 2015). Researchers use the case study approach to examine and evaluate phenomenon (Zheng-yao & Qing-sen, 2013) Ethnographic approaches offer the benefit of perspective that comes from anthropology, the study of the development of human cultures and societies as a worldview (Andy, Matt, & Steiner, 2016). Ethnographic design anthropologists ask how

cultural contexts, social practices, embedded meanings, and social relationships affect the way human beings interact with the daily idiosyncrasies of life (Hale, 2016). I reviewed and rejected ethnography because the focus of my study was not about human interaction in everyday life.

Researchers use the phenomenological design to explore the lived experiences of participants (Alfakhri, Harness, Nicholson, & Harness, 2017). Wagstaff and Williams (2014) posited that researchers use the phenomenological design to examine the sense that participants make of their social worlds and interpretations of their experiences. I reviewed and rejected the phenomenological research design because the focus of my study was not to understand the culture of an organization or to explore the lived experiences of the participants. Therefore, I did not use a phenomenological design.

Data saturation is a vital aspect of the qualitative study. Data saturation occurs when there is no capability of the emergence of new information, themes, or codes about the phenomenon from responses (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Lowe, Norris, Farris, and Babbage (2018) posited that data saturation is complete when more data will not lead to the discovery of more information related to the research questions. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) argued that researchers do agree on some general principles and concepts: no further data, no new themes, no new coding, and the ability to replicate the study; when and how the researcher achieves data saturation will vary from study design to study design.

To assure that I achieved data saturation, I used the principal foci in the research process, which according to Saunders et al. (2017) are (a) sampling for theoretical

saturation, (b) sampling for a priori thematic saturation, (c) analysis for inductive thematic saturation, and (d) data collection concerning the degree in which new data repeat what previous data saturation. I also addressed, as (Fusch & Ness, 2015) suggested, the question of how many participant interviews are enough to reach data saturation; and confirmed that the *concepts*-articles, questions, themes, and participant's responses-behind data saturation *remain universal and timeless*. The quality of the research is sound if the four elements of quality are present.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study included seven digital-media and technology executives who successfully used disruption innovation technology strategies to maintain marketplace sustainability. The justification for seven participants is on previous researchers conducting qualitative studies on DIT and achieving saturation at this number of participants. I used purposeful criterion sampling to select the participants. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sample that is deliberately chosen to participate in the study (Bullard, 2016). Researchers use purposeful sampling in qualitative research to establish criteria and carefully select subjects with the expectation that each participant will bring unique information and value to the study (Lee-Jen et al., 2014). The criteria for participation in this study were (a) selection of digital media and technology executives of subscription-based business models that offer streaming services to their customers, (b) digital-media and or technology executives that address DITs within their organization, and (c) digital-media and or technology executives with involvement or control of the creation and implementation of organizational strategies addressing DITs.

Purposive sampling is useful in qualitative research studies. Serra, Psarra, and O'Brien (2018) posited that researchers using purposive sampling strategies do not seek generalization or randomness; but, the informed selection of particular cases, capable of maximizing the chances of observing phenomena of interest. I achieved data saturation when all required criterion for participants was complete, and the executive's responses became similar if not, exact, replies to my research questions. Lastly, I reached data saturation when new themes, codes, categories, or questions did not arise after the research question and sub-questions completed.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face, via Skype, email, and telephone. Each interviewee had a choice in the interview setting based on their location, whether east coast or west coast in a different time zone, their proximity to New York State, and their comfort level with being audio or video recorded. I used standardized open-ended interview questions. Utilizing open-ended questions allowed faster interviews that were easily analyzed and compared; also, a general interview guide approach (see Appendix A) was used to ensure that the same general areas of information are collected from each participant. The interview guide provided a more focused approach while still offering a degree of freedom and malleability in getting information from the interviewee.

Ethical Research

In this study, I abided by the ethical considerations recommended by the IRB. The Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 45 part 46 (45 CFR 46), known as the "Common Rule," is based on the Belmont Report, which identifies three primary ethical principles governing all research. Researchers' guidance in a study is the principles of justice,

beneficence, and respect for the participants of the study. The principles of justice, *the establishment or determination of rights according to the rules of law or equity*, include equal distribution of risks and benefits to the subjects. I was fair in the exclusion and inclusion criteria and distributed risks equally among all participants.

Besides, Ezekiel, Emanuel, Wendler, and Grady (2000), proposed seven requirements that systematically explain a coherent framework for evaluating the ethics of clinical research studies. The first requirement is valued; benefits of increased health and knowledge must derive from the research. The second and third requirements are scientific validity and appropriate subject selection. Scientific validity premises that the research must be systematically rigorous; while, fair subject selection requires scientific objectives that are invulnerable and has the possibility for and distribution of risks and benefits, which should determine the selection of study sites in communities and the inclusion criteria for each study participant.

The fourth and fifth requirements for assessing research ethics are favorable risk-benefit ratio and independent review. Favorable risk-benefit ratio requires minimization and a possibility of improved benefits for societal gain that must outweigh the risks contextually throughout research procedures and scientific practice. Individual review is a research process in which unfamiliar individuals to the researcher, resolve to either support, modify, or conclude a study. The last two requirements to explain a coherent framework for evaluating clinical research study ethics are informed consent and respect for enrolled subjects.

Before research begins, participants provide voluntary informed consent to participate in the study and must be thoroughly informed about the research and their role in the study. The last requirement is respect for enrolled subjects. Participants should receive privacy protection and the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time Fulfilling all seven requirements is necessary and enough to make research ethical.

Researchers are guided by the principles of respect for fairness, justice, and inclusiveness as well as the principle of free and informed consent because participants of research studies are typically volunteering and have vulnerabilities that may be affected by participating (Lee, 2018). IRB approval safeguards ethical criteria and protects participant rights and welfare during a study (Heflin, DeMeo, Nagler, & Hockenberry, 2016). IRBs are required by U.S. federal regulations to review and approve research involving human subjects before such investigation may be initiated at a given institution (Sonne et al., 2018). The IRB application process was essential and required before data collection to address ethical compliance. Lee (2018) argued that the purpose of getting ethics approval before a study assured that the proposed research was reviewed to ensure (a) the study has to potential to contribute to the body of scientific knowledge, (b) the study has the potential to add value to social experience, and (c) the rights and welfare of the participants are protected and can have a potential benefit gained from participating. I obtained approval from Walden University's IRB before starting data collection; the approval number for this study is 04-29-19-0664009.

Before conducting the interviews, each participant received the academic credentials of the researcher. Participants also received the purpose of the study, critical

conduct instructions about the procedures of the research, an informed consent form (see

Appendix B), and the code of ethics (see Appendix C) relating to the data collection

practices for this study. Participants received four points of contact. The first point of

contact aimed to solicit participants; after receiving a confirmation to join, I emailed

informed consent forms and a link to the questionnaire. The form complied with IRB

compliance regulations and requirements. The informed consent form included the

following information to be acknowledged for the interviewee's participation: (a)

participation was voluntary, (b) participants were not being paid or receiving any

incentives for their involvement in the study,(c) withdrawal from the study was possible

without penalty, (d) if feeling discomfort during the interview session, participants had

the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview altogether, (e)

participants were audio-recorded, (f) participants and their company's name remained

anonymous, and (g) participants received a copy of the signed consent form.

Furthermore, I included the purpose of the study, the interview structure, and

consent to audio record the interview, sample questions that I asked before the

conversation, how I planned to utilize the collected data from the interview, procedures

for data collection storage and for how long, and my contact information. The next point

of contact was completing the interviews for the study. The last point of contact was to

share the results of the study with the participants if they have a desire to be informed.

The collected data was stored securely on a password protected word processor document

to protect the confidentiality of the participants and will be destroyed after five years.

