

Beyond First Click

Redesigning onboarding for supporters

How we're focussing on **early life engagement** and **High Value Actions** to reduce churn for the Guardian

The
Guardian

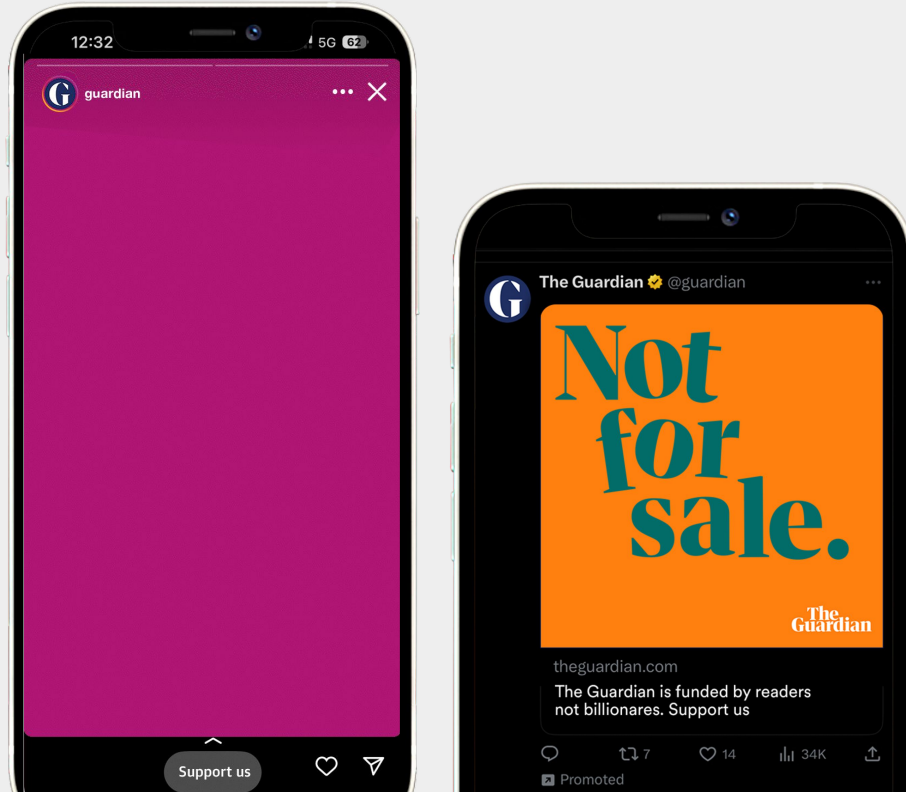


Yvienne Ribao
Senior CRM Manager



Aislinn Mallon
*Head of CRM –
Engagement*

| Open to all, funded by many, beholden to no one



The Guardian's business structure and ownership make it unique as a media organisation:

