Le Monde

France

100%

of in-person Le Monde Ateliers events sold out

70%

of Les Ateliers customers are existing Le Monde subscribers

> “ Publishers can create value for their brand not only by producing news content. Readers have the added opportunity to get in touch with their favourite publishers and are ready to spend more.”
>
> Pierre Cirignano
> Deputy Director for Diversification, Le Monde

The challenge

Le Monde is the leading global French-language news brand and the most trusted national newspaper in France, according to a 2021 poll by Reuters.1 To maintain growth and operate profitably amid rising print costs, Le Monde’s team has two goals: to reach 1 million digital subscribers by 2025, and increase average revenue per subscriber. The team was looking for opportunities to create services beyond its editorial products that would appeal to its existing subscribers as well as attract new users to the brand.

With support from Google News Initiative, Le Monde created Le Monde Ateliers, a new programme of digital and live talks delivered by expert speakers. The events cover a range of subjects, from novel writing to geopolitics.

Le Monde's highly respected editorial board selected speakers or drew on staff. They have included comic strip illustrator Lewis Trondheim and novelist Véronique Ovaldé. Offering workshops with such respected experts offers a competitive advantage over other services, says Pierre Cirignano, Le Monde’s deputy director for diversification. The programme launched in November 2021 with three types of events on offer: in-person, instructive workshops for small groups; evening masterclasses delivered in person and online; and on-demand video courses.

The results

Early signs suggest the programme is attracting a new audience to Le Monde and giving existing subscribers more opportunities to interact with its services.

To date, 70% of attendees were existing Le Monde subscribers, and 30% were non-subscribers. All in-person Ateliers sessions were sold out and received very positive reviews from attendees.

“It seems that we were right about the high affinity between the offer and our core fans; they were waiting for this kind of offer and ready to spend more with us,” says Cirignano. Going forward, he adds, Le Monde would like to reach beyond its existing readers.

Cirignano and his team are actively targeting 50,000 Ateliers users from among Le Monde’s subscribers (roughly 10% of subscribers), 30,000 readers of Le Monde who do not pay for subscriptions, and a further 50,000 new users.

Cirignano says there are plans to invest in more online course production and other new developments, if the audience insights suggest that there is enough demand. Ultimately, the plan is to launch a dedicated subscription offer for Le Monde Ateliers.

[1] Reuters Institute, France, Digital News Report, 2021.