In academic research, participants are required to know that their participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw from the study at any time before or during the study (Mealer & Jones, 2014). Bellone, Navarick, and Mendoza (2012) contended that participants withdraw due to dispositional and situational factors such as discomfort and time restraints. Thorpe (2014) suggested examining subsequent methodologies and ethical issues before the study to determine the best course of action following a withdrawal before it occurs. After the interviews, I destroyed any documentation that was relative to the participants of this study.

Data Collection Instruments

I used an interview and a demographic questionnaire to collect data. Before participating, each executive completed a demographic questionnaire about their gender identity, education level, years in the streaming or technology industry, and their professional title in their company. After completing the demographic questionnaire, the participants' were notified via telephone or email, if applicable that (a) they were volunteering to participate in an interview that was stoppable at any time, (b) there was an audio recording of the interview, and (c) transcription of the interview was not distributed. The benefits of using a questionnaire are that it's a simple method of obtaining data; it's less time consuming to complete. Researchers use questionnaires to gather data from a broader scattered sample.

As the researcher conducting semistructured interviews, I used active listening skills and other communication theories to cognize body language, non-verbal communication, intonation, and silence. I was the primary instrument because I observed,

listened to, and interpreted first-hand data collected from the interviews of seven digital-media and or technology executives located in New York State and California. The open-ended questions asked were aimed to gather pertinent and direct information from executives who used strategies to address DIT to maintain marketplace sustainability. The researcher visualizes, hears, and interprets the data, which makes the researcher the primary data collection tool of the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). Researchers use semistructured interviews to increase the potential of the validity and reliability of the research results (Carcone, Tokarz, & Ruocco, 2015).

The use of member checking helps the researcher improve the fittingness of a study, which includes applicability and internal validity (Creswell, 1994). Member checking is also a technique for exploring the credibility of results from the respondent's answers to the interview questions and other data collection instruments for the study (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). Member checking also serves different purposes in qualitative research. Iivari (2018) contended that member checking might increase the validity and credibility of research, and or it may motivate invitations for informants to take more of a part in the research process, co-constructing the research outcomes with the researcher.

I addressed reliability and validity using member checking and triangulation through identifying and recording reoccurring themes from the semistructured interviews. I used the triangulation of multiple data collection methods by comparing information from the participant's reactions to the questions such as voice inflection and intonation, interpretations of the questions, and body language during data analysis. Triangulation,

the multi-method approach to the investigation has two objectives, (a) validation, which

supports a common finding with the help of others and completeness, and (b)

complements the date with new results to find new information or get additional pieces to

the overall puzzle (Ashour, 2018). Manning and Kunkel (2014) affirmed that participants

provide more detailed responses when asked open-ended questions. Study participants

will receive a list of the open-ended research questions for the semistructured interviews.

Furthermore, participants will receive a demographic questionnaire before the

semistructured interview takes place. All supporting appendices are in Section 3 of this

study.

Data Collection Technique

Researchers use data collection methods to analytically gather evidence about the

focus of the research (Yin, 2018). Researchers use data collection techniques such as (a)

interviews, (b) words from participant observation field notes, (c) focus groups, (d)

transcripts and journals, (e) written questions, and (f) thematic analysis to attain

triangulation (Clark & Vealé, 2018). Zhou and Nunes (2013) asserted that conducting

semistructured interviews is a very effective method of receiving specific details

addressing the research question. I used semistructured questions to find out strategies

digital-media and technology executives use to address disruptive innovation technology.

I gathered in-depth information about the participates opinions and perceptions relating to

the research topic.

To access participant prospects, I used social media platforms such as Twitter,

Facebook, and LinkedIn using keywords technology, video streaming, Netflix, and

disruptive innovation. I reviewed the participant's profiles to determine if they fit the criteria for participating in the study. I sent a request of invitation to 25 prospects that met the eligibility criteria. The remaining responders beyond the amount needed for the study were used as back up participants when withdrawals occurred. The participants did not receive incentives for volunteering to participate in this study.

I used an interview and a demographic questionnaire to collect data. Before participating, each participant completed a demographic questionnaire about their gender identity, education level, years in the streaming or technology industry, and their professional title in their company. Following the completion of the demographic questionnaire, the participants received a notification that (a) they were volunteering to participate in an interview that was stoppable at any time, (b) the interview was audio recording (c), and assurances that the interview transcription would not be distributed.

The advantages and disadvantages of using an interview protocol are that the participants and the researcher had written and informed consent to conduct the interview. Another advantage of the study was the participant's awareness of the interview questions and expectations during the interview. This protocol is standard across many professional fields. However, the disadvantages are that the interviewee may discontinue the study at any time, the interviewee may not want to answer the demographic questions, and the interview may be longer than the 45 minutes allotted for the interview due to extended responses. The pilot study process is as follows: I completed a field test of the interview questions. The purpose of this field test revealed the effectiveness and the clarity of the demographic questionnaire and the interview

questions used to conduct this study. I also provided a description of generated data for each of the data collection methods.

The initial contact with the participant before the study began was to sign a confidentiality agreement Recruitment included a sign-up sheet and an emailed consent form to potential participants. Participants completed a demographic questionnaire survey and answered the main research question. If there was a data management breach, the disclosed information was not a part of the study, and new participants were selected. Collected data were destroyed if breached in any way. Furthermore, if it was a participant that caused the breach, he/she was disqualified from the study. I restarted the research with new participants and destroyed all previous participant's information. A pipeline of 20 additional participants was available to restart the investigation.

Data Organization Technique

Researchers can achieve useful data analysis utilizing data organization techniques (De Waal, Goedegebuure, & Tan Akaraborworn, 2014). Palominos, Palominos, Cordova, and Diaz (2017), contended that data management could cause a complication because of different factors related to storage, organization, processing, and analysis of records. Research data should be organized according to the time in which they originate, whether as instrumental records or as a result of processing. I used password protected word processing documents as an electronic data filing system to organize data for easy recovery and data examination. I used NVivo 11 software to upload data from MS Word for analysis; created password-protected folders to separate each participant labeled as anonymous- participant number, then created password-

protected files within the folders labeled, themes. I will delete and shred all paper and electronic documents after five years.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore innovative technological strategies that some executives of digital-media corporations use to maintain marketplace sustainability for addressing DITs. The overarching question is, What innovative technological strategies are digital-media executives using to maintain marketplace sustainability and address disruptive innovation technologies? I analyzed data relating to the opinions and perceptions of individuals in a social context. Flick (2014) asserted that qualitative data analysis encompasses cataloging and explanation of declarations, various resources, or cases to define a phenomenon. Haanstra et al. (2013) affirmed that data analysis comprises category development and recurrent coding themes. Organizing the collected information is the first step in data analysis, followed by data perusal, classification, and synthesis (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013).

The primary data collection method for this study was interviewing. The preparation for collecting interview data for analysis consisted of transcribing raw data from audio recordings of the interviews and coding responses utilizing a CAQDAS - NVivo. Participants received a copy of the transcription via email. Roller & Lavrakas, (2015) suggested researchers avoid discrepancies, verified accuracy through compared transcription and audio recorded results, and made corrections if needed. The initial coding process consisted of the line by line software coding of keywords and concepts. To identify key themes in this study, I used a thematic analysis to explore the data in the

study. This process aided in interpreting the research evidence and supporting the study's conclusions. I used methodological triangulation in this study. I used results from several qualitative methods to gather information such as interviews and a demographic questionnaire from each participant. Comparing the results from the interviews and demographic questionnaires helped establish validity and determine if similar results were present between participants and key themes amongst participants.

