

Recommended Reading for Subscription Marketers

If you're looking for good books to help you with the strategies in this book, here are a few of my favorites.

[*The Automatic Customer: Creating a Subscription Business in Any Industry*](#), by John Warrilow (Portfolio). This book identifies and labels *nine* distinct variations on the business model. Author John Warrilow discusses the differences in these variations, as well as their fit for different industries and businesses. The book does a great job of describing the overall benefits of a subscription model, as well as the revenue metrics that businesses should track in a recurring revenue environment

[*Brand Against the Machine*](#), by John Morgan (Wiley). This book is a compelling discussion of the realities of branding in today's world. It's full of actionable insight, and aligns well with value nurturing objectives of building a customer-focused brand and earning customer trust.

[*Branding Basics for Small Businesses*](#), by Maria Ross (NorLights Press). I read the book after hearing Maria talk. Despite the title, her no-nonsense approach to branding makes sense for businesses of all sizes. She offers great advice about true brand consistency.

[*Content, Inc.: How Entrepreneurs Use Content to Build Massive Audiences and Create Radically Successful Businesses*](#), by Joe Pulizzi (McGraw-Hill Education). Pulizzi proposes that we begin with subscription content, and then build out to figure out what they should sell. A company founded on this premise will develop a corporate culture based on adding value through content and aligning with customers' values—both core value-nurturing practices.

[*Difference: The One Page Method for Reimagining Your Business and Reinventing Your Marketing*](#), by Bernadette Jiwa (The Story Of Telling Press). This book is a fast but inspiring read, calling us to create a real difference in customers' lives.

[*Epic Content Marketing*](#), by Joe Pulizzi (McGraw-Hill Education). Pulizzi compiles everything you might need to know about content marketing in one place. It's the modern content marketer's definitive source.

[*Everybody Writes: Your Go-To Guide for Creating Ridiculously Good Content*](#), by Ann Handley (Wiley). I love Ann Handley's writing—here's your chance to find out why it's so good. This book offers insight into how to make marketing writing both fun and personable. Even if you're an expert writer, you'll find much to love in this book.

[*Marketing Above the Noise*](#), by Linda Popky (Bibliomotion). This book is a comprehensive tour of effective marketing practices, incorporating the latest trends but not letting them

distract the reader from long-term objectives. Linda also touches on the topic of marketing to customers: “Your marketing should reinforce the wisdom of the customer’s choice.”

[*The Membership Economy*](#), by Robbie Kellman Baxter (McGraw-Hill Education). In *The Membership Economy*, Robbie shares her insider’s perspective into the challenges and opportunities of building a membership-based business. After the necessary discussion of terminology and trends, she dives into seven key strategies and tactics for membership businesses, including onboarding, pricing and technology.

[*The New Rules of Sales and Service*](#), by David Meerman Scott (Wiley). David Meerman Scott redefined marketing several years ago, with his *New Rules of Marketing and PR*. In this new book, he highlights the challenges of ongoing customer engagement. The topic is highly relevant for a marketer in a subscription-based business, as the divisions between marketing, sales, and service are shrinking.

[*Stop Boring Me: How to Create Kick-Ass Marketing, Products and Ideas Through the Power of Improv*](#), by Kathy Klotz-Guest (Substantium). The book offers guidance for creating better, more effective marketing content by applying the essential principles of improv comedy. As you might expect, reading it is fun; the text is filled with entertaining stories as well as spot-on examples.

[*Thinking Fast and Slow*](#), by Daniel Kahneman (Farrar, Straus and Giroux). He may have won the Nobel Prize for Economics, but marketers everywhere should offer up thanks to Kahneman for explaining our irrational (and lazy) thought systems. To empathize with your customers, it helps to understand how they’re thinking. This book reveals the vagaries of human decisions and thoughts.

[*To Sell Is Human*](#), by Daniel Pink (Riverhead Books). This book is less about sales and more about human nature, empathy, and persuasion. It’s an entertaining read filled with useful insight.

[*True Story: How to Combine Story and Action to Transform Your Business*](#), by Ty Montague (Harvard Business Review Press). This book insists that brands must go beyond storytelling to *storydoing*. Montague describes how an authentic corporate metastory transcends marketing and informs business actions.

[*Winning the Story Wars*](#), by Jonah Sachs (Harvard Business Review Press). This book elevates marketing to another level, calling on Joseph Campbell’s hero’s journey, cultural myths, and Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Sachs’s call for an end to “inadequacy” marketing and a new, empowering approach to marketing is inspiring.

[*Youtility: Why Smart Marketing is about Help, Not Hype*](#), by Jay Baer (Penguin Group LLC). The title encapsulates the meaning of the book and Baer’s approach to marketing, combining utility with a focus on the customer or audience. In the subscription marketing context, the concepts also apply when you’re nurturing value for existing customers. By focusing on being helpful and practicing Youtility, marketers add value outside the solutions they sell.