



**MEDIA** CAMPUS

America's  Newspapers

# Our Hometown

Live Virtual Conferences

## — Rethinking Paywalls —

Matt Larson, President & CEO  
[mcl@our-hometown.com](mailto:mcl@our-hometown.com)

December 18, 2020  
2pm EST

# Our Hometown

## About Us

- **Family business**, founded in Upstate NY in 1997.
- Manage hundreds of **newspaper websites** and **native apps** across North America.
  - **WordPress**-based Platform - Customized for **Newspapers**
    - #1 Priority is **Customer Support**
- Constantly **Evolving Platform** and **Feature set** based on publisher feedback

# In the next 30-45 minutes, we'll discuss...

- **Paywall Models**
- **Pricing and Auto-renewal**
- **Strategies for Marketing Digital Subscriptions**
- **Subscription Sales Blitz**
- **Locate questions box**
  - First to answer wins a prize at the end of the webinar!
  - Type your name, the paper you are with, print publication frequency, and estimated # of digital subscribers

# Our Hometown

## Frequently Asked Questions

“We are thinking about finally **launching a paywall**. What are the different **paywall models** available and which have you seen the most success with?”

*-Publisher in Florida*

# Paywall Models for Newspapers

- **Hard Paywall**
  - Restricts all content to paid customers only - [LeonCountyToday.com](http://LeonCountyToday.com)
- **Soft Paywall** - A mix of paid and free access content
  - Specific Categories set free - [JournalTrib.com](http://JournalTrib.com)
  - Select articles marked free - [GaffneyLedger.com](http://GaffneyLedger.com)
  - Current News protected, archived news free (or vice, versa) - [PortAransasSouthJetty.com](http://PortAransasSouthJetty.com)
- **Metered Paywall** - [ChesterfieldObserver.com](http://ChesterfieldObserver.com)
- **Registration Wall** - [AmherstBee.com](http://AmherstBee.com)

\*Email [ops@our-hometown.com](mailto:ops@our-hometown.com) for a copy of the slides

# Our Hometown

## Webinar Poll

**What kind of paywall model do you have on your website today?**

- 1.) Hard Paywall
- 2.) Soft Paywall
- 3.) Metered Paywall
- 4.) Registration Wall
- 5.) None of the above

# Our Hometown

## Frequently Asked Questions

“Can we **automatically** send a renewal notice to remind readers when their subscription has expired?”

*-Publisher in North Dakota*

# Autorenewal

- **Autorenewals**
  - Require them to opt-out, rather than repeatedly opt-in
- **Increases Retention**
- Convenient for Customer
- The **“Netflix Model”**
  - First month free (or discounted), autorenews at full price



# Our Hometown

## Frequently Asked Questions

“How would you recommend we **price** our digital subscriptions?”

*-Publisher in New York*

# Pricing

- **Digital Subscription Options (Weeklies)**
  - \$2 - 3 / edition
  - \$5 - 10 / month
  - \$50 - 65 / year
- Charge **at least** as much as the equivalent period for a print subscription.
  - Ideally, charge **125% of print** to account for archive access.
  - Leave room to discount!
- As part of the new website design, Our Hometown helps publishers formulate a digital business plan.

*The*  
**JOURNAL**

Crosby Journal Online Subscription Options

Please note that all subscriptions will auto-renew each billing period until cancelled from your **Account** page!

<b>Crosby Journal - Weekly Subscription</b> <b>\$1.99/week</b> Subscribe	<b>Crosby Journal - Monthly Subscription</b> <b>\$10/month</b> Subscribe	<b>Crosby Journal - Yearly Subscription</b> <b>\$50/year</b> Subscribe
--	--	--

**The JOURNAL Tioga Tribune**

Homepage The Journal - Crosby, ND Tioga Tribune - Tioga, ND Advertising Contact Us Corner Market  
History Local Events Marketplace Classifieds Archives

**Support Local Journalism!**  
Donate Today!

**Featured Advertisers**

**Journal Publishing**  
For all of your business and commercial printing needs  
journalcrosbynd.com

**Know what's before. Call before you dig.**  
811  
Water with invisible How-it-Don-See  
Now it's  
Dig Safe  
Call 800-456-4600  
www.digsafe.org

**FROM THE JOURNAL**

**Room for three**  
July 28, 2020  
Jody Michael -- The Journal From left, Jackson, Samuel and Silas Kinzel made up one half of a see saw squad (brother Matthew, not pictured, was on the other end)...

