

Efforts to Regulate Subscription Marketing Practices Should Avoid Penalizing Consumer-Friendly Magazines

Magazine media publishers maintain exceptionally high levels of subscriber satisfaction through well-understood, simple subscription management processes that benefit consumers.

THE ISSUE

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and some state legislatures are considering new rules to restrict auto-renewal practices widely used by many subscription services, including magazine media publishers. But the consumer-friendly magazine sector has developed time-tested subscription management practices that work for subscribers.

Customer satisfaction is a cornerstone of the magazine media industry's viability and vitality. The overwhelming majority of print and digital magazines in the United States are sold by subscription – about 95 percent in 2020. Magazine media publishers uphold high levels of consumer satisfaction through well-understood, simple subscription management processes that benefit consumers.

Many subscriptions are sold with an advance consent feature that allows readers to affirmatively accept the automatic renewal of their subscription, providing subscribers the benefit of uninterrupted delivery of their favorite titles. Subscribers like this feature, as evidenced by the extremely low numbers of consumer complaints.

Proposals pending before the FTC and some state legislatures – which likely are intended to address legitimate concerns about the actions of some bad actors outside of the magazine sector – would entirely disrupt the long-standing subscriber relations practices of magazine media publishers.

A BETTER SOLUTION

Directly target abusive practices of specific bad actors.

Target the real problem, not consumer-friendly magazines, by zeroing in on specific abuses and actors.

THE TAKEAWAY

- ✓ The magazine sector has developed consumer-friendly subscription management practices that subscribers appreciate.
- ✓ Opt-in subscription renewal enables uninterrupted access to the magazine titles that subscribers love.
- ✓ Imposing broad-brush regulations would punish good actors and disrupt the positive relationship magazine media maintains with their subscribers.

Magazine Media Delivers

Valued & trusted content

- ✓ Content that is researched, curated and edited.
- ✓ Readers value our educational, cultural, scientific, and informational content, in long-form articles and on digital platforms.

Diverse & multigenerational connections

- ✓ Read by more than 90% of U.S. adults across all age groups and demographics, including 18-25.
- ✓ A 1.5 billion audience across all its platforms – digital, mobile, video and print.

Commitment & investment to our communities

- ✓ More than 240,000 U.S. jobs supported with an annual average wage of more than \$98,000.
- ✓ Trusted, long-standing first party relationship based on respect and transparency for our readers.
- ✓ Partner in environmental stewardship, using bio-degradable, recyclable and certified materials.