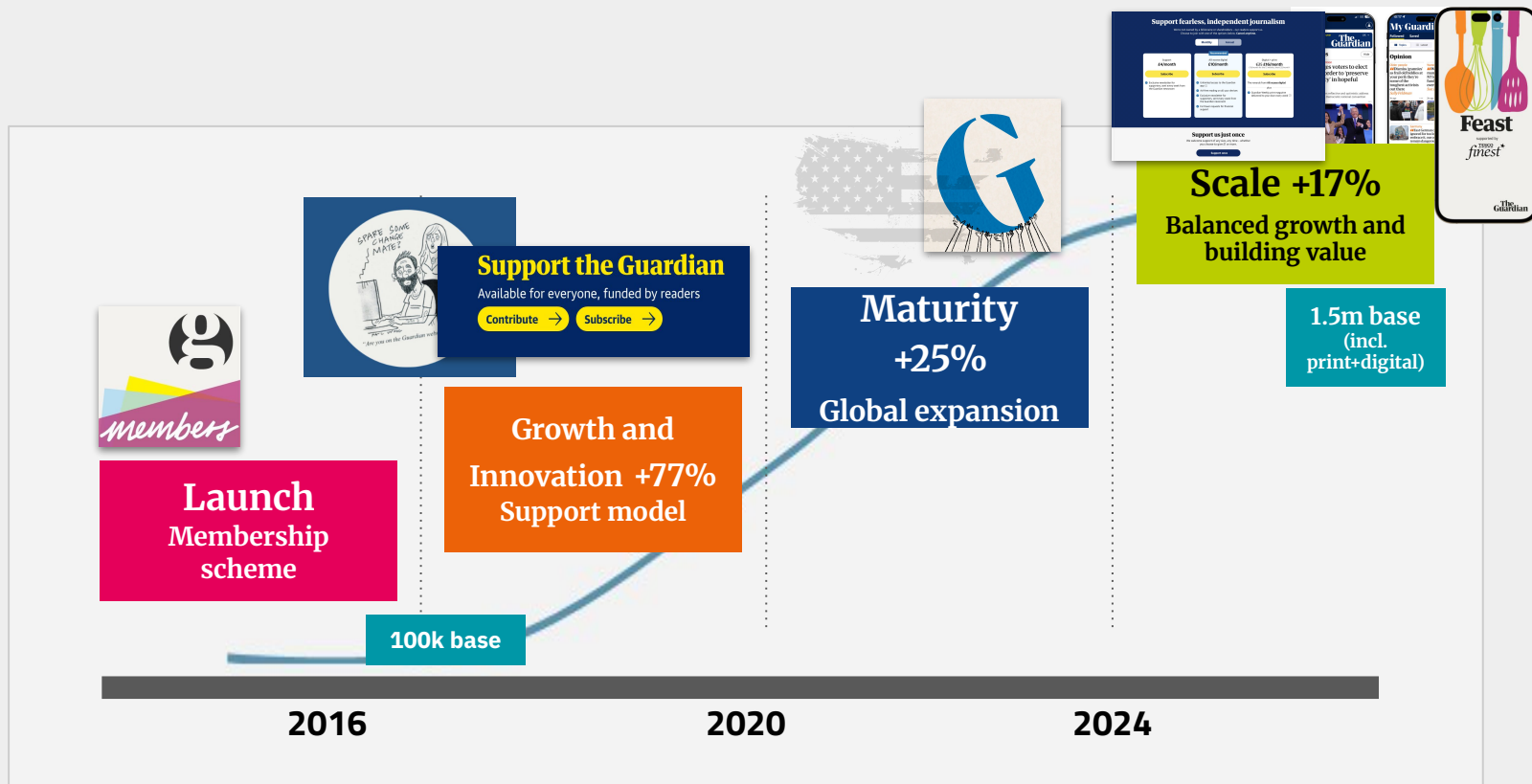
- No paywall (open to all)
- Reader supported (funded by many)
- No billionaire owner or stakeholders (beholden to no one)

There are several paths to support digitally

The screenshot shows The Guardian's digital support campaign page. At the top, it says 'United States US\$' and 'The Guardian'. A countdown timer shows '04 08 56 06' (days, hours, minutes, seconds). The main headline is '4 days left of our campaign. Can you help?'. Below this, a message states: 'We're not owned by a billionaire or shareholders - our readers support us. The best way to fund our crucial journalism is on a monthly basis. Cancel anytime.' A progress bar indicates 'Can you help us hit our supporter target?' with '41,876 of 50,000 goal'. There are two tabs: 'Monthly' and 'Annual'. The 'Monthly' tab is selected, showing three options: 'Support \$5/month', 'All-access digital \$15/month' (marked 'Recommended'), and 'Digital + print \$45/month'. Each option has a 'Support' button. The 'All-access digital' option lists benefits: 'Unlimited access to the Guardian app', 'Ad-free reading on all your devices', 'Regular dispatches from the newsroom to see the impact of your support', 'Far fewer asks for support', and 'Unlimited access to the Guardian Feast app'. The 'Digital + print' option lists 'The rewards from All-access digital plus Guardian Weekly print magazine delivered to your door every week'. Below the monthly options, there is a section 'Support us just once' with a 'Support now' button. At the bottom, there is a section 'Support another way' with a link to 'help page'. The footer contains links for 'Privacy policy', 'Privacy settings', 'Contact us', and 'Help centre', along with a 'Back to top' button and a copyright notice: '© 2025 Guardian News & Media Limited or its affiliated companies. All rights reserved.'