**County budget likely will need tightening**  
July 28, 2020  
Divide County Commissioner Doug Grube reviews county budget figures. Divide County

**FROM THE TIOPA TRIBUNE**

**Rodeo, grain palace days persevere in face of pandemic**  
July 28, 2020  
Palace Rodeo expect it to look a lot like last year's event, above, with organizers feeling like there's no better place for a gathering than...

**Temperature check**  
July 28, 2020  
Dave Tengedal photo Mikayla Wolfe and Casey Kennell are among the couples getting a temperature screening from

# Our Hometown

## Frequently Asked Questions

“What do other publishers do to **market subscriptions** to the website? We have many followers on **Facebook** and email subscribers on our **newsletter** list”

*-Publisher in Michigan*

# Marketing Subscriptions

- Homepage
- Article Teaser
- Newsletter
- Social Media
- Print

*The*  
**JOURNAL**

Crosby Journal Online Subscription Options

*Please note that all subscriptions will auto-renew each billing period until cancelled from your **Account** page!*

<p>Crosby Journal - Weekly Subscription</p> <p><b>\$1.99/week</b></p> <p>Subscribe</p>	<p>Crosby Journal - Monthly Subscription</p> <p><b>\$10/month</b></p> <p>Subscribe</p>	<p>Crosby Journal - Yearly Subscription</p> <p><b>\$50/year</b></p> <p>Subscribe</p>
--	--	--

# Marketing Subscriptions

- Homepage
- Article Teaser
- Newsletter
- Social Media
- Print



# Marketing Subscriptions

- **MOBILE** Homepage
- Article Teaser
- Newsletter
- Social Media
- Print



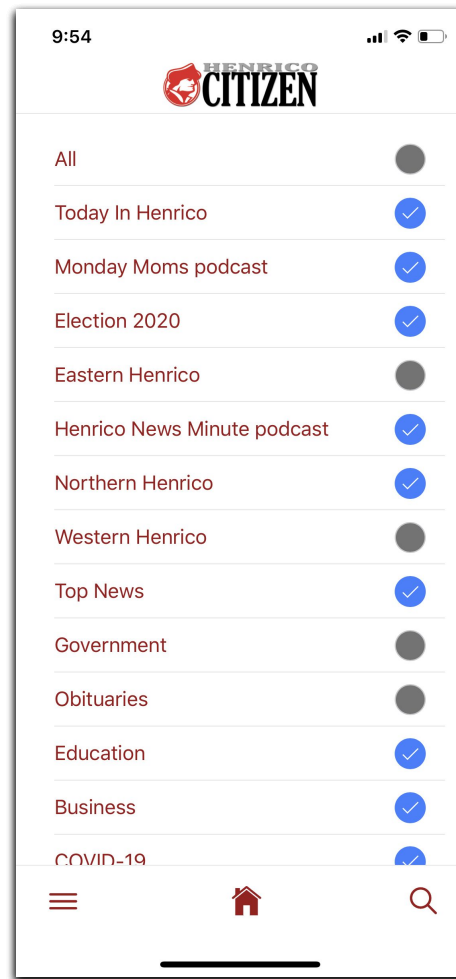
# Marketing Subscriptions

- MOBILE Homepage
- Article Teaser
- Newsletter
- Social Media
- Print



# Marketing Subscriptions

- **MOBILE Homepage and Apps**
- Article Teaser
- Newsletter
- Social Media
- Print





# Marketing Subscriptions

- Mobile Homepage and Apps
- **Article Teaser**
- Newsletter
- Social Media
- Print

The screenshot shows a news website interface. At the top is a dark blue navigation bar with a search bar, a menu icon, and links for 'Log In', 'Buy Single Issue', 'Subscribe', 'News Alerts', 'Privacy Policy', and 'Submit News'. Social media icons for Facebook and Twitter are on the right. The main content area features an article teaser titled 'Comin' through!' dated 'December 16, 2020'. The text describes tugboats moving a large offshore rig through a ship channel. Below the text are two buttons: a yellow 'Subscribe' button and a blue 'Purchase Single Issue' button. Further down, a notice states that the full version of the story will be available to all readers after 2 weeks. Below this, it explains that full versions of news stories from the most recent 2 weeks are available to online subscribers only, while older stories are available for free in the archive. A login section follows with the text 'Not an online subscriber yet? Sign Up Here' and 'Purchase this online single issue Purchase Now'. The login form includes fields for 'Username' (containing 'ops@our-hometown.com') and 'Password' (masked with dots), a 'Remember Me' checkbox which is checked, and a 'Log In' button.

