

The Disneyland App's Next Investment

One decision, from 29 post-visit interviews

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Key takeaway: Spend the next cycle on guidance and literacy: a sequencing layer that helps people run their day, plus a plain-language explainer for the Lightning Lane and Virtual Queue system. Not more features, more promo, or a separate first-timer app.

Why now: The app is already a strong lookup (wait times, map, mobile order). What people describe missing is that it teaches no one how a park day works, so strategy gets learned on Reddit, TikTok, and from cast members. The gap reaches paying Magic Key holders, some of whom cannot say what Virtual Queue is, and since Lightning Lane is paid, that confusion plausibly suppresses revenue people would spend if they understood it. In short: the app is a lookup that assumes you already know how to run a park day, and that assumption fails newcomers, lapsed returners, and even passholders.

What we're doing:

- A guided, sequencing layer ("what's next," using wait times, location, and the guest's own bookings).
- A plain-language onboarding for the queue system, the single densest point of confusion.
- A home screen that leads with the guest's own day over promotion, plus the cross-segment quick wins: a restroom filter, food-first search, and the gate scan up front.

What we're explicitly not doing:

- Building a separate first-timer app, or adding more data fields and promo cards. The fix is onboarding the app we have; more data is not where people stall.
- A full home redesign on the clutter complaint alone. The screen shown in research was logged-out and promo-heavy, so that complaint is real but likely overstated.

Tradeoffs: Guidance is harder to build than another card, and will not move the satisfied power users who already survive the app. We are acting on a mechanism (the newcomer's deficit is real but unfelt by them, visible mainly to the veterans beside them), not a sized rate, because the first-time sample is thin.

Next: Product to scope a guided-day and queue-explainer spike next sprint; Research to run a wave that sizes the first-time cell and tests a personalized home against the real, logged-in screen. [Owner and dates to confirm.]

Evidence: 29 AI-moderated interviews, IQS 3.84/5. Directional on first-timers (5 in the cell, roughly 3 clean) and the home-screen clutter finding is stimulus-caveated; both ride as stated, not hidden.