- **One-time:** Single contribution, no benefits
- **Recurring contribution:** No benefits
- **All access digital:** Our digital subscription, includes benefits
- **Digital Plus:** Digital + print subscription, includes Guardian Weekly

Our 10 year journey



Our global digital base

1.4m
total recurring
supporters
around the globe

**US and
Canada
500k**
+228k single
contributions

**UK
550k**
+56k single
contributions

**Europe
196k**
+38k single
contributions

**Rest of world
33k**
+6k single
contributions

**Australia &
New Zealand
164k**
+34k single
contributions

| Overview of our retention strategy



**Drive
Annual**



**Increase
Frequency**



**Deepen
value &
experiences**



**Retain at
cancellation
point**



**Reduce
payment
failure**

Pre-empt churn

Retain

| What are High Value Actions?

High Value Actions are **engagement signals** that help us to understand **engagement depth, support readiness and supporter value** across the lifecycle



High Value Actions are strongly correlated with **higher support propensity** and **lower churn risk**

Attended a
Guardian
Live event

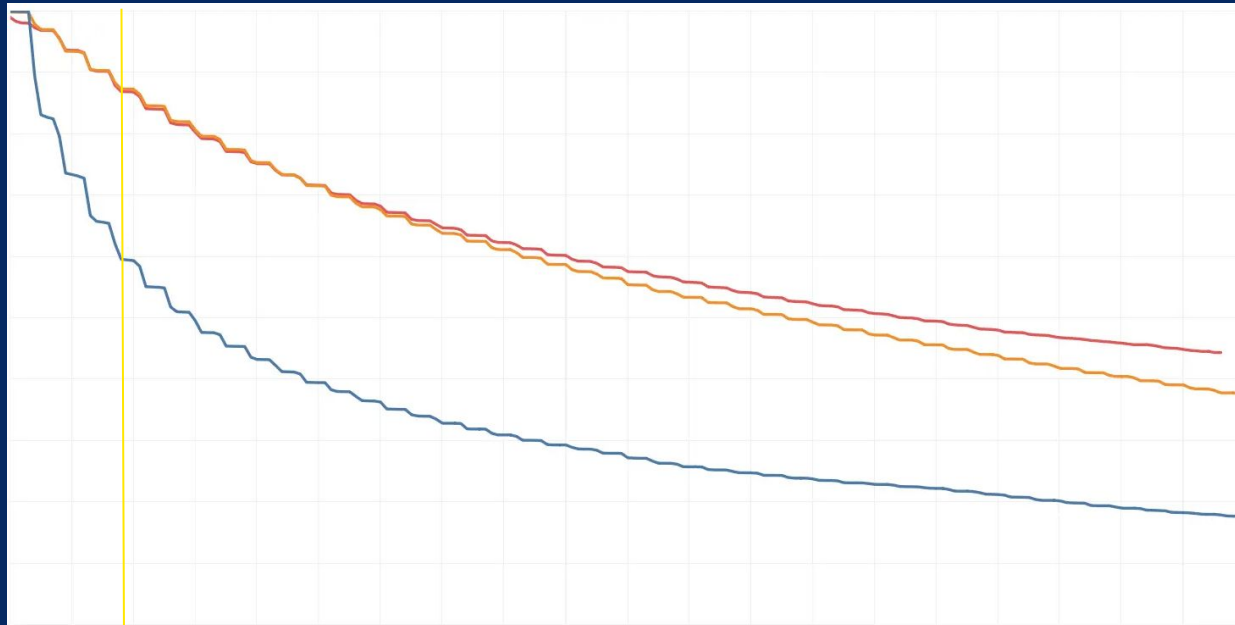
Subscribed to
an **editorial**
newsletter

Downloaded
Feast app

Downloaded
News app

Played
Puzzles

| Onboarding: why focus on the first four months?