Discovering thematic identification is an essential duty in qualitative research (Guest, 2006). According to Bulmer (1979), Maxwell (1996), and Strauss (1992), thematic identification originates from the literature review, subject-matter-experts peer agreement of professional definitions, logical constructs, researchers' values, theoretical orientation, and personal experience with the subject matter. Therefore, I focused on the key themes and correlated them with the literature and conceptual framework by summarizing the literature, surveying sub-topics found through the data collected, linking how the research related to the topic, and analyzing the literature by comparing the state or quality of the literature**.**

Reliability and Validity

Moon et al. (2016), stated that the elements of quality that could be used by reviewers and readers to evaluate qualitative research are: dependability, creditability, and confirmability. *Dependability* is the consistency and reliability of the research findings and the degree to which the research procedures are documented, allowing an external researcher to follow the research process. *Creditability* refers to the real value of the actual meanings of the participant's responses. *Confirmability* demonstrates that the

results link to the conclusions in a method that can be replicated, and *transferability* refers to the degree in which the findings described in the study are useful to theory, practice, and future research.

Reliability

Reliability relates to the measurability of a research instrument to yield consistent results and defines the degree serving the purpose of the items prepared to measure the accuracy of the research findings (Leedy & Ormond, 2013; Sahin, 2018). Accessing the integrity of qualitative research is the root of trustworthiness criteria. Guba (1981) raised four trustworthiness concerns: (a) truth value, how do we know if we have factual findings? (b) applicability, how do we apply the results in other settings or with other respondents? (c) consistency, how do we know if the findings will be repeating amongst participants? and (d) neutrality? How do we know if the conclusions from participants and are not biased?

Triangulation improves the reliability of collected data through related interpretations and facts from varying sources converging and relating to the same event. The existence of triangulation reduces researcher bias and cross-examines the integrity of the interviewee's responses. Using the formation of triangulation entails utilizing a multiplicity of methods, investigators, sources, and theories to attain substantiating evidence (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). The increased dependability and credibility of sources serve as evidence because it strengthens the triangulation of the study (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2015). I collected data using semistructured interviews and a single

demographic questionnaire for each participant. These methods enhanced the dependability and credibility of my research findings.

Following interview guidelines and protocol, I addressed dependability and credibility. Additionally, I utilized an auditable coding system of themes and participants, member checks, to eliminate any research biases while analyzing and interpreting the results, and consistent data comparison amongst participants to confirm transferability. I emailed my interpretations to participants for examination, accurateness, and validation. The dependability, claim, argument, and evidence (Sujan, Smith, & Harrison, 2006), of this research study, was established utilizing detailed recorded accounts of the process of the study, enabling future researchers to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results.

Validity

Shenton (2004) and Guba (1981) proposed four criteria that require qualitative researchers in pursuit of a trustworthy study to consider: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability. The validity in qualitative research involves transferability, the extent to which the finds are transferable to the context of other participants, and confirmability (Anney, 2014). Transferability was achieved and established when I provided readers with evidence that my research was pertinent to other streaming-platform settings, industry and marketplace circumstances, previous and future eras of DIT, and targeted populations. Validity refers to the accuracy, credibility, and meaningfulness of a research study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). Hongjing and Hitchcock (2018) suggested establishing credibility, the specific procedures

employed, such as the line of questioning pursued in the data gathering sessions, and the methods of data analysis derived from successful comparable projects. Credibility is also established based on the background, qualifications, and experience of the investigator in the field of small business and through member checking. I member checked each participant's experience immediately following their concluded response to each question. I paraphrased and repeated the received responses to the participants to ensure that I avoided biases and achieved accuracy, comprehension, and clarity of their experiences.

Bassey (1981) proposed that if experts believe their situation to be like that defined in the study, they may relate the results to their positions, which will make it easier for transferability to occur for the reader. Confirmability is a qualitative researcher's equivalent apprehension to impartiality; thus, ensuring taking measures to verify that the results are actual experiences and ideas of the participants', and does not include the researcher's biases or preferences (Shenton, 2004). The audit trail is critical to this process to have observers replicate the study through the researcher's procedural descriptions and investigative decisions. Therefore, I performed an audit trail for this study.

Transition and Summary

In section 2, I reiterated the purpose of this study and the rationale for conducting this research. I outlined the role of the researcher, participants, research method and design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection instruments, data organization techniques, data analysis, and reliability and validity. In Section 3, I present

my research findings, the application to professional practice, the implications for social

change, recommendations for action, a proposal for further research, reflections,

conclusion, and any appendices included in this study.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore innovative technological strategies that some executives of digital-media corporations used to maintain marketplace sustainability for addressing DITs. I used Christensen's (1997) disruptive theory as the conceptual framework and Roger's (1962) DOI theory to explore my research question. I interviewed seven executives of top-performing digital-media, streaming technology corporations operating with headquarters within New York and California.

To achieve methodological triangulation, I collected data using a demographic questionnaire, semistructured interviews, and NVivo 12 software for gathering thematic phenomenon and maintaining the validity and reliability of the research. The active participants for my study were labeled P1, P2, P4, P5, P6, P7, and P8. P3 withdrew from the study. Each participant of my study had three to twenty-five years' experience in digital media. P1 and P2 were chief executive officers (CEOs) in the streaming-video industry. P4 was a technical engineering manager. P5 was a marketing technology executive. P6 was a senior brand and marketing director; P7 was a vice president of over-the-top (OTT), which refers to devices that go over a cable box to give users access to tv content, streaming, and digital media. P8 was a business development executive for an unplugged video-streaming tablet TV.

After the interviews, I conducted member checking, used interview notes, and NVivo to identify the reoccurring themes from participant's feedback. The four emerging

themes were: (a) teamwork, with a subtheme of decision-making; (b) data collection, with subthemes of partnerships and market studies; (c) budgeting, with subthemes of pricing and cost; and (d) corporate governance, with subthemes of differentiation, barriers, and marketing management.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question for this study was: What innovative technological strategies are digital-media executives using to maintain marketplace sustainability and address DITs? I used Christensen's (1997) disruptive innovation theory and Roger's (1962) diffusion of innovation theory as the conceptual frameworks for this study. I used audio recorded semistructured interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the strategies executives use in the video-streaming industry. During the interviews, participants responded to open-ended questions regarding their experiences, organizational value, and strategy. I organized and standardized the interview process and gained insight into the participant's experiences utilizing the interview protocol (Appendix A) and the research and interview questions (Appendix B).

After the interviews, I thanked all participants for their willingness to participate in my study. Then, utilizing NVivo 12, I transcribed each interview and revised and edited the transcripts according to the recorded audio files, as some had been mistranscribed during the NVivo transcription. I also used member checking during the interviews to confirm and ensure the accuracy of my interpretations and to clarify any vague, complex, or confusing statements. In conformity with the invitational letter and consent form, after I transcribed the interviews, I stored the audio recordings in a

password protected electronic file. I labeled them by participant number to ensure their confidentiality.

I triangulated the participants' semistructured interview responses to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena and to test validity through the convergence of information from different sources. I used methodological triangulation with (a) a questionnaire, (b) a professional publication, and (c) peer-reviewed journal articles. The questionnaire used for triangulation was a self-designed demographic survey that captured the participants' ages, nationality, education level, geographic location, and years of experience in the video streaming and or digital media industries. The professional publication used was *Streaming Media Magazine* in print and online versions. According to Streamingmedia.com (2019), Streaming Media Magazine is the premier online destination for professionals seeking industry news, information, articles, directories, strategies, solutions, and services. I reached data saturation when my data collection efforts failed to afford new information after seven interviews.

During data analysis, I used NVivo 12 software to assist me in coordinating, coding and interpreting the data. The four themes emerged from the seven participant demographic questionnaires and interviews. In this section, I discuss the relationship between each primary and subtheme, and the literature reviewed in this study. The findings of this study revealed strategies used by some digital-media, video streaming executives to address DIT and maintain marketplace sustainability. The major and minor themes that materialized from the data during my investigation were consistent with the information described in the peer-reviewed articles used in Section 2. Subsequently, the

findings of this study transmitted a common accord within the systematized body of

knowledge for digital media and video streaming strategies, as it corresponds with the

broader conceptual frameworks of DIT and the DI theories.

