

Digital Publishing Benchmarks Report Snapshot: Monetization

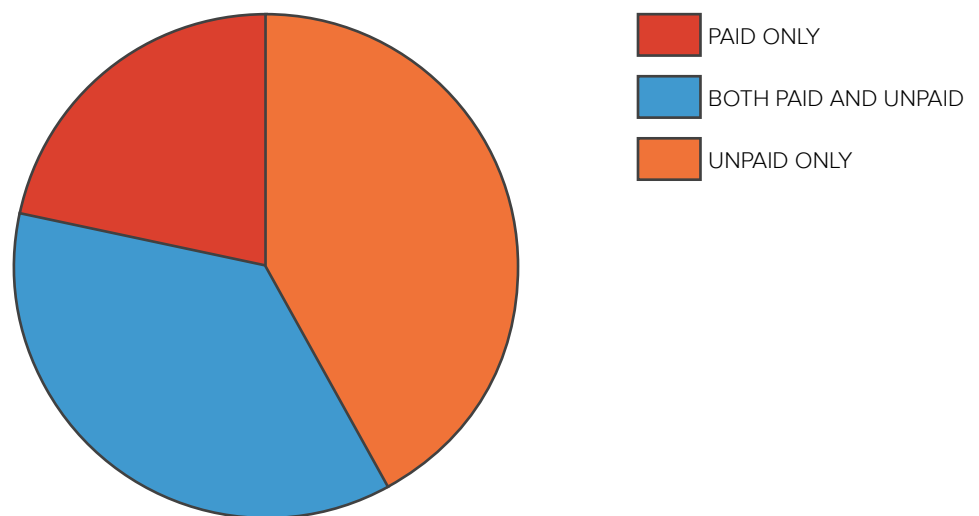
As media companies shift their focus from print to digital, publishers have had to transform many different aspects of their business. One of the biggest challenges facing publishers in the wake of these changes is the re-adjustment that comes with reconfiguring their revenue model and relationship with advertisers.

To learn more about how publishers are currently approaching monetization, and how they plan to in the future, we surveyed hundreds of industry professionals to gather the following results.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

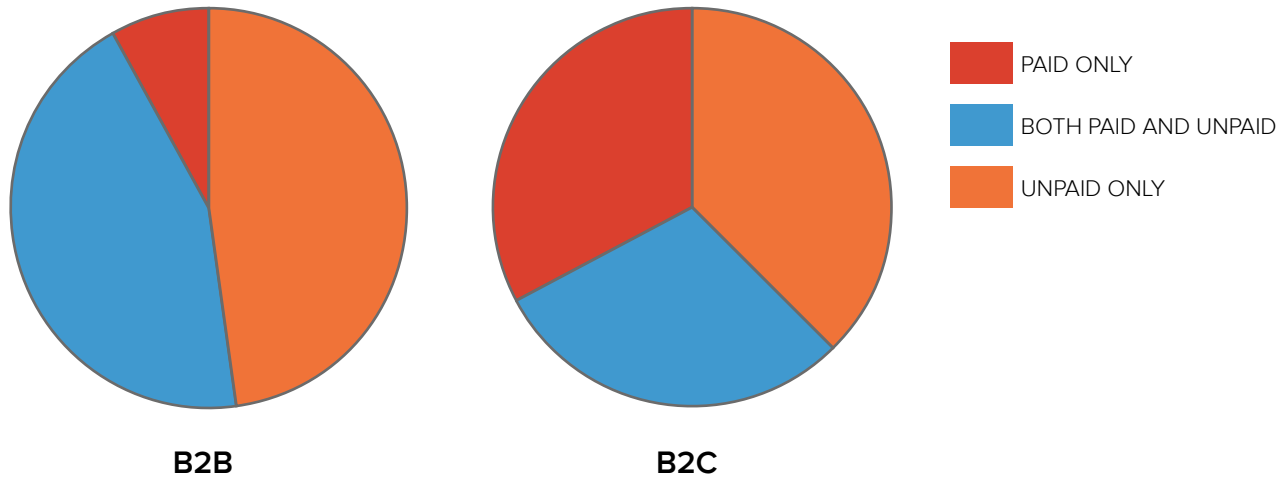
How Many Publishers Are Still Charging For Their Content?

As free content continues to proliferate on the web, many publishers are finding it harder and harder to charge for their publications. The vast majority (**78.4%**) of respondents, offered some form of free content.

