

*The New York Times* is the latest major print media outlet to join the trend toward a subscription based business model. Beginning in 2011, *Times* readers will be charged to access articles after they have reached a monthly allotment of free content. While the shift is intended to boost revenue, it's questionable, and highly likely, that the change might reduce readership and website traffic. As the way people access news transitions away from traditional media, namely print and television, the business models associated with them need to shift as well. Although the model might have worked in the past, one size doesn't fit all.

With the ubiquity of social media and sharing of information through websites like Facebook, Twitter, and Digg, charging to access articles might cause *The New York Times* more problems than solutions. If the goal of a newspaper is to disseminate information, its ability to achieve that goal will be hindered by the inability to easily share links. Busy readers are likely to read an article that is suggested to them by a friend or colleague who knows their interests.

Subscription fees mean that readers will run into problems sharing content with others that have not paid to access *The Times* causing people to look elsewhere for content. With social media and the ability to share content, *The New York Times* and other digital sources are actually able to directly reach an audience that has an immediate interest in their content. *The Times*

is missing an opportunity to reach readers that are naturally interested in their content. They're missing a huge opportunity in a world that is becoming increasingly dominated by social media that is centered around free sharing information.

Not only does *The New York Times'* shift to a subscription based model not solve the problem of revenue lost when readers shift from print to digital, but it alienates those that are already getting their news online, finding articles of interest and sharing them with others.

Check out [Mashable](#) for all the details.