In the following, I present the findings of my study in correlation to the emergent

themes and subthemes. Moreover, I connect the study findings to the conceptual

frameworks of this study: Christensen's (1997) theory of disruptive innovation and

Roger's (1962) DI theory. For each major theme and subtheme, I identify what study

findings confirm, disconfirm, or extend the body of knowledge on disruptive innovation,

as illustrated in the literature review, as well as updated peer-reviewed articles considered

since writing the proposal. View the table: Participants' responses that collaborate with

themes (see Appendix C).

Theme 1: Teamwork

Participants revealed the importance of teamwork and how it shaped the

organization's strategies. The theme of teamwork emerged from Interview Question 1.

All participants indicated that most plans formed throughout several departments working

together. Kholed, Hassan, and Maon (2019) emphasized that today, employees work in

collaboration to achieve company goals and to deliver excellent and useful services to

their patrons. Each executive shared various methods of teamwork and how it works

within the organization.

P1 uses three levels in the strategy process with the executive team. The three

levels focused on are organizational goals, brand positioning, and psychological trends.

Level 1, organizational goals include the current vision and the future vision of the

company, impact, growth, relevancy, core offerings, revenue, and unique selling proposition. Level 2, psychological trends, act as the organizational vehicle, which includes the workforce, the product, the promotions, and the distribution channels. Level 3, brand positioning, is based on the marketing and tightening of a comparative competitive strategy and creativity. Creativity is one of the most critical factors contributing hugely to the growth of the economy and maybe the key to modern-day organizational survival (Sik, 2016). The most significant digital platforms are seizing most of the digital industry's growth; the strategic options for these companies will certainly decrease to incessant bouts of economizing, resulting in a merger or company consolidation (Vollmer and Bennin, 2018).

P2 follows the vision, mission, and traditional classic business model for the strategy building process of the team. P4 orchestrates teamwork through a combination of a two-way conversation, original ideas, and conducting two brainstorming sessions. Changes in the concept of teamwork correlate with changes in technology; and, is perceived by an extended crew and managed to prevent error and mitigate consequences (Tullo, 2019). P5 uses partners, reactively and proactively, external agencies, and weekly meetings. Similarly, P6's strategy building process is to use various department leaders who gather for meetings to discuss content, asking the team, "what can influence the general public to watch our content?" The team's discussion also revolves around making content accessible and user-friendly while working with the network's streaming apps and social media platforms. Hussain (2019) specified that one of the best ways to influence consumer behavior is to use sensory marketing strategies: visual, auditory,

olfactory, tactile, and gustative. These innovative sensory marketing strategies stimulate the customer's brand relationship, making an emotional connection that enhances brand loyalty (Hussain, 2019). However, some executives use data sets and analytics.

Maboudian and Rezaie (2017) communicated that data mining techniques help to analyze empirical data and discover useful knowledge and relationships among attributes and variables. P7 uses a collective of data mining and business analytics for the start of their strategy building process; the results from the data collection and analysis determines what type of strategy method would be used at that moment. P9's team viewed the video streaming platform as a service, not a product. However, the streaming service was used for a tablet tv and marketed as *Unplugged* for the corporate strategic positioning in the marketplace.

Decision- Making. Decision making at different levels of management is becoming increasingly difficult, given the rapid evolution of science and technology (Daniela, 2019). The subtheme, decision-making, is the executive's use of preemptive planning. P1, P2, and P6 agreed that the decisions made with the teams are not guaranteed solutions. Instead, the determination created, then tested, and later implemented if the test was successful in the marketplace. However, if it is not successful, the team continues to strategize until a strategy works. Fabbri (2016) declared that building a strategic vision to be translated into present-day decisions and actions evolved through three broad generalizations: (a) forecasting technological focus, (b) bringing in industry and market perspective and (c) adding social and user-oriented perspective. P2 and P6 clarified that the implementation of several strategies coincides

with what is trending in the market. P6 stated that strategies are "thrown against a wall to see what sticks; whatever sticks is the new strategy for use."

Additionally, executives are always thinking ahead of the market. P2 stated, "we strategize to disrupt our organization with emerging technology innovations every day; if we are not disrupting our company, we cannot possibly maintain sustainability in the industry." Murray, Agard, and Barajas (2018) suggested using segment-level forecasting, which utilizes data mining and forecasting tools that result in a higher degree of customer-level forecast accuracy than traditional methods. P4's company thrives on anticipatory devising because their company is one of the top industry leaders and trend-setters of the social and digital media culture. Lalicic and Dickinger (2019) asserted that users' innovative traits influence their online creative behavior, self-efficacy influences consumers' perceptions of platform conditions, and supporting platform conditions support user-driven innovations.

The importance of digital marketing is continuously growing, and new communication opportunities made available by the development of digital technology shed more light on the technology trendsetter phenomenon (Reale, 2019). Digital-media leaders and technology innovation trend-setters disrupt the marketplace to keep it flourishing and profitable. Utilizing partners, such as contractual media consultants, third-party vendors, and outsourced media companies, is another strategy some executives are using to address disruptive innovation in the streaming-video industry.

Theme 2: Data Collection

Participants disclosed that timely and effective data collection is the driving force to having a profitable company. Grover, Chiang, Liang, and Zhang (2018), stated that the ultimate success of a big data analytics (BDA) project, a complex process used to examine large amounts of data to uncover market trends, correlations, and customer preferences, assisted executives with realizing their strategic business value, which gives the organization a competitive advantage. P7 leverages its brand through service and solutions. They develop new strategies into new markets from applying new data sets with new verbiage and terminology while attempting to solve problems through analytic tools. They have a collective of set parameters used in various industries; their data sets are communal through three different companies.

Competitors in the streaming-video industry use some of the same partners and external vendors for data collection; this is called data-crowdsourcing. Liu, Xia, Zhang, and Wang (2016) argued that there are technology risks that negatively affect data crowdsourcing performance. However, Silva, Rocha Dacorso, Barreto Costa, and Di Serio (2016) expressed that external innovation agents can help strengthen organizations. Nonetheless, P1 uses efficiency and inexpensive experiments for data collection. The attributes of efficiency and inexpensive experiments are undisclosed.

Partnerships. The first subtheme for data collection is employing external partners to provide industry information from market studies for organizational advancement and sustainability. P2 utilizes external partners and customer-based data sets for data collection. According to all study participants, these external partners gather

information and decide on the video streaming platform's content libraries and

distribution choices. The external partners use current market trends to choose which data

sets are most appropriate for use. They also decide who the target markets should be

according to business analytics; and what and how the next execution of marketing

strategies and campaigns reach current and potential customers. P4 uses market studies

that formulate through other external marketing and media companies. P6 admitted to

using outside vendors to keep their companies competitive. The advancements in

computer, mobile, and Internet technologies have had a substantial impact on

organizational competitive advantage. A modern *decision support system* (DSS), an

interactive software-based system that collects, organizes, and analyzes business data,

can help in building and maintaining competitive advantages (Daniela, 2019). P5 stated,

"we know we are not the industry-leading company, so why try to be them; we know

where we rank in the market; so, we want our company to be its best at whichever level

we acquire in this industry." P5 uses partner ecosystems and alpha-beta tests in their data

collection efforts.

     Moon et al. (2016) articulated that because of the increased usage rates of tablet

PCs and smartphones, online video consumption has accelerated. This phenomenon has

caused several challenges in providing video streaming services more efficiently in the

mobile environment requiring the use of network streaming-video apps. P6 disclosed

that external media consultants provide data analytics for their company, which helps

them navigate their content libraries, target markets, and marketing strategies. One of

their most recent approach, gained from an external media consultant, was to add the option of viewership through an app.

