

PRINT MATTERS

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5 great reasons to implement auto renewal

We already know you won't like this idea, but we're going to try to talk you into it anyway (insert halo here).

Many of you have been concerned about how hard it is to retain subscribers these days. And it isn't for lack of trying — most of you use blow-in cards, USPS letters, emails and even phone calls to try to get your subscribers to renew their subscriptions.

Yet still, they go.

Maybe it's time to try a new approach. Drum roll please! You should automatically renew your subscribers, every single one of them. Here are five reasons why this is a great idea.

1 Everyone is doing it. Auto renewal is used by cable companies, streaming services, cell phone providers and home security companies. Once viewed as an outrageous tactic, it is now so common that consumers have grown comfortable with it.

2 It protects a vital revenue stream for you. When subscribers don't renew, the revenue goes with them. When you're a small operation, every dollar counts. It should also be noted that it is much easier and more cost-efficient to maintain current subscribers than find new subscribers.

3 It makes it easier for subscribers. They don't have to remember to fill out and send in a card or reply to an email. People are exceptionally busy these days; anything you can do to make their lives easier, they will appreciate.

4 It will reduce your expenses. You spend a decent amount of money on your renewal program, and those expenses will diminish significantly because you no longer have to send multiple notices for renewal. It will save staff time as well because you aren't having to track all the data on who has and hasn't renewed.

5 Your readers love you! They subscribe to your magazine because they are actively invested in what you are covering. They know that you're a low-budget operation, and they will understand why you decided to take this step.

All of that said, though, the move must be made with care so as not to upset your readers. You need to communicate it with enough time for them to opt out if they so desire. And you should communicate it multiple times the first time you put it into effect. And use multiple platforms to be sure the message gets through (blow-in card, USPS mail, email).

If you're still squeamish about the concept, you could offer a reduction in price in exchange for the auto renewal. Everyone loves a discount.

We've even taken the liberty of drafting a letter you can send your subscribers announcing the change in policy (see below).

We know it sounds daunting, but we also know that bravery is almost always rewarded. Just know that we believe in you and your beloved niche magazines, and we think this is an idea worth trying. If you take us up on it, please let us know how you do!

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COOL CAR MAGAZINE

Date

Dear valued reader,
We want to thank you for your loyalty to [magazine name] throughout the years. We are writing today to tell you of a new policy we are implementing regarding subscription renewals.

Beginning in December of 2022, we will be automatically renewing all subscriptions. This will make the process easier for both of us, and it will allow us to have a revenue stream we can count on.

If you have any questions about this policy, or if you wish to opt out of auto renewal, please email us at [XX].

As you know, we work hard to ensure that our magazine continues to be relevant, informative and enjoyable. We look forward to deepening our relationship with you and with the entire [XX] community. Thanks again for your support.

Sincerely,
[XX]