We see our
biggest retention
drop off in the
first four months

User journey

Meet Laura

Profile

A loyal reader for
over two years

Motivation

Full experience
across all her
devices

Personalisation
recommendations

Mindset

Relieved the
purchase is
complete, but she
is time-poor



Old onboarding experience: web

"I have to sign-in again?"

"I've already downloaded the Live app..."

"What's Feast? Why should I download this?"

"Can't be bothered to read this"

The Guardian

Secure transaction

Your subscription

Change

All-access digital View details

Total £12/month

Auto-renews every month until you cancel. Cancel or change your support anytime. If you cancel within the first 14 days, you will receive a full refund.

1. Your details

Email address

Confirm email address

First name

Last name

2. Payment method

☐ Direct debit

☐ Credit/Debit card

☐ PayPal

Pay £12 per month

If you pay at least £12 per month, you will receive the All-access digital benefits on a subscription basis. If you increase your payment per month, these additional benefits will be included monthly without further contribution to the Guardian. The All-access digital subscription and any contributions will auto-renew every month. You will be charged the subscription and contribution amounts using your chosen payment method at each renewal unless you cancel. You can cancel your subscription or change your contribution at any time before your next renewal date. If you cancel or refuse to pay a contribution, your subscription and any contribution will stop immediately. Cancellation of your subscription will also cancel any contribution or contribution of your contribution made after 14 days will not be refunded. If you cancel, you are agreeing to our [Terms and Conditions](#). To find out what personal data we collect and how we use it, please visit our [Privacy Policy](#). All card payments are processed by Stripe. Read the [Stripe Privacy Policy](#) and [Stripe's conditions](#).

The Guardian

Thank you Helene for supporting us with £12 each month

Look out for your exclusive newsletter from our supporter editor. We'll also be in touch with other great ways to get closer to Guardian journalism. Adjust your email preferences at any time via [your account](#). In the meantime, please sign in to get the best supporter experience.

Complete your Guardian account

Please validate your email address today so we can recognise you as a valued supporter when you visit our website or app. This means we will:

- Show you far fewer requests for financial support
- Offer you a simple way to manage your support payments and newsletter subscriptions

Make sure you sign in on each of the devices you use to read our journalism - either today or next time you use them.

Explore your subscriber's app

The Guardian News app
Unlock limitless Guardian journalism in our quality news app today.

The Guardian Feast app
Make a feast out of anything with the Guardian's new recipe app : Feast.

Share your support

Invite your followers to support the Guardian's open, independent reporting.

Return to the Guardian

If you have any questions about supporting the Guardian, please contact our customer service team.

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The Guardian

Complete registration Sign in

Gaby Hinsliff

Having women in power was supposed to change everything



'Sometimes I explode'

John Fogerty on Creedence, contracts and control



'Wh live Em high UK'

News Opinion Sport Culture Lifestyle

World UK Climate crisis Ukraine Environment Science

News

Ukraine

Putin ready to make Ukraine deal, Trump says before Alaska summit

New onboarding experience: web

Action 1: Complete your account

"Looks like I
haven't
finished"

"I'm reassured
I purchased
what I
selected"

15:40 theguardian.com

The Guardian

Thank you Charley for subscribing to All-access digital
You've just joined over 1.3m others who support independent journalism.

Create your account
Unlock the premium experience, online and in the app.

Email address
name.surname@gmail.com

Create your account

This service is protected by reCAPTCHA and the Google [privacy policy](#) and [terms of service](#) apply.

Purchase summary
Thanks for your payment. We've sent a payment confirmation email to [name.surname@gmail.com](#).

Payment details

Product	All-access digital
Amount paid today	£12/month
Payment method	Credit/Debit card

Your benefits

- Far fewer asks for support
- Ad-free reading on all your devices

15:40 theguardian.com

The Guardian

Thank you Charley for subscribing to All-access digital
You've just joined over 1.3m others who support independent journalism.

