

Boosting Circulation Figures with Olive's Electronic Edition

Converting partial-week subscribers to seven days; one-day passes; NIE program

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ABC regulations

- Our circulation director worked with ABC to ensure that we could convert weekend or partial-week subscribers to 7 days by adding the electronic delivery to their print package. We call these “mixed delivery” or “hybrid” subscribers.
- Must get approval from ABC.
- Users have to opt in; the sale cannot be assumed.
- We first targeted Sunday-only customers because those gave us the best return (1 day a week converts to 7).

Contacting subscribers

- We contacted our subscribers whose frequency of delivery was less than 7 days, either by phone, mail, or on their invoices, offering them the opportunity to opt-in for additional days of delivery with electronic editions. The effort took several months.
- We also converted employees' free print subscriptions to electronic. ABC allows us to count these 400+ employee copies.

Contacting subscribers

- Initially, we only invited partial-week subscribers who were at full price. This allowed us to upgrade them to 7-day mixed delivery subscriptions at no additional cost. Although these were discounted subscriptions, they were above 50% and for the electronic delivered copies, no expense for newsprint or carrier delivery. This tactic proved to be fairly successful and subsequently we have begun offering 7-day, mixed delivery subscriptions to new subscribers.

The bottom line

- By converting many of our Sunday-only and partial-week subscribers to 7 days, we expanded the service of 21,700 subscribers and have added about 12,000 papers to our circulation base.

E-paper includes archives

- A big selling point in converting subscribers was that the electronic edition includes free access to archives back to 1988. (The Gazette has imported our text archives using Olive's legacy archive product.)

Converting archives sales to Circ

- Wanting to capitalize on our 20 to 30 daily archives searches, we created a single-copy sales interface for our Olive archives. A non-subscriber wanting to search for a story now buys a one-day, one-week or one-month “pass” to use our archives. These can be counted as circulation, like a rack sale. See the page:

Online archives “pass”



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the 'Welcome to The Gazette Online Archives' page. The page features a navigation menu with 'Archive Info', 'Subscribe Here', 'Back to The Gazette', 'Login Here', and 'FAQ'. The main content area includes a 'Welcome to The Gazette Online Archives' header with 'LOGIN | SIGN UP | FAQ' links. Below this, there is a section titled 'Are you a print subscriber? Click Here' and a paragraph explaining the electronic archive service. A 'You may subscribe at five levels:' section lists three subscription options: 24-hour access (\$2.00), One month access (\$4.00), and One month access (\$8.00). A final section titled 'Best Value! First week's access for subscribers \$5.00' describes a recurring subscription option.

Authenticating users

To avoid having to set up thousands of custom accounts for the converted users, we use their phone number as a unique identifier, and last name as password. Then we query our circulation database to confirm they are active subscribers at a qualifying rate. If their paid subscription lapses, they cannot log in.

Tapping into NIE

- In a smaller initiative, we worked with ABC to qualify use of the electronic edition in our Newspaper in Education program. Teachers must opt in, and they must order a specific number of copies of the e-paper. We then issue usernames based on the teacher's name and number ordered (Smith1 thru 25).

Other best practices?

- We'd love to hear from other papers as to creative ways they've used the Olive platform to enhance circulation.
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