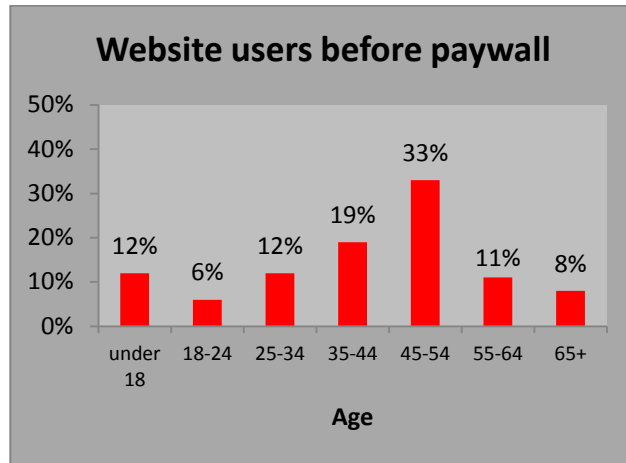


# Demographic study of a daily newspaper's free website users vs. digital subscribers

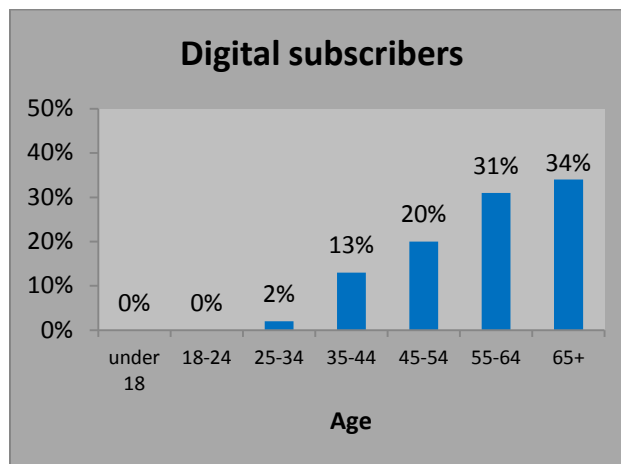
[Our-Hometown.com](http://Our-Hometown.com)

Everyone in the community newspaper industry knows their readers skew older, so it was no surprise when a study of the ages of digital subscribers to the [Times Record](#), a daily community newspaper in Brunswick, Maine, had a considerable number above age 50.

One might think that a “digital” offering would attract younger people but quite the opposite is true. This report compares user age demographics before implementing a paywall and the digital subscribers to the website after the paywall went up. Here's the free website user data from [Quantcast](#) as of Nov. 2011:



While the Times Record website was free, there was the expected age distribution of readers with the average age being about 43. Here's the digital subscriber data fifteen days after the paywall went up on January 2, 2012:



Digital subscriptions are undeniably more skewed toward an older demographic when compared to those that used the free website. The average age of digital subscribers is 59 where the average age of users of the free website is about 43.

We propose that this trend may be due to the fact that older prospective digital subscribers have one or more of these attributes: they place greater value on the content, have more disposable income or have more time to utilize the content.