Enter your code
We've sent a temporary verification code to [name.surname@theguardian.com](#). Please check your inbox.
For your security, the verification code will expire in 30 minutes.

Verification code

Submit verification code

Didn't get the email? Check your spam or [send again](#)

For further assistance, email our customer service team at [signinsupport@theguardian.com](#)

Purchase summary
Thanks for your payment. We've sent a payment confirmation email to [name.surname@gmail.com](#).

Payment details

Product	All-access digital
Amount paid today	£12/month
Payment method	Credit/Debit card

09:12 theguardian.com

The Guardian
To: name.surname@gmail.com
Reply to: noreply@theguardian.com

785271 - Your one-time code

The Guardian

Your one-time passcode
This passcode can only be used once. Do not share this code with anyone. This code will expire in 30 minutes.

785271
If your code has expired, please request a new code.

If you did not request this code, you can safely disregard this email.

Checking for Mail...

15:40 theguardian.com

The Guardian

Thank you Charley for subscribing to All-access digital
You've just joined over 1.3m others who support independent journalism.

Enter your code
We've sent a temporary verification code to [name.surname@theguardian.com](#). Please check your inbox.
For your security, the verification code will expire in 30 minutes.

Verification code
785271

Submit

Didn't get the email? Check your spam or [send again](#)

For further assistance, email our customer service team at [signinsupport@theguardian.com](#)

Purchase summary
Thanks for your payment. We've sent a payment confirmation email to [name.surname@gmail.com](#).

Payment details

Product	All-access digital
Amount paid today	£12/month
Payment method	Credit/Debit card

"Looks like
I've finished
my account
setup"

15:40 theguardian.com

The Guardian

Thank you Charley for subscribing to All-access digital
You've just joined over 1.3m others who support independent journalism.

Welcome to the Guardian
Your account is set up and ready to go. Now you can explore your exclusive benefits.

Explore your benefits

Skip

Saturday Edition newsletter ☒
An exclusive email highlighting the week's best Guardian journalism from our editor-in-chief, Katharine Viner

Purchase summary
Thanks for your payment. We've sent a payment confirmation email to [name.surname@gmail.com](#).

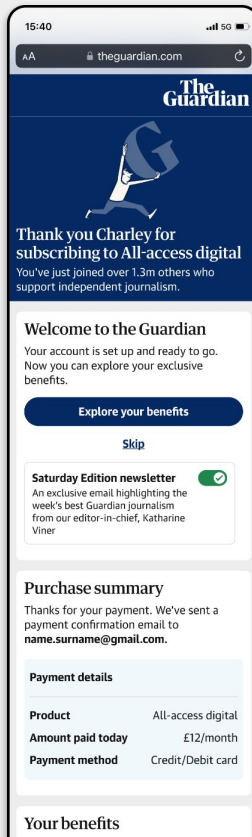
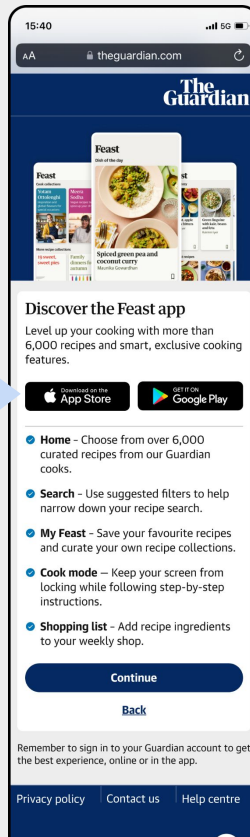
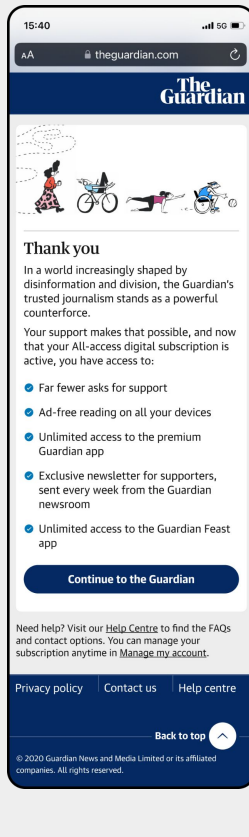
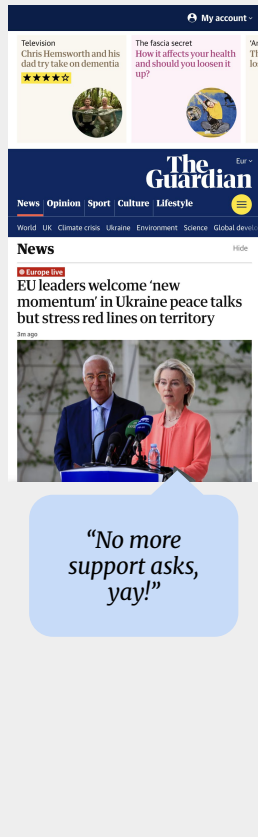
Payment details

