



# Client Success Story

**How [BN]Tech's paywall  
technology helped The Buffalo News  
to Double Digital subscriptions  
in less than a Year**

<https://bntech.io>

# The Buffalo News is the largest primary newspaper of the Buffalo-Niagara Region dedicated to providing honest, accurate and fair news to the community.

The Buffalo News began publishing online in 1999. At first, the hope was that programmatic revenue would help to offset some of the print decline and would eventually pay for itself. After years of trying that model and realizing that it would not be successful on its own, they launched their first paywall in 2012.

They decided to use a paywall from one of the several third party vendors available at the time. However, after a few years of unsatisfactory results and much frustration both for customers and for the company they were ready to abandon the idea of having a paywall. The system they used had constant technical issues that were making readers unhappy.

Mike Connelly, the Editor of The Buffalo News said,  
“You can’t give readers a bad experience, they will just go somewhere else.”

After a lot of discussions concerning their readers, total revenue and what was in the best interest of the community, they considered dropping their paywall until the Publisher asked one simple question:

“How can we maximize  
subscriber revenue and programmatic advertising revenue while providing our  
paying customers with a good experience?”

This question set their strategy going forward and they decided to look at a different type of paywall system altogether that would solve those issues completely.



# The Search for a New Paywall System

After The Buffalo News tried their first paywall, they noticed that there are many flaws in traditional paywall technology. **One of the biggest flaws in their paywall system at the time was that it was too easy to bypass. Even their paid subscribers didn't bother logging in because it was more hassle than the workarounds.**

Some of the other issues with the previous system were:

- Limited ability to target different rules to different groups of users or content
- Very little reporting capability, which meant that the only approach to setting the meter was arbitrary
- No ability to A/B test different rules, messages, and offers

Brian Connolly, Vice President of Innovation and Business Development, realized that there was no third party vendor paywall that met their needs.

## The Buffalo News needed a paywall system that:

- Allowed for flexibility to adapt to rapidly changing business requirements
- Easy to use and didn't require a great deal technical expertise for minor changes
- Needed a system that created actual measurable results and provided a good ROI

## [BN]Tech paywall solution

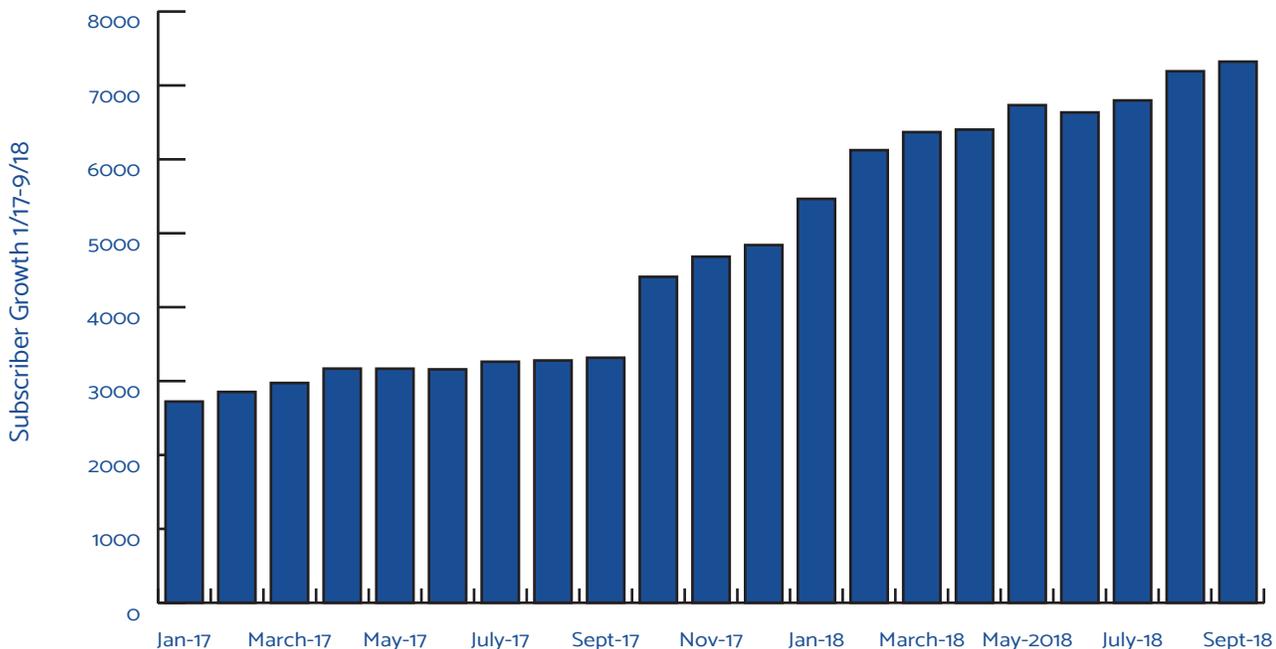
[BN]Tech created a new paywall system that tracks users differently which closes the loopholes in other technology and opens up new digital circulation revenue streams. [BN]Tech is not cookie based, which makes it very unique compared to almost everything else on the market. [BN]Tech has created a paywall that is customizable and fit for a newspaper. Brian Connolly says, "It's worthwhile to invest in something custom". He thinks it's important that [BN]Tech was developed by a newspaper company, "No one knows a newspaper needs like a newspaper company". [BN]Tech has an advantage because the developers have tried other paywalls and they know what works and what doesn't work. They were able to create something unique because of their knowledge of what other options are available.

The Buffalo News has been very satisfied with the results they have had so far. Connolly said "The combination of the data collection plus a paywall that works is magic"

# The Results of the [BN]Tech Paywall on The Buffalo News

The Buffalo News began using the [BN]Tech paywall in 2017 and has since then more than doubled their digital subscribers year after year and have shattered digital subscriber growth goals. Connelly says “The results are unquestionable. It’s driving subscription business and building digital reader revenue which is essential for the future. Our digital subscriptions have more than doubled in the last year.” He recommends this to other newspapers because “it’s built by a newspaper, around a newspaper’s needs, its more aligned with what a news company needs to do”

The Buffalo News Digital Subscriptions



## Looking Ahead

Mike Connelly and Brian Connolly both believe that [BN]Tech has provided the essential components to take digital subscriptions to the next level. By utilizing the growing technology, becoming smarter with collected data, and having more dynamic pricing, metering, and pitching, The Buffalo News expects their return to multiply. They believe that having a quality subscription access solution is essential to moving forward, this is what [BN]Tech provides.

“In a future where, digital reader revenue is the largest driver, The Buffalo News can’t succeed without [BN]Tech” -Mike Connelly