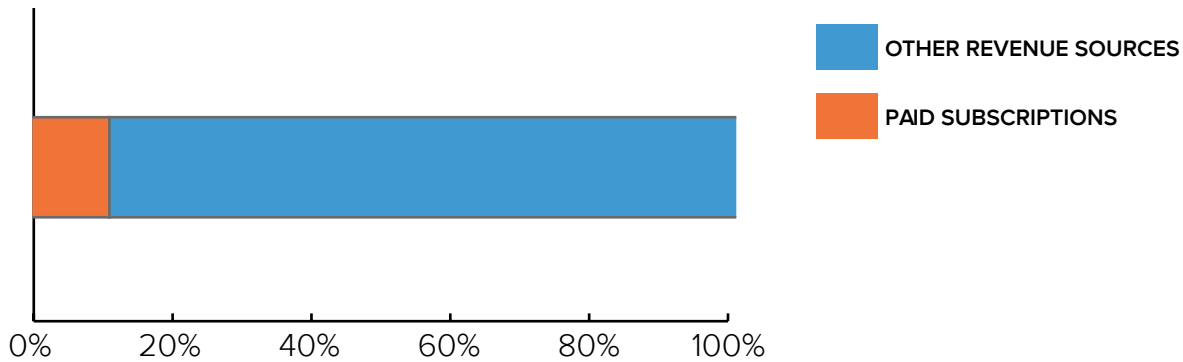


Breakdown of paid versus free content offerings

Broken down by publication type, we found a relatively even divide for B2C publications — **38% unpaid, 30% both, and 33% paid**. B2B publications, on the other hand, tended to offer more unpaid options—**48% unpaid, 44% both, and 8% paid**.



These paid subscriptions are only pushing the bottom line so far. In total, a mere **10.9%** of respondents cited paid subscriptions as their greatest source of revenue.



16% of B2B publishers list print subscriptions as their greatest source of revenue

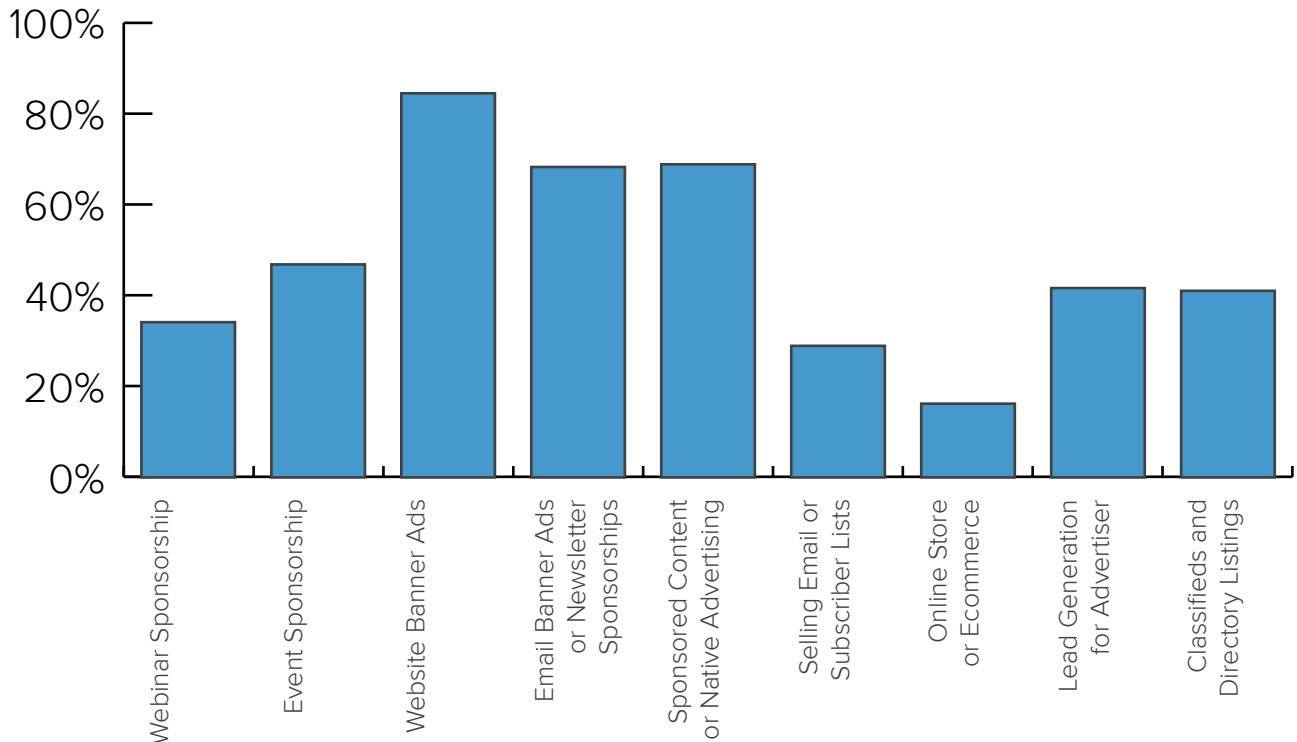
7% of B2C publishers list print subscriptions as their greatest source of revenue

Though the amount of money that publications can make through paid subscriptions is waning, there are no shortage of alternative channels for revenue generation.

