

DRIVING DIGITAL ACCESS.

INMA GLOBAL MEDIA AWARDS

INMA AWARDS ENTRY FOR

11. BEST INITIATIVE TO RETAIN SUBSCRIBERS

 **The New Zealand Herald**



Herald Premium

EXCERPT.

Just 20 months ago, NZME launched NZ Herald Premium (paid digital access). NZME's campaign to retain print subscribers focussed on increasing the number of print subscribers who activated their NZ Herald Premium digital subscription.

A two-pronged approach was adopted, getting full week subscribers to unlock their complimentary NZ Herald Premium access, and getting our part-print subscribers to upgrade to a print/digital bundle.

NZME's success was measured by the number of print subscribers who activated their account, the number upgrading to a print/digital bundle and by the reduction in newspaper subscriber cancellations.



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Herald Premium

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nzherald.co.nz/subscribe

INMA BEST INITIATIVE TO RETAIN SUBSCRIBERS



CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES.

With over 20,000 newspaper subscribers having activated their digital subscription entitlement by the close of 2019, NZME knew NZ Herald Premium was poised for growth. Research and trend analysis confirmed that the single biggest factor driving subscriptions was “distinctive journalism,” which is why NZME invested heavily in boosting core journalism resources, new partnerships offering diverse content and storytelling. All helping to reinforce NZ Herald’s 158-year-old reputation as a trusted source of news.



CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES.

- Sizing up Herald print subscribers, NZME's objective was to activate 40% of this group, by the end of 2020, to unlock their digital entitlement, as part of their print subscription for no additional cost increasing the value they got from their print subscription, reducing the likelihood of them cancelling their print subscription and starting their transition to a digital only subscriber in the future.
- With subscriber retention fundamental to growth, NZME instituted a campaign to activate the print subscribers with their digital access via a multi-channel approach including direct mail, email, outbound calling, editorial messaging, targeted Facebook ads and ads in the paper.



CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES.

- A promotion targeting subscribers that got the newspaper only a few days a week to upgrade their subscription to a print/digital bundle for a special price of \$1 per week was developed, with the objective of reducing the number of part print subscribers by 10%.
- A promotion bundling a free trial of the newspaper with digital access, set the stage for those readers who purchased a print subscription to be more likely to use digital.



CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES.

- NZME projected that there would be improved sales conversion from readers moving from a free trial to a paid print subscription due to the print subscription trial including NZ Herald Premium digital access.
- Minimising subscriber losses was paramount to the preservation of a core group of print subscribers. While we expected a degree of print subscription cannibalisation as NZME ramped up the Herald Premium campaign, we expected the increased value of a subscription would retain subscribers.



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 Herald Premium



CAMPAIGN RESULTS.

Just 20 months ago, NZME launched NZ Herald Premium (paid digital access) pleased to have seized the first mover advantage but cognisant of the possibility that paid digital subscription could rile our print audience and cause them to cancel their print subscription and move to digital only.

