Allrecipes Increases Customer Retention and Subscription Revenue with Vindicia

Home Cooks Unite
Allrecipes is the world’s largest digital food brand, with 19 sites serving 24 countries in 13 languages. This year 40 million home cooks will visit Allrecipes 1.5 billion times across smartphones, tablets, and PCs, consuming 4 billion pages of shared food experiences to solve everyday food needs. In addition to social connection, Allrecipes delivers an end-to-end meal planning and shopping solution that provides cooks seamless access to information, tools, and services geared to save them time and money. This broad offering includes subscription-based services that give cooks access to advanced tools.

To make subscription easy for home cooks—and for its own team—Allrecipes trusts Vindicia’s CashBox as its subscription and recurring billing platform. “CashBox helps customers to maintain their subscriptions without a lot of back-and-forth about payment details,” says Paul Kriloff, senior manager of customer revenue and customer acquisition marketing for Allrecipes. “On the acquisition side, CashBox gives us flexibility. With CashBox, we get highly effective support for billing-side customer retention and acquisition. It frees our team to focus on acquiring customers by evangelizing Allrecipes Pro.”

More than Billing
Recurring transactions like subscriptions require more proactive billing support than one-time purchases. A brand such as Allrecipes may offer just one or a few subscription services. But with a conventional approach to billing, each new promotion—even a simple virtual coupon—can require days or weeks to create and add to the billing systems. If not done properly, conventional billing can diminish customer trust and satisfaction over time. Billing details can change and temporary issues may cause a card to fail, leaving customers without the services they value until they can resolve the issue.

“When it comes to maintaining strong, long-term relationships with our community, every touch point must provide the best possible experience,” says Kriloff. “There is no room for compromise. You can offer a great service, but without a smooth billing experience, you’re going to miss opportunities to acquire new customers as you lose others over time. CashBox helps us avoid the challenges and inefficiencies that can accompany subscription billing.”

A Seamless Process
The starting point of an Allrecipes subscription typically occurs when a home cook elects to take advantage of a premium feature, such as the menu planner or recipe customization. To attract potential subscribers, Allrecipes creates promotions and sets up promotional pricing in CashBox. After choosing a subscription plan, the customer simply provides a payment method, such as credit card. CashBox manages the transaction, related communications, and renewals. CashBox also resolves many minor billing issues automatically. The integrated tax engine ensures compliance with the customer’s local requirements.

“From promotions and customer service to tax management, CashBox makes the billing side of our processes a breeze,” says Kriloff. “Generating a promotional code in CashBox is fast and easy. It’s basically instantaneous and requires no assistance from IT staff. Integrated reporting gives us the visibility into transactions that we need. For instance, I can easily track conversions from a free trial or other promotion.”
Kriloff adds, “Customers stay informed about their accounts with automated email communication. They can also manage and update their billing information easily. If customers do need help, our customer service agents have instant access to transaction histories, and can modify payment information and grant refunds through CashBox. We’re seeing end-to-end efficiency.”

Using Insight to Optimize Processes

Allrecipes takes advantage of Vindicia Client Business Reviews to gain insight into how it can increase subscription revenues and customer satisfaction. During these reviews, subscription experts from Vindicia share analysis with Allrecipes about its performance over time and as compared to similar subscription businesses. One of the key goals of these reviews is to help Vindicia clients identify opportunities to modify their processes to increase revenues through pricing and renewal optimization.

“Vindicia reaches out to us proactively to make sure our billing processes support our goals,” says Kriloff. “The Vindicia team brings the outputs of their analysis, along with benchmarking data. It’s an opportunity to catch and correct issues that could be affecting revenue. In our case, our overall performance was strong, and we were especially pleased to see how much retention has improved since we started working with Vindicia.”

Increased Revenue with Vindicia

Choosing Vindicia has helped shift the way Allrecipes views subscription billing. “We no longer see subscription billing as just a transaction—it’s a chance to add value for customers,” explains Kriloff. “Home cooks subscribe to Allrecipes Pro Features because they enjoy the way it helps them get more from our site. CashBox minds the billing side of those relationships, improving customer satisfaction and retention.”

According to Kriloff, Allrecipes has seen measurable improvements in retention—and revenue—with Vindicia. He says, “More customers are renewing their subscriptions since we turned to Vindicia. Our transaction success rates have climbed by as much as 10 percent. With its support for acquisition and retention, CashBox has the potential to contribute to even more impressive revenue gains going forward.”