P7 uses unique in-house tools and data sets, which sometimes requires a new strategy; they work with external vendors to give them information on who and what is trending in the market and how the company can capitalize on the emergence of these trends. P8 did not use external partners for data collection; instead, they used pilot tests for the *Unplugged* tv tablet. However, P8 used external partners for capital funding and distribution of the pilot products. External agents, partners, vendors, and competitors formulate the streaming with video companies utilizing their expertise in market studies and data mining that addresses *DIT* and maintains industry sustainability.

Market Studies. The second subtheme for data collection was market studies. All the participants agreed that following consumer behavior trends and desires helped to create innovative marketing strategies. P1 stated that their organization focuses on the psychological trends in the market. Barry and Weinstein (2009) declared that psychographic segmentation had revealed more powerful target market insights while providing marketers with a springboard for adapting selling propositions and tailoring the marketing mix. P6 stated that the organization follows new consumer trends, data, and new technological advances in the market. Venera and Suzana (2019), posited that consumer behavior is an essential aspect of the way marketing departments develop their strategies; and, today, many corporate executives realize that we live in a consumer-driven society.

P2 stated that the organization watches market trends as well, and companies going against the market trends, develop their market, attacking common business problems with creativity. P4 stated that they use social media and their key performance indicators (KPIs) to assist with marketing strategies based on market trends. Marketing KPIs evaluate the overall marketing effectiveness within the context of business or destination impacts; KPIs provide an understanding of contemporary marketing evaluation and measure results from the marketing and promotional activity (World Tourism Organization and European Travel Commission, 2017).

P5 stated that his organization also follows data, and alpha and beta tests; but, also uses their brand name in their marketing strategies. Collaboration between marketing and communication is essential, especially in the realization of brand positioning (Kostelijk & Alsem, 2020). P7 stated that their company creates new company verbiage and terminology, while P8 gathers market study information from product pilot tests. Pilot tests determine if the procedures and products are well-coordinated and able to generate results (DeBar, Jarvik, Tuzzio, & Vazquez, 2017).

Collectively, all participants advised that strategy formation should rely on consumer behavioral trends. Executives should watch and follow all consumer markets that relate to innovation and technology, even those not within their industry. Furthermore, organizations must brand effectively. Participants with the delivery option of using an app or social media for their company stated that most of their company's revenue relied upon their apps and how consumers use them for viewing streaming

entertainment. Therefore, the consensus for maintaining marketplace sustainability is to follow the market trends.

The United States-based digital-media companies flourish from online usage, company apps, and social media platforms, explicitly streaming video companies. Digital-media and technology executives of streaming video companies use external media vendors through partnerships and market studies for data collection to address DIT and to maintain marketplace sustainability.

Theme 3: Budgeting.

Company sustainability in the marketplace base on having enough money to innovate, keep up with trends, expand in the digital media industry, and remain relevant in streaming video. Strategies link to budgets (Enthoven, 2019). When the executives responded to me about their business model barriers, 80% of the participants expressed budgetary concerns. Savage (2019) stated that balanced or unbalanced budgets influence the economy or determine spending priorities for companies, which influences consumer pricing. There are many influential factors to consider when pricing a product or service. Value-based selling includes understanding customer needs, customer segmentation, customer selection, value proposition development, value-based pricing, and value quantification, which are critically important in the context of pricing strategy implementation (Hinterhuber & Liozu, 2019).

Pricing and Cost. Pricing products and services require market and financial knowledge, patience, and a strategic effort. A restricted set of personality traits is associated with sales manager effectiveness (Hinterhuber & Liozu, 2019). P1 stated

that the organization was affected by a *sunk cost system*, defined as the lack of recovering

funds used in an entity for emergence or growth. It was challenging to achieve an initial

profit because pricing services had many internal and external influences. P2 stated that

their pricing model includes cost versus results and their competitor's pricing model.

Therefore, for example, if one competitor were charging $4.99 to customers for the

subscription services, then the other organization would charge $4.49, giving consumers

a choice based on price and not content availability. P4 stated that their pricing

incorporates the cost to the customer versus cash flow. P5 stated that competitor pricing

influences their pricing; "it was complicated to figure out what price to charge

subscribers for their service because there was already a streaming video giant in the

industry to compete with to gain customers." P6 based pricing on data analysis results.

Chiu and Lee (2017) asserted that the corporation, brand image, price functionality, and

appearance would be the critical success factors of product sales.

The study participants agreed that financing the venture from the start-up phase,

as a new entrant to the market, and its present position in the streaming video industry

was uncomfortable. P8 stated that putting prototypes on the market did not perform as

planned and money used to manufacture and market the devices could not recover as

expected. The costs affiliated with continuing the launch of the device surpassed the faith

that U.S. based venture capitalists, unlike British venture capitalists, were willing to

invest. All study participants experienced having a lack of money for the company to

succeed within various stages of product and service development. Some of the study

companies, however, prospered after continuous attempts to market their product or service to venture capitalists in the digital media and technology industries.

Theme 4: Corporate Governance.

Corporate governance encompasses the efficient processes and procedures that govern, regulate, and sustain the organization. The corporation's code of ethics governs the operations and management of an organization. Company operations, processes, and laws have changed due to corporate codes of ethics, consumer state and federal protection laws, and technological customer data storage laws. Some organizations are well equipped to capitalize on disruption, some minimize its importance to their business model, while others struggle to defend their interests.

Differentiation. The first emerged subtheme was to focus on content library development and competitive differentiation. All participants stressed the importance of knowing what and how to develop specific content for their brand identity and brand promotion. The study participants have branded their companies on the Internet, through local television station advertising, and on other various media channels such as billboards, radio commercials, sponsorship, and community- growth-related partnerships as a strategy to generate revenue. Content library development links to the marketing strategies of each company. P7's content development came from uniquely positioned data sets from external companies. At the same time, P8 stated that major networks and other video streaming companies control content development, as the streaming service offered to consumers was a product, not a service. P8's consumers paid for the device once, not monthly with access to all streaming companies, broadcasting networks, and

cable companies. P5 stated that library development comprises of consumer requests and competitor's position in the video streaming marketplace. These three examples show how content library development varies based on product or service offerings, consumer desire, and corporate competitive position in the industry.

Another aspect of content library development is branding. P7 stated that their branding leverage relies on service and solutions. Through service and solutions, the company was able to develop new strategies into new markets. Applying new collective data sets with new verbiage and terminology to attempt to solve problems through analytic tools helped with developing new strategies. P5 stated that the corporate strategy for brand positioning in the marketplace was to come up with an effective slogan for a product that delivered streaming services. P1 stated that executives should not rely on the market or one platform; however, brand leverage positioning should rely on customer satisfaction.

All participants stated that their companies used data and other collected information from their competitors' experiences in the marketplace. By paying attention to what their competitors were doing, they had an opportunity to make predictive inclinations in the streaming video market. P4 stated that because their company is primarily a social media platform, they needed to use national secondary data from other streaming companies to help develop their video streaming sector. P2 stated that the company contracts with major video streaming platform companies to assist with differentiation. P8 asserted that their product provided an *unplugged* option for an all-in-

one device, which was what differentiated them in the market. P8 also advised digital-media executives to differentiate, consolidate, and protect your technology.