DIGITAL PRODUCTS

How Are Publishers Currently Driving Revenue?

As publishers continue to adjust to a business model that looks outside of paid subscriptions for revenue, a wide variety of products and services are emerging as alternative monetization solutions.



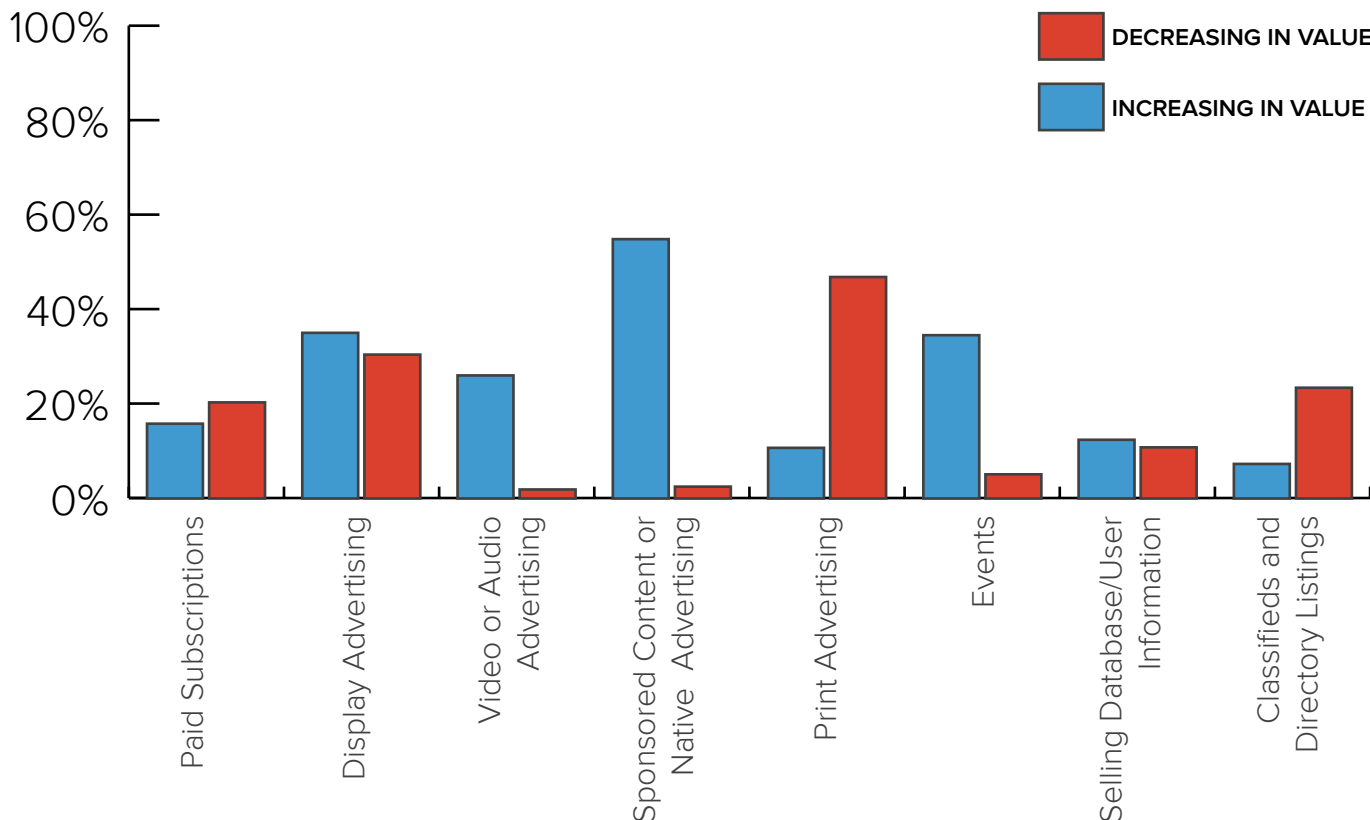
When broken down by publication type, the results revealed a similar preference between B2B and B2C companies for Website Banner Ads, Email Banner Ads or Newsletter Sponsorships, and Sponsored Content or Native Advertising. B2B publications however, rely more heavily on Lead Generation for Advertisers, and Webinar Sponsorship than B2C companies do.