Product	All-access digital
Amount paid today	£12/month
Payment method	Credit/Debit card

Your benefits

New onboarding experience: web

Action 2: Explore your benefits



Old onboarding experience: email

Day 1

Day 1/4

Day 4/7

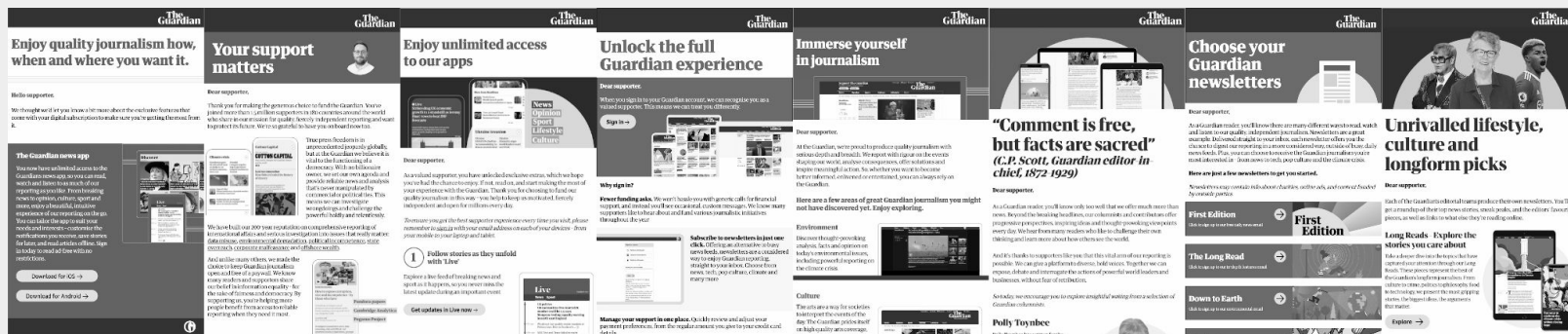
Day 7/10

Day 7/10/13

Day 10/13/16

Day 13/16/19

Day 13/16/19



New onboarding experience: email

Day 1/4

Day 7/10

Day 10/13/16

Day 13/16/19

[illegible]

