Infographic Report - Subscription in IT

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# Why this topic?

I chose this topic as it is something I feel has not been explored in the wider world when it comes to how the negative aspects could get even worse. There is plenty of coverage in the gaming industry on the outrage towards more extreme usage of subscription and the general dissatisfaction towards subscription in general.

I wanted to research what the benefits of subscription models are and whether my total distrust of the system will come out unscathed after investigating or there really is a future in subscription that works for all.

# What even are subscription models?

The initial idea of subscription is benign, to provide those who cannot afford a whole purchase of an item the opportunity to use it and pay in small instalments as they do. However, on inspection there are quite significant drawbacks without much beyond a surface level dive. The distributor retains ownership of the product in its entirety and can take back access to whatever service you have invested in at any time without rhyme or reason. Granted, this is not done in practice as a company would get an awful reputation and no consumer would give them light of day, but the possibility is there still, and consumers are not protected enough. A customer who spends more than what the buy out cost of a product through subscriptions does not acquire ownership and will only pay more.

## There are five types of subscription models.

### Flat Rate

– A fixed monthly charge for all users who use the product.

### Tiered

– Rates are based on pre-established tiers, an example being a bronze membership and a gold membership where gold is offering more services than bronze and so costs more. You may want one feature in gold but not others yet will have to pay for all.

### Usage Based

– Also known as pay as you go, you are paying based off how much you have used the service after the fact.

### Per Added Module

– Similar to the gold and bronze system but this time the features are separated into individual packages that you can pick and choose from to add up into your total monthly payment, ideally you are not paying for anything you would not like.

### Per User

– This is not for the individual but rather one company that is purchasing another company’s service or product. The provider charges based on the number of users within the purchasing company.

(O'Brien, 2021)

# What to be wary of & bad trends

You could previously purchase photoshop outright in a computer shop through a CD-ROM, this gave you full access to photoshop for as much as you paid for it. In 2013 Adobe launched Creative Cloud; its subscription-based package that included photoshop and it was no longer possible to purchase creative suite (the non-subscription-based model) as of January 9, 2017, now you have full access to it for as long as you pay for it. (Wayback Machine, 2019)

Creative suite 6 ranged from US$1,300 to $2,600 (ProDesign Tools, 2017)

Photoshop is €26.86/month (Adobe, 2023)

1,300 dollars is 1216.80 euro (Wise, 2023)

This equates to just over 45 months which is under 4 years. While assuming that the lower end of the scale is what photoshop would have cost. This tells us that in just under 4 years, also assuming subscription price remains the same, you would have spent more on photoshop than purchasing outright, and the strongest assumption of all is that this is not a long period of time when it comes to somebody who makes their livelihood off using photoshop.

# Design Choices

I went for a simple colour scheme that is used in many places as I wanted the information to be the feature that stood out more than the poster design. As this is an assignment rather than a poster that would be public facing I felt I did not have to use more eye catching choices to stand out amongst the crowd and letting the information speak for itself was best.

# Conclusion

Beware of what seems to be cheaper at face value as it may end up costing you a lot in the long run.

Do not accept subscriptions as the sole future, ownership security is vital to controlling your life.

I learnt that the price of adobe suite was extremely high before, I was expecting it to have been €500 at most. I also expected the current subscription to be no more than €15, I expected them to overcharge but learnt it’s even worse than feared.

# References

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