Digital Product	B2B	B2C
Webinar Sponsorship	48 %	8%
Event Sponsorship	48.5%	27%
Website Banner Ads	72.7%	65%
Email Banner Ads or Newsletter Sponsorships	64.6%	48%
Sponsored Content or Native Advertising	56.6%	55%
Selling Email or Subscriber Lists	34.3%	14%
Online Store/Ecommerce	15.2%	13%
Lead Generation for Advertisers	51.5%	20%
Classified and Directory Listings	35.4%	32%

LOOKING FORWARD

How Will This Landscape Change Over the Next 6 Months?

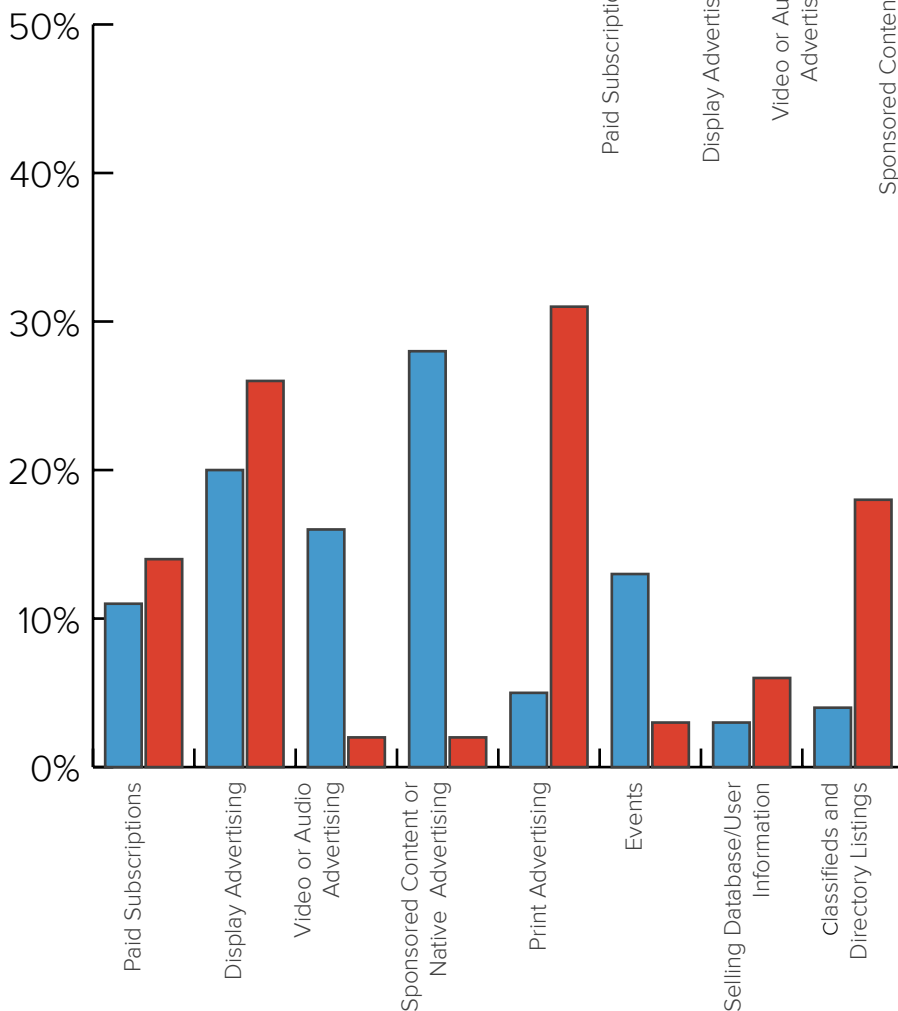
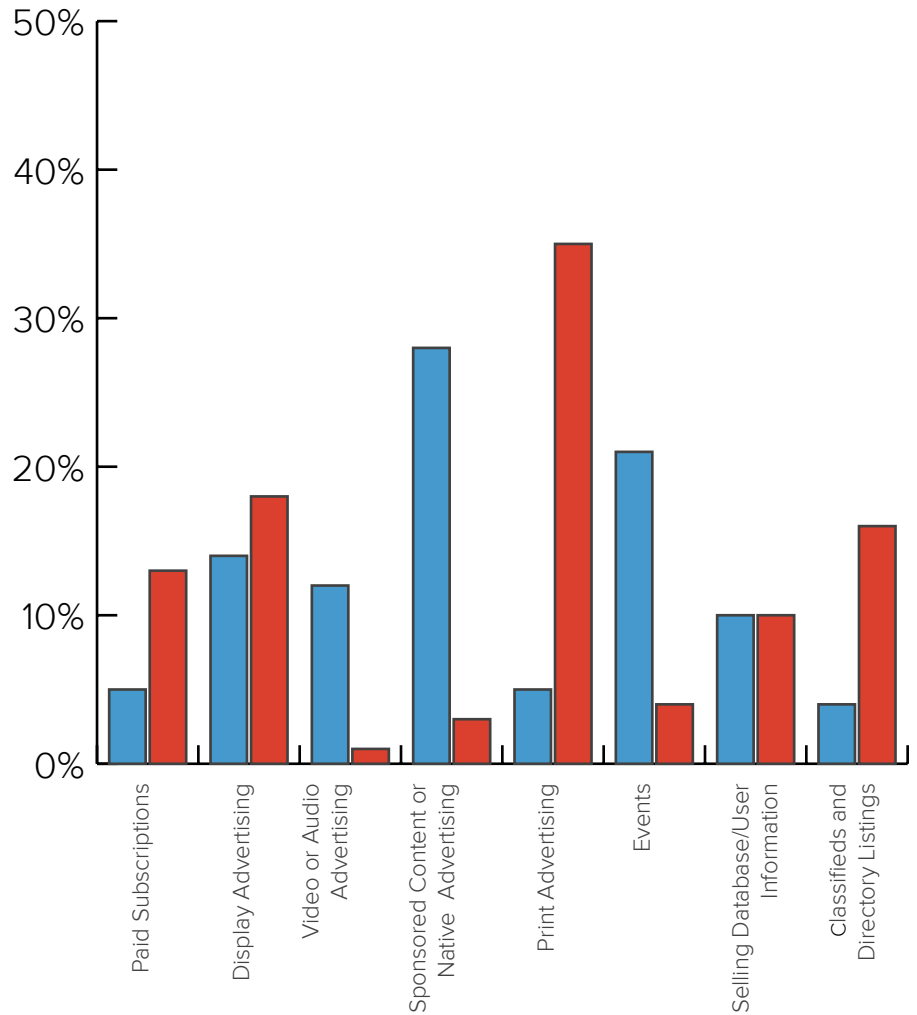
Digital publishers are still living in a volatile time of transition and discovery. The tactics used most widely or proved most valuable today, may quickly become outdated. To gain further insight into how publishers see their strategy changing, we asked which revenue streams publishers predicted would increase and decrease most in value over the next six months.