Barriers. The second subthemes to emerge from theme four were barriers and how they each participant addresses them. P1 stated that their organizational barriers were staffing for expansion and funding. P1 addressed this barrier by making decisions based on results and reaching out for help from technology experts in the industry. P2 responded that money was a barrier; there were many instances where there was a shortage of funding to get innovation on the market. P2 stated that they address funding issues through learning from the mistakes that were made and borrowing money from people in the technology industry because it is difficult to get a bank loan. P2 indicated that banks do not provide loans to technology companies. P8 stated raising capital was a barrier as well.; In providing further detail, P8 explained that pricing, the lack of U. S. based venture capitalist availability, and a willingness to invest in the company was a barrier. To address and eliminate this barrier, the executives sought out U. S. based venture capitalists and returned the money to lenders and products to manufacturers to eliminate debt and liability.

P6 stated that barriers to their business model were ensuring the use of the correct data. Working closely with the technology team to identify consumer viewership and create a full marketing plan addresses this barrier. P7 stated that federal and state regulations were barriers to their business models; and that consumer protection in the technology-driven world is challenging to accomplish. However, executives heavily monitor regulations for corporations that store data, use data sets, or gathers demographic

information from consumers. Utilizing unique reports, customizing segments, and trying new strategies eliminated the barriers.

P4 stated that the organization could not compete with their competitor's content availability. They divided attention to the core problem with the competitor's KPIs and dealt with the whole demand and corporate governance to address this barrier. P5 stated that the organizational barriers were pricing and competition; so, to address this issue, they built a one-stop solution where consumers can get all the content they wanted and built an app. The competitors already had apps, so it was just the right thing to do (P5). Operational barriers must be addressed to *DI,* enhance corporate market growth, and maintain marketplace sustainability.

Marketing Management. Marketing management ties directly to marketplace disruption. Marketing management demands sophisticated decision-making involving vital decisions underpinned by the marketing philosophy designed to target a specific market (Kotler & Keller, 2016). This subtheme connects to corporate governance because without a team to manage marketing strategies, marketplace sustainability cannot materialize. According to Delener (2019), disruption is discontinuous thinking applied to the task of marketing and advertising; marketing and advertising manager's jobs are to create and improve on their brands for favorable marketplace disruption. Innovative companies have discovered that it is not enough just to follow customer needs—they must lead them (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Therefore, executives create marketing campaigns to reach their target markets.

P1 responded that the organization does not rely on a specified market; instead, they just try new things. P2 stated that the organization's motto is, "if we do not put ourselves out of business, how will we have sustainability?" P4 stated that they organize their corporate message to consumers using outside research companies, and then they evaluate worth. P5 response was through differentiation, environmental safety, highlighting the size of the subscription base, and content library. P6 organizes the corporate message through consumer trends, new advances in the marketplace, apps, partners, and their competitor's habits. P7 organizes the corporate message through service and solutions; while, P8 focused its message on the product's features of being *unplugged*, OTT, DVR, open architecture television (OATV), all in one device. Customer-focused executives use internal and external company evaluations, consumer trends, and customer service as ways to organize their corporate message.

Participants disclosed the methods they use to organize their corporate content and corporate message for creating innovative strategies. They also disclosed what successful current technologically innovative strategies leverage their corporate brand. The study participants' responses directly aimed toward their marketing strategies. Several study participants stated that they follow the market trends of consumers, general business, technology emergences, digital media, and the streaming video industry. Direct insight into the responses are as follows: P1 responded that the organization's marketing strategy is to follow psychological trends in the market; P2 watches the market as well. The detailed account of what P2 records in the marketplace was undisclosed during the interview as there are many methods available for use.

P4 currently uses KPIs, and the organization uses social media platforms for marketing their company's content. P5 uses the brand name and takes advantage of data and alpha-beta tests. P6 follows consumer trends, data, and new technological advances in the market. Delener (2019) explained that if marketers and advertisers want their brands to grow, and grow profitably, then something must intrude on consumers' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Marketers must disrupt these ordinary, comfortable patterns of non-choice this inclination toward disinclination. P7 creates new company verbiage and terminology to update its brand in the market to combat competitors utilizing the same corporate message. Alsem (2019) argued that disruption is about finding the strategic idea, which breaks and overturns a convention in the marketplace. Therefore, P8 highlighted the product's features because the product was a tablet that supported streaming capabilities without requiring consumers to purchase a monthly subscription. This strategic idea creates a disruption and a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

When an organization must drastically change two of the three primary business model constructs to survive, it has been strategically disrupted (Alsem, 2019). Marketing management connects to the conceptual framework of DI because it drives market change and disruption in market stabilized corporations. New technological innovations for products and services are emerging every day. Amazon Prime Video executives are now offering a new service option to members and potential members. Beck (2019) exposed that consolidating all of one's streaming subscriptions can be performed on Amazon's platform.

Other types of significant consolidations are occurring between leading streaming video corporations and smaller ones. For example, Buckman (2019), a featured columnist for Media Post, shared that there was a significant shift in the streaming video industry in 2019 due to mergers and consolidations. This shift in the streaming video industry sector began when Disney bought Hulu in May 2019; and, Apple TV launched a new platform in January 2020. Warner Media rolled out a new streaming service, HBO-Max, launching in May 2020. NBC Universal executives announced they would begin a streaming service called Peacock, launching in April 2020.

Debby, for $400, seeks to end your need to toggle between every streaming service app by creating artificial intelligence (Al) based search engine for your tv and wants to consolidate subscription services by replacing any other streaming device or smart speaker (Rayome, 2020). Debby, which emerged in 2020, is supposed to alleviate cord-cutters who are experiencing TV streaming service overload and getting tired of endlessly scrolling through Netflix, Disney Plus, Hulu, and Amazon Prime Video. Other major digital-media streaming video companies have acquisitions, mergers, and or consolidations under negotiation with television networks, parent cable companies, and isolated cable networks (P4, 2019).

Overall, the findings of my study were to (a) create technological, marketing, and innovative strategies (b) listen to the market based on consumer behavior and market trends and (c) budget effectively, make sure the cost and pricing are competitive and comparable to the rest of the market. The participants also stated that they maintained

sustainability through marketing strategies, which included: (a) following marketing trends, (b) brand positioning, and (c) use of social media and apps.

<div align="center">**Applications to Professional Practice**</div>

The findings of this study have many applications to both digital-media executives and video streaming practitioners. Business strategy digital-media executives should consistently follow the market trends for technological emergences and advances; they should follow consumer behavior to maintain marketplace sustainability. The lack of effective strategy uses for the video streaming industry's business model, despite the substantial growth within the industry, has been a recurring theme in the streaming industry literature. Hasan, Jha, and Liu (2018b) conducted an online video streaming services survey; the results concluded that motive, psychological factors, lack of self-esteem, and lack of self-control influenced excessive usage. The findings of my study further extend the body of knowledge on the topic of strategy formation and the impact of DIT within the digital media industry. Explicitly, in streaming-video, as it incorporates within the conceptual framework, which provided proven and practical strategies from digital-media executives who have maintained marketplace sustainability from their business models and strategy usage.

The technological and innovative strategies that digital-media, video-streaming executives use to address disruptive innovation to maintain marketplace sustainability have beneficial applications to professional practice. The study revealed seven strategies advantageous to digital-media executives to help maintain sustainability in the marketplace of emerging technological innovations and advances that cause disruption.

The innovation and marketing strategies include (a) listen to the market, (b) use data sets, (c) use solution-based strategies, (d) budget effectively, (e) follow market trends, brand position effectively, and use social media and apps to reach consumers.

The presence and usage of video streaming services have increased in recent years, causing an enormous disruption in the cable broadcasting and movie theater industries; while also generating contentious debates around its contribution to the transformation of the television and movie industries. Birkinbine (2019) stated that in the wake of the transition to digital projection technology, the introduction provided a critical industry restructure which disadvantaged competitors that lacked access to technology; the technology itself was not the agent of change; but rather, the power and capital that underlie the technology. Numerous theorists considered whether consumers are saving more money through cutting cables. Strangelove (2015), asserted that cost was not the deciding factor; instead, the convenience of free online entertainment made the difference in cord usage as people tended to use the Internet more frequently for daily use. My findings also relate to social construction and contingency theories in the technology and digital media industries.