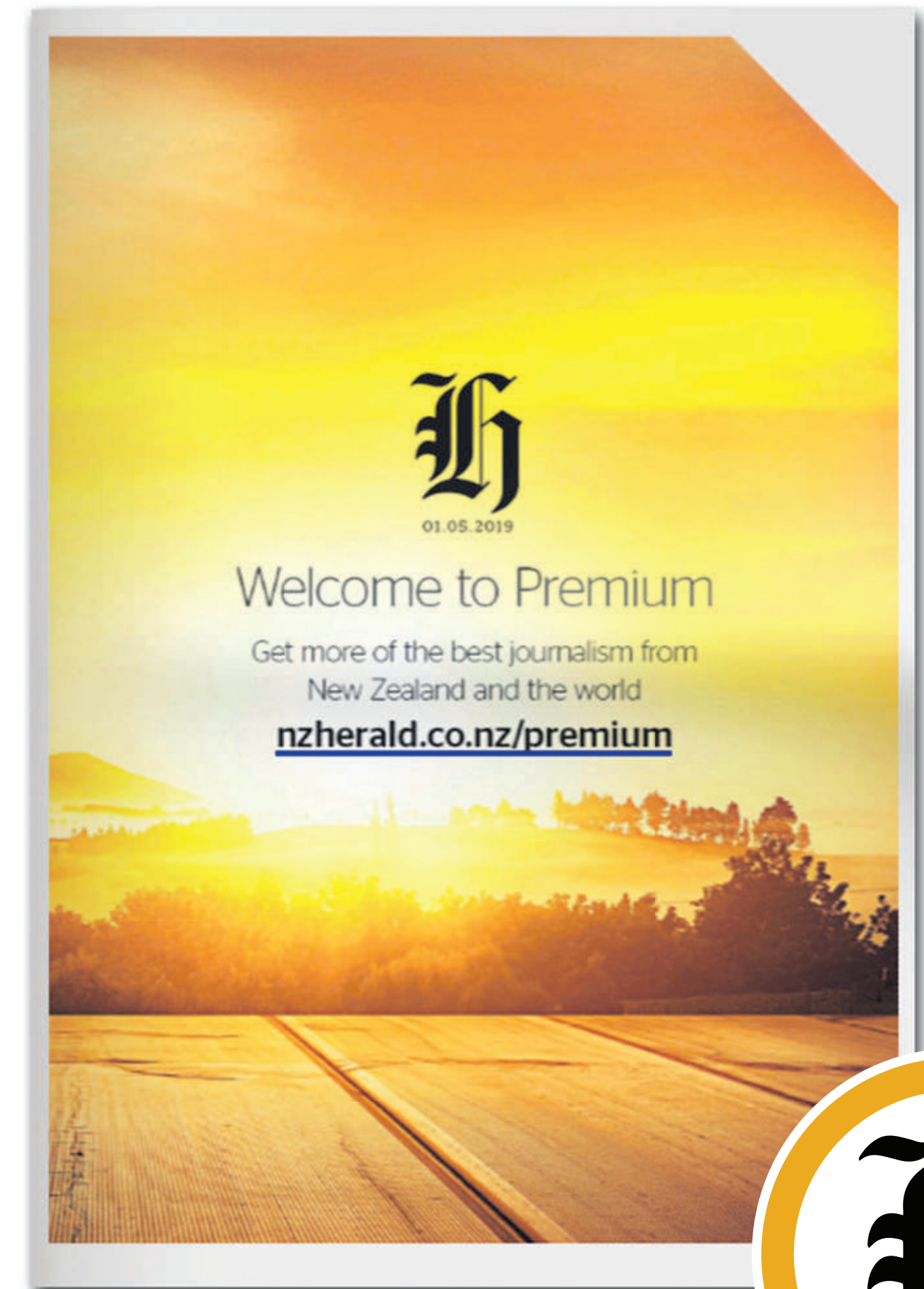
Turns out we had little to worry about and much to celebrate as our retention initiatives far exceeded our expectations.

In just 20 months, NZME successfully activated over 50% of all eligible NZ Herald print subscribers, eclipsing our 40% target at year end. The result compares to a 2019 study of the U.S. metropolitan newspapers, which saw print subscriber activation rates ranging from 13% to 63% - a median of 42%



CAMPAIGN RESULTS.

- The spectacular success of NZME's strategy stems from adding free digital access as part of a print trial and integrating multi-channel activation messages to print subscribers.
- The campaign to upgrade part week, (less than 5 days per week) print subscribers to a bundled subscription exceeded target with over 11% of subscribers upgraded.
- Engagement stats show that print subscriptions have impressive digital engagement (36% of print activated subs are in the highest digital engagement segment) again helping to increase the value they place on their subscription.



CAMPAIGN RESULTS.

- As more subscribers activated their digital entitlement, or upgraded to a bundle, an 8% YOY decline in print subscription cancellations occurred, reflecting the success of NZME integrating digital activation messaging into our customer journeys.
- In just 20 months, our subscriber penetration rate - or the proportion of subscribers compared to nzherald.co.nz audience - reached almost 5%, which is significantly higher than industry benchmarks of 2%-4% based on studies by FTI Consulting and Mather Economics.
- The biggest learning from this campaign is that subscribers don't cancel print to move to digital. Not only that, but retention benefits also exist for print subscribers. NZME will continue to activate its print subscribers in order to improve their retention rates.



NZME CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE TEAM.



INMA BEST INITIATIVE TO RETAIN SUBSCRIBERS



Herald Premium