Revenue Source	Increasing in Value	Decreasing in Value
Paid Subscriptions	15.8%	20.3%
Display Advertising	35%	30.4%
Video or Audio Advertising	26%	1.9%
Sponsored Content or Native Advertising	54.8%	2.5%
Print Advertising	10.7%	46.8%
Events	34.5%	5.1%
Selling Data/User Information	12.4%	10.8%
Classifieds and Directory Listings	7.3%	23.4%

B2B

The majority of B2B publishers cited sponsored content or native advertising (**28%**) as the revenue stream that they predicted would increase most in value over the next six months. Conversely, print advertising was predicted to decrease most in value (**35%**).



B2C

B2C Publishers responded similarly, with the majority (**28%**) also citing sponsored content or native advertising as most likely to increase in value in the near future, and print advertising (**31%**) or display advertising (**26%**) to decrease in value.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Monetization Strategy Moving Forward

Paid Subscriptions Cannot Sustain a Business

As publications move online, customers have become less and less willing to hand over money for content. Paywalls may be a sustainable business model for giants like the New York Times, but building a business off of circulation profits alone is no longer a viable option for the vast majority of publications.

Publishers Are Still Deciding Where to Dedicate Their Efforts

Publications that have stuck to “business as usual” for decades are now being forced to re-evaluate how they maintain their livelihood. As such, we see a variety of tactics emerge. While banner ads are currently leading the charge, our research indicates a shift will continue to occur over the next six months.

Sponsored Content is on the Rise

As paid subscriptions continue to wane, publishers will have a greater hole to fill with other revenue streams. Our research indicates that for both B2B and B2C companies, banner ads and newsletter sponsorship will continue to increase. However, sponsored content and native advertising will grow at an even faster rate.

Lead Generation Separates B2B and B2C Publishers

B2B and B2C companies rely on many of the same revenue drivers. However, B2B companies showed a much higher tendency than B2C companies for offerings that focus on lead generation—for example, explicit lead generation, webinars, and event sponsorship.

WHAT'S NEXT?

There's More Research on the Way

To learn more about the state of the digital publishing industry, sign up below to receive the complete **HubSpot Digital Publishing Benchmarks Report** when it becomes available. The report will cover:

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