

7 UNAVOIDABLE SUBSCRIPTION TRENDS

You Need to
Follow in 2021



Empowering your media business



Speaking Today



Joe Cronin

Subscriptions Subject
Matter Expert

Lineup Systems



Mark Whistler

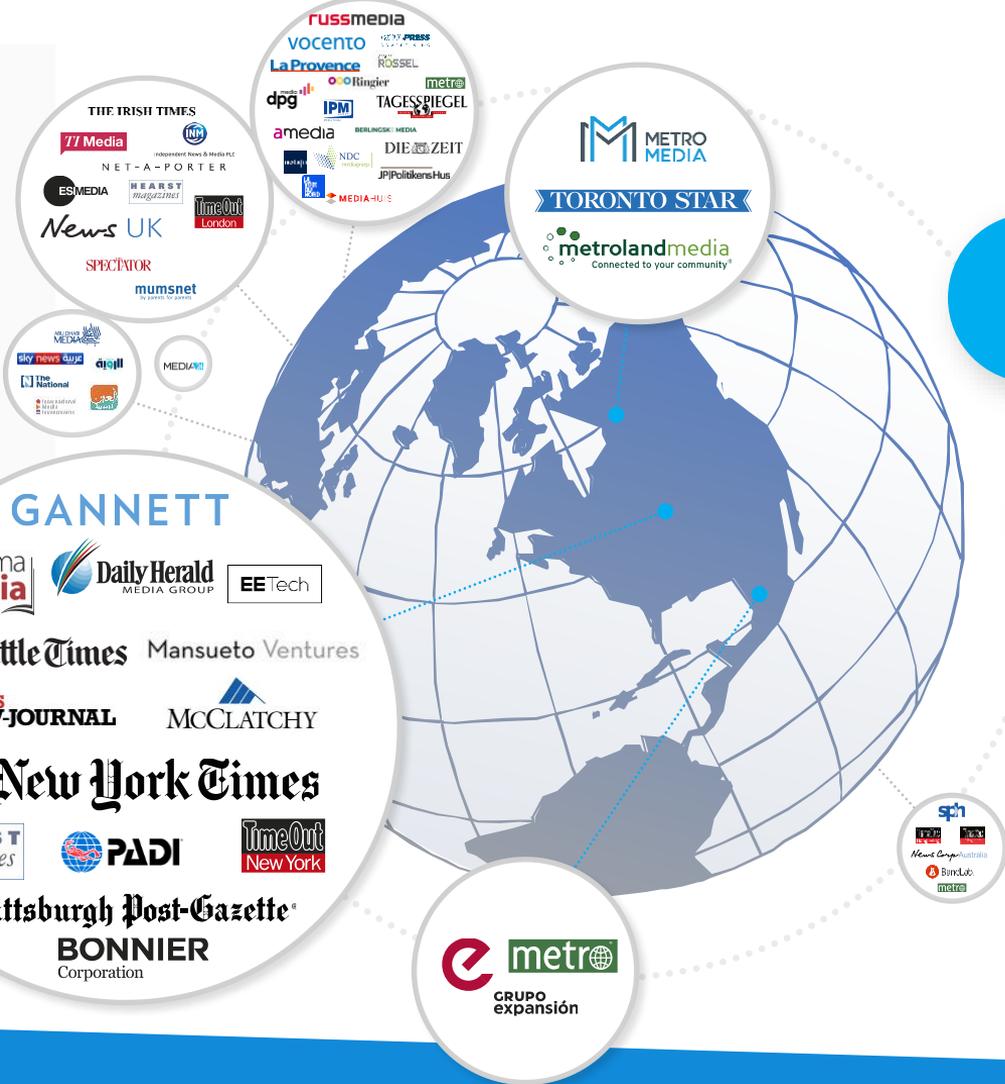
Product Marketing Director

Zephr

7
languages

32
countries

21.5k+
users



The world leader in
advertising sales
solutions

6,800+
media brands selling with Adpoint

\$31bn+
in billed ad revenue

310+
Digital media businesses

51
Multichannel conglomerates



Zephr is the **Subscription Experience Product** focused on accelerating digital revenue growth.

We combine intuitive UI and plug-&-play integration architecture to let commercial and technical teams develop **powerful subscription relationships and deliver personalized experiences for every customer.**

140%

Increase in click-through rates

23%

Increase subscription revenue in the first year

30%

Revenue uplift at point-of-renewal

\$612K

Extra revenue generated in first year

News Corp



TRIBUNE
PUBLISHING

New Scientist



Which?