Day 1

Day 5

Day 7

Day 9

Day 12

Day 14

Day 16

Day 18

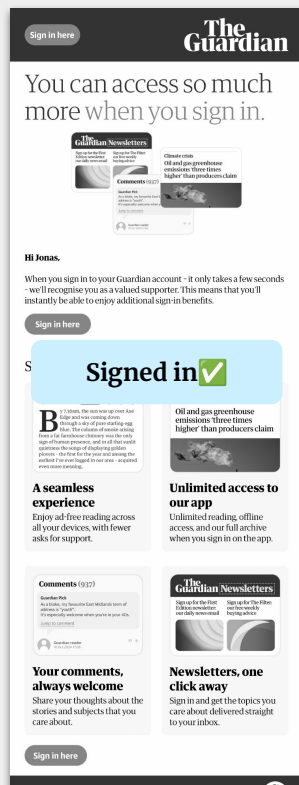
Day 21

Day 24

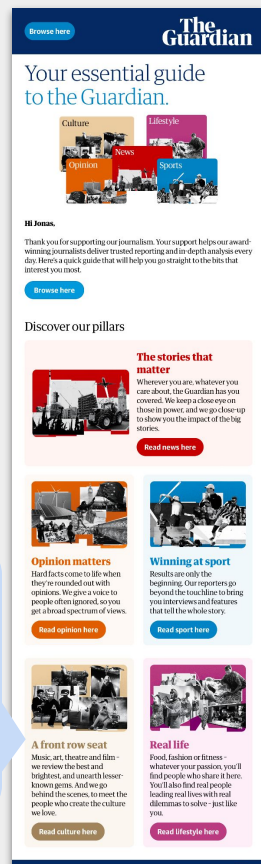
Day 30

[illegible]

New onboarding experience email deepdive: Day 2



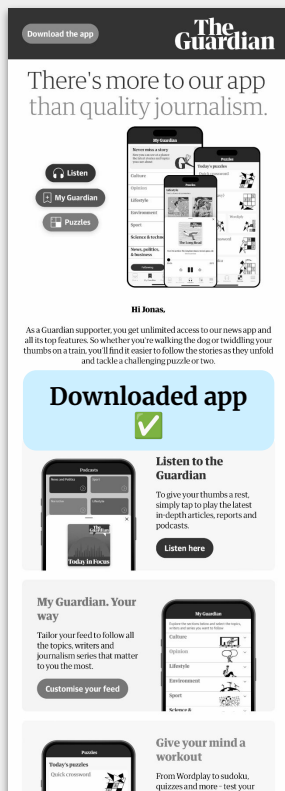
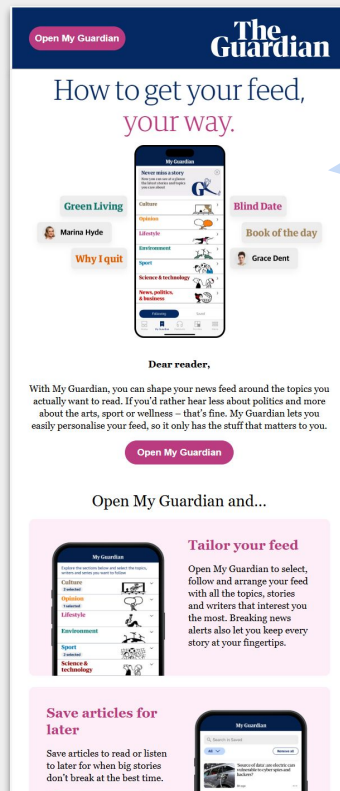
"I'd totally forgotten about the breadth of the Guardian... the culture and lifestyle bits hooked me"



Engagement email to encourage exploration of the Guardian pillars

New onboarding experience email deepdive:

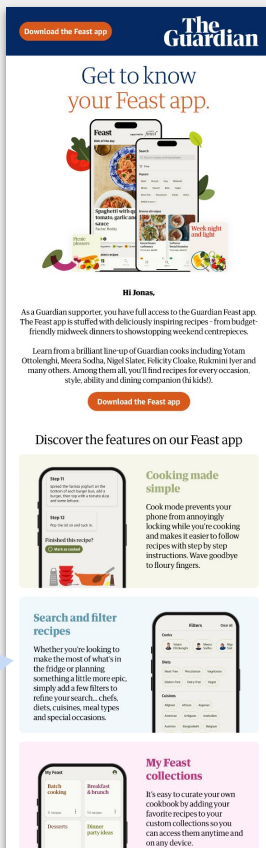
Day 5



"I can curate my feed!?"

A My Guardian email is sent to help them begin personalising their experience.

