

# Are Paywalls and Subscriptions Losing Popularity?

You don't have to browse the internet for long to experience at least one paywall blocking your access to content. Our world is currently running on a subscription economy, where all types of content, applications, and various services come with a monthly fee. This includes online newspapers, blogs, mobile and desktop applications, graphic design tools, generative AI software, and more.

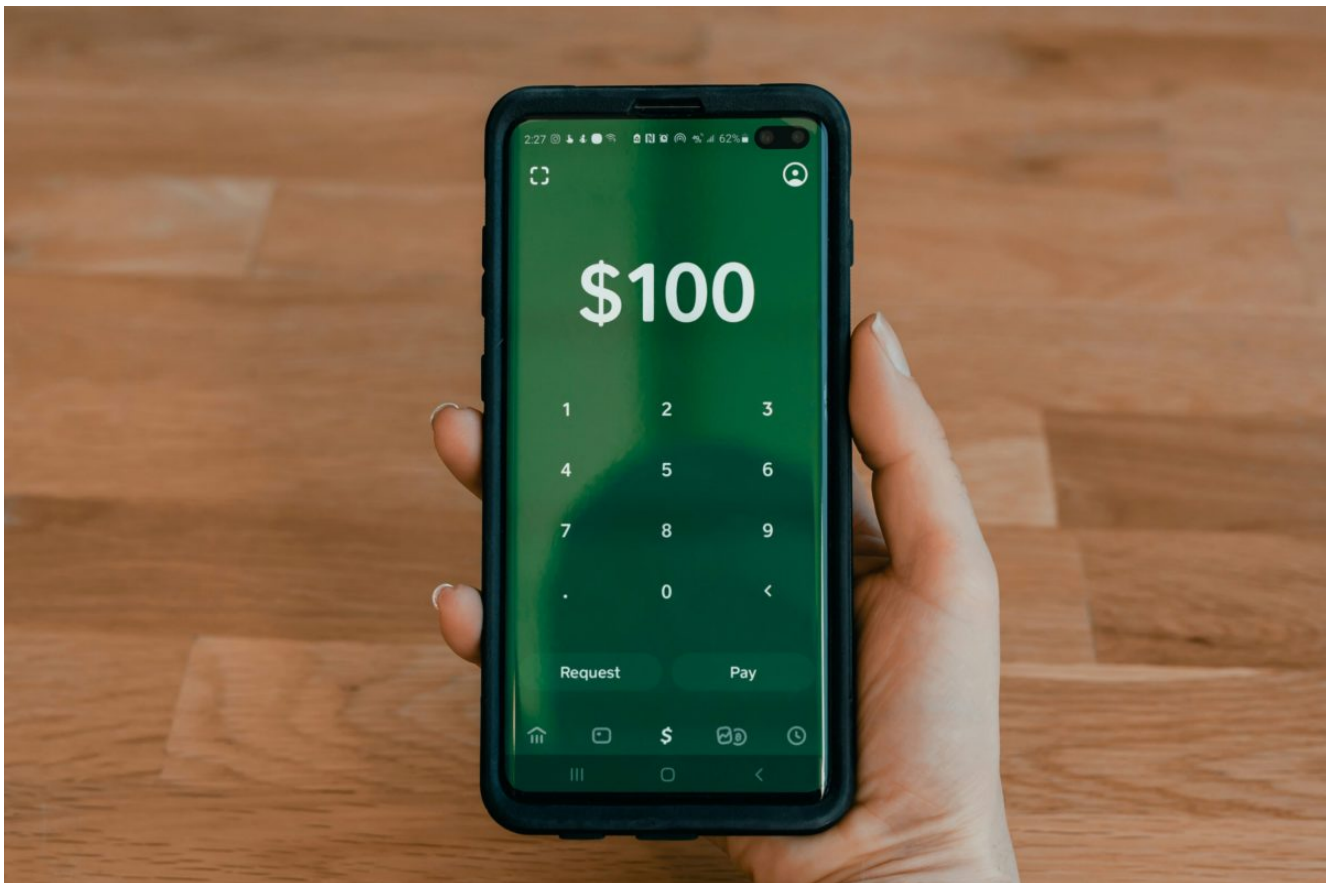


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The subscription-based model has been standard for years, but it's finally taking a noticeable toll on people's wallets. Between sudden [price hikes](#) and more companies moving to subscriptions, people are tired of bleeding money. Ever since the pandemic hit, people have been reducing their expenses,

and even today, subscriptions are still first in line for the chopping block.

### **People are tired of paying monthly fees for everything**

If there were only a few things people had to pay for through a subscription, it wouldn't be so bad. It's the fact that practically everything comes with a monthly fee that makes the subscription-based economy a financial drain. Even the news is more expensive than ever before.

Although news has never been free, it wasn't as expensive as it is today. Prior to the internet, newspapers charged a small fee for each physical paper, whether it was delivered daily, weekly, or purchased at a newsstand. It didn't cost much, even accounting for inflation. However, because of the massive decline in paper subscriptions, today's news publications are mostly digital, and access sometimes comes with a monthly fee. You can't just buy one article or one day's worth of news – you have to go all-in for the month.

Thankfully, a lot of news outlets have gotten the hint to [back off the paywalls](#), but some are still holding out and providing only a few free articles per month to each visitor. It doesn't seem to make a difference – instead of subscribing, people just search for the same news story published on a different website.

### **Consumers are canceling entertainment subscriptions**

For most people looking to save some money, newspaper subscriptions are easy to cancel. Reading the news isn't as important as accessing project management software for work or being able to use Photoshop and other Adobe tools. Still, even those necessary tools cost more money than most people wish to spend. And when you add streaming television services, like Netflix, Disney+, and Amazon Prime, the cost is even higher.

Streaming entertainment is one of the most expensive types of

subscriptions for some people, and it's not the individual services. Most cost between £9- £18 per month, which isn't much. It's the fact that many people have to buy several subscriptions to different services to get all their preferred channels and shows they want to watch.

To combat the high cost of subscription entertainment, a lot of people are going back to basic cable television and finding new shows to enjoy. There are plenty of good series and movies on cable, and if you don't already know what to watch, a site like [mytelly.co.uk](https://mytelly.co.uk) will tell you exactly what's on and when so you can discover new shows.

### **Software subscriptions are on the chopping block, too**

Businesses tend to get [sucked into buying monthly subscriptions](#) to a bunch of software that doesn't always support productivity or provide much value. Some industries take advantage of businesses, like how email marketing tools charge per subscriber, forcing many small-to-medium-sized businesses to pay upwards of \$800 or more per month just to maintain an email list.

People are taking a hard look at all of their software subscriptions to prioritize the tools they need and are getting rid of everything else. Many of the subscriptions being canceled are the result of [forgotten free trials](#) and contracts that couldn't be canceled. In 2022 alone, consumers paid £688 million for subscriptions they didn't use.

### **Forgotten trials lead to unwanted subscriptions**

Sometimes it's the consumer's fault for not canceling on time, but often, companies make it hard or impossible to cancel, and some subscription renewals are even misleading. For example, there are well-known genealogy sites that don't make it clear you'll be billed annually at the end of your trial. The screen displays a monthly cost, leading you to think you'll only be charged a small monthly fee if you forget to cancel on time.

Instead, they bill you for the entire year.

### **Are we nearing the end of the subscription economy?**

While the subscription economy isn't over, it's certainly transforming. With consumers being more selective than ever about how they spend their money, companies that charge for subscriptions will need to provide undeniable value if they want to stay in business. Companies with low-quality services will disappear, while businesses with high-quality services will rise.