Emerging in the 1980s, social construction theory (SCOT) is a theory about the relationship between society and technology (Bijker, 2015). The premise of SCOT is that technology does not determine human action; but, human action shapes technology. Kulkarni (2017) professed that contingency theory generated a new way of thinking about organizational structure; the core assumptions were that organizations are open systems and that there is no best way of organizing a good fit between internal systems

and external environment. A significant reason to have a disruptive innovation strategy in place for ET is that it has a direct impact on consumer behavior and market trends in every industry today. Therefore, corporate executives must use anticipatory strategies to address DIT to maintain marketplace sustainability.

The results of my study could educate digital-media, specifically, streaming-video executives about how to manipulate and differentiate their corporate value and the distinctiveness of their product and service offerings. Creating personalized viewing experiences in new technology markets, streaming-video executives should continue to think beyond the current market technology and the product and service offerings that enhance their profitability and consumer loyalty to their brand. Focusing on the participant's experiences and effective marketing techniques, the findings of my study suggest that video streaming executives can attract a vast amount of potential long-standing customers, creating new user-friendly and convenient platform features, that cater to the needs and wants of the international streaming-video audience.

Implications for Social Change

The implications for positive social change included improving cost-effective video streaming options for consumers and the potential to advance business models for helping executives create innovative strategies to maintain marketplace sustainability and address disruptive innovation technology. The digital-media streaming industry has been one of the most rapidly expansive platforms of entertainment for consumers today. It has become the most sought-after source of convenient and user-friendly entertainment for patrons, causing frequent business model changes and organizational structure

disruptions, according to Foley (2019). Digital-media executives that can gage potential emergence in the market will have more success with addressing the strategies required to maintain marketplace sustainability. The integration of business sustainability models for socio-economic and environmental crises resolution is a social innovation (Starik, 2013). With altering traditional business models, executives can develop more creative, innovative strategies to remain relevant in the expanding streaming-video industry.

The findings of this study might generate awareness of the lack of sustainability strategies in the digital media industry, specifically, streaming-video platforms. Furthermore, the findings of this study may illustrate proven strategies that lead to more effective digital-media services, successively creating more jobs for the general public and aspiring digital-media executives in the areas of business strategy, marketing, technological advancement, and consulting. The findings may help increase local and international economies and taxable incomes. This study could also be beneficial to streaming-video leaders who want their product and service offerings to devise a DIT emergence into the current marketplace; while, incorporating new digital-media and streaming-video strategies.

Recommendations for Action

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore innovative technological strategies that some executives of digital-media corporations used to maintain marketplace sustainability for addressing DITs. Disruptive innovations exist and succeed when consumers cannot picture their lives without digital products that have become integral attributes of both every day and business life (Glinkina, Mikhailovna,

Regent, Sokolova, & Frolova, 2019). Based on the findings of my study, I propose several actions digital-media leaders can take to address disruptive innovation technology. Leaders should continue to: (a) monitor their competitive position in the streaming-video marketplace, (b) comprehend how consumer behavior and trending service offerings affect technological emergences, and (c) recognize how to adjust and revolutionize their business models.

The first action executives and leaders should adopt is monitoring their competitive advantages and disadvantages in the digital-media industry to maintain necessity, loyalty, and relevance with consumers. Achieving competitive advantage is based on customer value (Ghandi Arani, & Najmi, 2019). The second action executives should adopt the comprehension of how consumer behavior and trending service offerings affect technological emergences in the marketplace to provide consumers with what they want for streaming-video entertainment. Leaders should recognize that consumers do not pay for products and services; instead, they pay for benefits the products and services add to their lifestyles. The third action leaders should adopt is recognizing how to adjust and revolutionize their business models following consumer behavior trends, marketing methods, and their company's stratagems and aptitudes. This information is vital and relevant to the target audiences of this study.

The target audiences for the results of this study are broad in the sense of corporate governance and collaboration. Therefore, the first audience that should attend to the results of this study is any corporate executives who need to address DIT emergences while trying to maintain sustainability in their industry's marketplace. The

second audience that should attend to the results of this study is organizational leaders who want to establish, prioritize, and profit on their position as a disruptive innovator in the international streaming-video industry. The third audiences are new technology and digital-media marketplace entrants who are aspiring to be industry leaders in their professional field. The last audience includes those who are current digital-media, streaming-video, technology, business analysts, business strategists, disruptive experts, and consultants, and marketing executives.

The findings of this study explain the strategies executives use to address DIT while maintaining marketplace sustainability. However, this study also incorporates the varying methods of sustainability practices that current digital-media executives are using to leverage their corporate existence today. Furthermore, this study exposes proven strategies to increase positive corporate reputation, enhances recognizable corporate branding to patrons, creates effective marketing campaigns that reach and influence targeted markets, and addresses progressive and productive DIT strategies. The dissemination of the findings of this study could be presented through digital-media and streaming-video conferences, technology innovation conferences, and peer-reviewed journals that correlate to the topics of digital-media streaming of video, innovation management, business strategy innovation, and DIT business modeling. My plan for dissemination includes sharing the findings of this study with the participants and publishing this doctoral study in a peer-reviewed journal(s).

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore innovative technological strategies that some executives of digital-media corporations used to maintain marketplace sustainability for addressing DITs; additionally, the participants for this study included seven digital-media executives in New York and California who used effective strategies to innovate technology and maintain marketplace sustainability. Future research could explore several streaming media business questions such as: What is the consumer perspective on how and why they choose to pay for specific streaming products or services? Do the monthly subscription costs of streaming platforms affect the consumer's decision to purchase? What strategies do music streaming executives use for marketing and maintaining sustainability through the age of disruptive innovation technology? What collective strategies do both corporate (music and video) executives use to keep the streaming industry-relevant and sustainable. A list of potential questions for future qualitative studies on corporate strategies could include the following:

1. How does your business strategies influence consumer behavior and its corporate revenue outcome?

2. Are music streaming executives using the same strategies as video streaming executives to address DIT to maintain marketplace sustainability?

3. What strategies are both corporate (music and video) executives using to keep the streaming industry-relevant and sustainable?

Thus, in all research explorations, limitations exist. The first of the four limitations noted in Section 1 of this study was the lack of access to the actual streaming

customers. The focus of this was on the executive's experience and not the consumer's experiences. The second limitation of this study was using a qualitative research method that did not include data sets, which affected the reliability and validity of the results. The third limitation was that executives did not disclose trade secrets associated with their corporate business models and innovations. The final limitation of this study was that the focus solely targeted streaming-video; offering a limited lens of the entire streaming industry which causes the lack of a full scope of the digital media industry.

Gaining consumer experiences, not only digital-media executives and leaders, incorporating a mixed-methodology that would include data sets, having executive's full disclosure about company practices and trade secrets, and expanding the investigation to include all digital-media executives regardless of a specific field would be ways to address the limitations noted in Section 1 in future research.

Reflections

My knowledge of the digital media industry, specifically, in streaming video, increased while conducting this study. I remained curious yet, objective, and relied on the participant's responses to guide the results of the study's findings. My data collection included the use of the social media platform, LinkedIn, to connect with executives who fit the criteria for my study requirements. Each executive significantly contributed to the study, which may not have been possible without the use of this digital platform. Finding executives that had the time and commitment to interview was very challenging, though, utilizing the digital social platform, gave me many options to replace those executives who removed themselves from participating in the study.

Digital media made it possible for me to view participant's employment profiles, backgrounds, and years of experience in the digital media industry, making the participant sample reliable and valid for the study, but also allowing participants to view my picture, professional experiences, and educational background. Having a reciprocal view of each other's profile helped with building the academic and professional relationship between the study's participants and me. My understanding of the strategies that streaming-video executives use to address DIT to maintain marketplace sustainability expanded because of this study.