Private Equity
International



Jamie Oliver

CONDÉ NAST

NEW YORK POST

MCCLATCHY

MIT
Technology
Review



NENI
New England
Newspapers, Inc.



DC THOMSON
MEDIA



Zephr |

01

Combined Revenue Models are Proving Essential

The Pew Research Center reported ad revenue dipped 62% between 2008-2018.

Against this backdrop, combined revenue models offer publishers a way to reinvent aspects of company structure for more resilient, lucrative revenue potential.

The model offers greater assurance of brand safety for ad buyers and requires quality published content to retain readers--a win-win for everyone.



Sync up your advertising and subscription strategies.

It's no longer possible to separate the impact these revenue streams have on one another.

If you're not already, work to align these areas as soon as possible.

02

Technology Advancements Improve Reader Experience

Reader experience isn't just about reducing churn, it's a critical element for any publisher's success across each revenue model.

"As the media industry continues to shift from advertising revenue - which is increasingly less viable as a sole source of income - to digital subscriptions, **the level of competition between subscription businesses is really heating up. Those who are on older tech stacks have found it hard to keep business agility**, which is essential to react to change in these unpredictable times. The most exciting developments have been around dynamic product offers and bundles, combined with no-code solutions to test, learn and iterate on subscription strategies."

*Chris Scott, CPTO
Zephr*



03

Personality-Based Subscriptions Empower Individual Writers While Also Benefiting Brands

Tap into the talent in your newsroom.

You may be able to leverage “micro influencer marketing” trends easier than you’d think. If there are stand-out personalities on your editorial team, don’t sleep on their revenue potential!



“Not every writer has the personal brand to be able to facilitate this but it highlights a really interesting trend of what I would call atomic monetization...Put simply, innovative media organizations are looking at their roster of editorial talent and ascribing significant value to the relationships that talent is cultivating with their audience.”

*Mike Donoghue, co-founder and
CEO
Subtext*

04

Subscriptions Throw a Creative Lifeline to Local Media

Communities

Local publishers know their audiences more intimately and create content that impact that audience in immediate and relevant ways. While not exclusive to local publishers, the ability to be a part of the local community is a strength that made a big difference in 2020.

Don't let up as the pandemic ends.



Local media got a significant boost from the pandemic, as readers became eager to stay connected to local news. Trends show this presents huge ongoing opportunities, so as the pandemic ends (knock on wood), don't let up! Keep emphasizing the power of local media, invest in strong marketing, and enjoy the boost.

05

Streaming Successes and Failures Reveal Important Subscriptions Lessons

Understanding the Fall of Quibi...

- Content wasn't enough to attract a seed audience of paid subscribers
- Assumptions about the potential audience proved wrong

"Had Quibi better understood its nuanced value proposition for users, perhaps other risks would have been mitigated for the company to see higher subscriber acquisition and retention..."



Don't assume you know your audience!



06

Artificial Intelligence Will Reduce Subscription Churn

AI can help organizations learn the underlying motivations behind subscriber retention vs. churn by analyzing large amounts of data quickly and suggesting changes to proactively keep readers engaged with their content.



Is it Really 'AI'?
Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning have become buzzphrases in the marketing and audience technology sectors. Be sure to ask your vendor(s) what they mean by AI - the answer could range from advanced task automation to predictive modeling.



07

Publishers Bundle Subscriptions With Brands to Broaden Audience Base

Build strong partnerships with brands and other publishers to bundle possibilities.

The potential for subscription bundles is clear - start building relationships with others in the subscription economy if you want to leverage this trend.

“The goal is to bring in subscribers that publications have identified as crossover target audiences beyond their traditional reach...The benefit of connecting publisher and non-publishers together through this subscription bundling model goes beyond the top-line subscription revenue grab...People often think it’s just about driving subscriptions, but it’s not. It’s about driving to a connected relationship where you continue to earn the right to be connected, but you are the business that can leverage the first-party data relationship...”

*James Henderson, co-founder and CEO
Zephr*



7 Key Takeaways

01 | Sync up your advertising and subscription strategies.

02 | Modernize your tech stack.

03 | Tap into the talent in your newsroom.

04 | Don't let up as the pandemic ends.

05 | Validate the assumptions you've made about your audience with data.

06 | Ask your vendors the right questions about artificial intelligence

07 | Build strong partnerships with brands and other publishers to open up bundling possibilities.