Search ... 🔍 Menu ☰ Log In Buy Single Issue Subscribe News Alerts Privacy Policy Submit News f 🐦

## Comin' through!

1 December 16, 2020

Tugboats move the Noble Danny Adkins semisubmersible offshore rig through the Corpus Christi Ship Channel in Port Aransas on Saturday, Dec. 12. The Port Aransas ferry landings can be seen at middle right. Movement of the massive structure attracted spectators on shore. (More photos on Page 5A.)

Subscribe Purchase Single Issue

The full version of this story will be available to all readers after **2 weeks**.

Full versions of news stories from the most recent 2 weeks are available to online subscribers only. Access to full versions of news stories from issues older than 2 weeks are available to all readers for free in our [archive](#) of all issues.

Not an online subscriber yet? [Sign Up Here](#)  
Purchase this online single issue [Purchase Now](#)

Username  
ops@our-hometown.com

Password  
.....

☒ Remember Me

Log In

# Marketing Subscriptions

- Mobile Homepage
- Article Teaser
- **Newsletter**
- Social Media
- Print



\*Automated Coupon Generator

# Case Study: Metered Registration Wall

- ChesterfieldObserver.com
- Free print newspaper
- Launched **Free Registration Wall** with a **Meter**
- After one month, the **Metered (Free) Registration Wall** converted to **Metered Paywall**
- Uses **automated newsletter marketing** tools to offer promo codes to non-subscribers



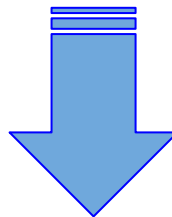
# Marketing Subscriptions

- Mobile Homepage
- Article Teaser
- Newsletter
- **Social Media**
- Print



# Auto-Publish to Social Media

- **New plugin announcement this month**
  - Automatically post every article published on WordPress to your social media channels
  - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Reddit
  - Customize teasers and schedule social push by article
  - Replacement for HootSuite
  - Share to multiple Facebook Pages



# Marketing Subscriptions

- Mobile Homepage
- Article Teaser
- Newsletter
- Social Media
- Print
- [Ideas from our blog](#)
- Video and Audio
  - [YouTube](#)
  - Podcasts

[illegible]

# “Weekly Office Hours” Concept for Newspapers

- Live Video Webinars are a new way for any business to create engaging content marketing (works very well for Our Hometown)
- Webinar hosted via webcam by the editor or publisher of your newspaper.
- Discuss the top news in the paper and on your website with screenshare. Discuss FAQs
- Promote upcoming events and advertisers
- Invite Subscribers to participate in the live chat
- Re-define what it means to be a subscriber



GoToWebinar



# “Weekly Office Hours” Concept in Practice

- **Wilson County News**

- Facebook Live - Weekly show
- Thursday's at 11am CST



- **Our Hometown Office Hours**

- Private GoToWebinar for publishers on Our Hometown's WordPress Platform
- Video Marketing tool, personalizes the company
- Real-time feedback and questions from customers





# Our Hometown

Final FAQ

“We launched our paywall a few years ago and subscriptions seem to have **leveled out**. What can we do to **increase** and **retain more digital subscribers**?”

*-Publisher in Texas*

# Subscription Sales Blitz

- **Use Newsletter Activity to identify warm leads**
  - Segment newsletter audience into Current, Expired, and Never Subscribers by comparing list with active digital subscriber emails
- **Expired subscribers**
  - Email special offer and follow up with call
- **Current subscribers (Good Customer Service)**
  - Call to get general feedback. If they are free, ask them 2-3 question survey
  - Offer to setup Discounted Gift Subscription
- **Never Subscribers**
  - Offer Free Month, no strings attached. Capture phone number with free registration for future follow up



# Upcoming Virtual Conferences with Our Hometown

- **Growing Your Mobile Audience**
  - Friday, January 8 at 1pm EST
- **Social Media Strategy**
  - Thursday, January 21 at 2pm EST
- **Iowa / Wisconsin / Minnesota - Tristate Virtual Convention**
  - February 4 - 5
- **Audio Articles and Video Podcasting**
  - Thursday, February 18 at 1pm EST



Register at [our-hometown.com/virtual-conferences](https://our-hometown.com/virtual-conferences)

# Our Hometown

## Feedback

- **Before you leave**, please leave a quick comment in the questions area.
  - What did you like/not like about the presentation?
- Winner of our “**First to comment**” contest gets a **free prototype** of their newspaper on WordPress! **Drop your email** in the chat!
- Visit [our-hometown.com/omcwebinar](http://our-hometown.com/omcwebinar) to download a PDF of the presentation.
- Complete a **30 second survey** and qualify for a **FREE prototype** on WordPress!