After completing this study, my thinking of the streaming industry has changed more positively. Initially, I thought that all the streaming-video companies used in-house executives to grow their businesses. Instead, I learned that most companies use outsourced digital-media consultants to: (a) elicit the most effective differentiation for their content libraries, (b) gather data-sets which supports data-analysis, and (c) advise the various technology and marketing teams on current or future market trends and their next innovative sustainability tactic.

Furthermore, I learned that some streaming-video executives do not lack strategies to leverage their organizations in the marketplace; however, they may lack the most effective team to support the corporation's needs for productivity and sustainability. I've learned that heavily relying on a team-based structure helps, digital-media, streaming-video, executives address DIT and maintain marketplace sustainability. I am deeply appreciative and grateful for the executives' willingness to participate and share

their experiences and industry knowledge with me that shaped the research findings of this study.

Conclusion

Streaming-video is created on a digital-media platform in which individuals watch television, movies, and other entertainment for its convenience and user-friendly capabilities. These platforms offer the opportunity for digital-media executives to reach billions of international consumers with just a few clicks and a cost-saving method compared to traditional brick and mortar buildings, movie theaters. Applying the theory of disruptive innovation, the purpose of this study was to explore the strategies that digital-media executives use to address DIT to maintain marketplace sustainability. The knowledge gained from this study's findings could help corporate executives create effective disruption strategies that could increase longevity in the streaming video industry. The implication for social change includes organizations' leaders acquiring new teams to strategize for the future of the company, which creates new jobs and better economies internationally.

The findings from interviewing seven participants who successfully addressed disruptive innovation and maintained marketplace sustainability revealed five themes: (a) teamwork, (b) data collection, (c) budgeting, and (d) corporate governance. With the increasing number of consumers utilizing streaming platforms for daily viewing entertainment, streaming executives should continue to focus on consumer behavior, market trends, and new technology disruptions in their industry to strengthen consumer loyalty to their brand.

The findings of this study reinforce that streaming-video services provide daily benefits for consumers and provide innovative ways for companies for marketing their products and services to the consumer to increase corporate revenue. The data and findings from the interviews held with the technology and innovation executives showed that the digital-media executives are continually preparing for new disruptions. P2 stated that within the corporation, the innovation and technology team work on disrupting themselves daily, reassuring that if they could disrupt their company's business model and practices, another competitor could too. Consequently, executives are thinking ahead of current practices of the industry to create their next competitive advantage and technological advancement; which, requires being attentive to consumer behavior, industry and market trends, and securing a position in the digital-media marketplace to maintain sustainability.

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Appendix A: Script Semistructured Interview Protocol

Welcome and thank you for your participation today. My name is LaTronya

Berry; and, I'm a doctoral candidate at Walden University conducting my study in partial

fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration.

Thank you for completing the demographic questionnaire, and this follow-up interview

will take about 30 to 60 minutes. It will include six questions regarding your experiences

and knowledge with the digital-media streaming industry and . I would like your

permission to audio record this interview so that I can accurately document your

responses to the questions. If at any time during the interview you wish to discontinue the

use of the recorder or the interview itself, please let me know.

All your responses are and will remain confidential. Your responses will be used

to develop a better understanding of how executives, like yourself, create and implement

strategies. The purpose of this study is to explore innovative technological strategies that

some executives of digital-media corporations use to maintain marketplace sustainability

for addressing DITs.

At this time, I would like to remind you of your written consent to participate in

this study. I am the responsible investigator, specifying your participation in the research

project: Successful Strategies to Address Disruptive Innovation Technologies in the

Digital-media Industry. We both have a dated copy, certifying that we agree to continue

this interview. You will receive one copy and I will keep the other secured, separate from

your reported responses. Thank you. Your participation in this interview is entirely

voluntary. If at any time you need to take a break or end without consequence, please let

me know. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Then, with your

permission, we will begin the interview.

Appendix B: Research and Interview Questions

Research Question:

What innovative technological strategies are digital-media executives using to maintain

marketplace sustainability and address disruptive innovation technologies?

Interview Questions:

1. What is your innovative strategy building process, and is it created by a team
   or an individual?

2. What current technologically innovative strategies leverage your corporate
   brand, and, based upon your experiences and data, why have these strategies
   been successful?

3. What were the principle barriers to implementing your current business
   model?

4. How were the principal barriers addressed?

5. In what ways are you organizing your corporate content and messaging for
   creating innovative strategies that can combat new or emerging marketplace
   technologies?

6. What additional information would you like to share about the successful
   strategies your organization uses to maintain marketplace sustainability and
   address disruptive innovation technologies?

Appendix C: Participants' Responses that Collaborates Themes

Subthemes	P1	P2	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8
			Theme 1- Teamwork				
Decision-Making	3 Levels - Goals, Impact, Brand Positioning	Follow the vision, mission, and traditional classic business model	A combination of a 2-way conversation, Individual executive level ideas, 2 brain storming sessions	Use of external agencies, weekly meetings, reactively & proactively use of partners	Anything that can get people to watch, Content, Working with a streaming app, Social Media	Data mining and business analytics	Use a streaming platform as a service not a product
			Theme 2 - Data Collection				
Partnerships & Market studies	Efficiency & Inexpensive	Partners and customer-	Market studies	Partner Ecosystems and alpha	Partners and viewer data	Unique In-house	Pilot Tests

	experiments	based data sets		and Beta tests		data sets	
	Theme 3 - Budgeting						
Pricing & Cost	Sink Cost System	Cost vs results Price: competitors	Cost to customer vs. cash flow and sustainability for future growth	Pricing based on Competitor pricing	Results of Data	Did not answer	VC willingness and available funding Pricing: subscription service costs of competitors
	Theme 4 - Corporate Governance						
Barriers	Staffing for expansion	Money	Could not compete with content availability	Pricing and competition	Ensuring use of correct data	Federal and state regulations	Money, pricing, lack of Venture Capitalists

Barriers Addressed	Had to make decisions based on results, reached out to other technology experts	Borrowed from people in the technology industry	Divided attention to the core problem with competitive and competitor KPIs, dealt with the whole demand, corporate governance	Build a one stop solution where you can get all the content you want and build an App	Work closely with technology team to identify consumer viewership & Create a broad marketing plan	Unique reports, Customized segments, & tried new strategy	Sought out U.S.A. based Venture Capitalists & returned money and product
Corporate Message	Does not rely on any specified market & Try new things (proces	Use the motto, "if we do not put ourselves out of business, how	Use outside research company & Evaluate worth	Through differentiation, Environmental safety, Highlighting the size of the	Customer trends, New advances in the market place, Apps,	Through Service & Solutions	Focus on being "Unplugged", OTT, DVR, OATV all in one device

ses or models)	will we put anyone else out of busines s or sustain		subscrip tion base, & Content library	Partner s, & Compe titor habits		
Marketing Strategies — Follow the psychol ogical trends in the market	Watch the market	Social Media & KPI usage	Using the brand name & Take advanta ge of data & alpha and beta tests	Follow consu mer trends, data and new technol ogy advanc es in the market	Create new compa ny verbia ge and termin ology	Highligh t product features
Additio nal Inform ation given						
Listen to the market, Shared staff and corpora te	Addres sing DIT is intrinsi cally & Consta ntly read,	Compa ny needs to change based on consum	Use the compan y's brand name for brand positioni	Did not want to share additio nal inform ation	Do not create anythi ng new & Use a solutio n-	Different iation, consolid ate proceed opportu nities, & Protect

vision, Data Support, & Have the right team	play, adapt & investigate new technologies while reducing cost	er trends & Competitor prediction	ng and marketplace recognition		based strategy	your technology