New onboarding experience email deepdive: Day 7



"I didn't realise Feast had so many features. I still need to download it"

Feast email encouraging them to download the app

New onboarding experience email deepdive: Day 14



Benefits Recap
email to remind
them of the full
range of supporter
benefits

"Good
reminder....I still
need to get the
Feast app"

New onboarding experience email deepdive: Days 16, 18, 21 and 24

"I didn't realise there was this much variety, so much to get into."

Browse here 

Choose from over 50 newsletters. 

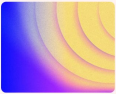
Hi Jonas,

Stay even more connected to the journalism you value most. Whether it's the latest news, arts and culture, food, or in-depth features and opinion, there's a newsletter to suit every interest.

Each one is written by our journalists, bringing you thoughtful updates, fresh perspectives and stories that matter – straight to your inbox.

Browse here

Recommended newsletters



First Edition
Every weekday
Start the day with the top stories from across the Guardian
Sign up here



Football Daily
Every weekday
Kick off your evenings with the Guardian's take on the world of football
Sign up here



The Filter
Extra Sunday
Get smart, sustainable shopping advice from the Filter team to your inbox*
Sign up here

*The Guardian's journalism is independent. We will earn a commission if

Explore now 

Read, watch and listen – all in one place.

Today in focus  **BLACK BOX** 

Hi Jonas,

Experience impactful journalism in your favourite format with the Guardian. Whether you prefer to watch our award-winning documentaries and insightful videos, explore the bigger picture through our galleries, listen to fresh insights on our podcasts, or read our latest articles, the Guardian offers a range of content guaranteed to keep you informed and inspired.

Explore now

A few recommendations to get you started

Today in focus - podcast
Hosted by Helen Pidd, Noshem Ighal and Annie Kelly, Today in Focus brings you closer to Guardian journalism. Combining storytelling with insightful analysis and personal testimonies, the podcast takes you behind the headlines for a deeper understanding of the news, every weekday.

Listen here

Featured: The comeback of the mountain gorilla
Patrick Greenfield hikes up the Virunga mountains in east Africa to trace the remarkable comeback of the mountain gorilla.

Between Moon Tides - documentary
Sea levels are rising in New England at some of the fastest rates in the world, pushing the saltmarsh square towards extinction. Leading a team of citizen scientists, Davide tries to raise their valuable nests to safety. Will this be the year they manage to save them?

Watch here

Explore now 

Go further beyond the headlines. 

Hi Jonas,

At the Guardian, we're proud to produce quality reporting with serious depth and breadth. With so much to explore on our website, we wanted to highlight a few areas you might not have discovered yet.

Explore now

Discover our verticals



Environment
Discover thought-provoking analysis, facts and opinions on environmental issues including powerful reporting on the climate crisis.
Read Environment



International
Conflict, elections, politics and protest: get up to date with all the biggest stories, wherever they are. If it matters, we'll be there.
Read International



Science
Facts are sacred – none more so than the scientific. Discover what make our world a better place. Keep abreast of all the latest breakthroughs in science.
Read Science



Long reads
Some stories need space to be told. Dive deep into rigorously researched and thoughtfully written long reads by some of the world's leading long-form journalists.
Read long reads

Highlights from the Guardian

Climate Crisis
World's top climate scientists expect global heating to blast past 1.5C target

Fitness
From turbo trainers to running buggies: the fitness gear that made you fitter

Browse opinion 

Opinions worth thinking about. 

Hi Jonas,

As a Guardian supporter, you'll know only too well that we offer much more than news. Beyond the breaking headlines, our columnists and contributors offer progressive perspectives, inspiring ideas and thought-provoking viewpoints every day. We hear from many readers who like to challenge their own thinking and learn more about how others see the world.

So today, we encourage you to explore insightful writing from a selection of Guardian columnists and contributors.

Browse opinion

Discover our columnists



Polly Toynbee has written for the Guardian for more than 40 years. Her books include *Disremembered* (how the attack on the state harms us all) co-authored with David Walker.
Read Polly's here



Aditya Chakraberty is senior economics commentator for the Guardian. He has won multiple awards and appears regularly on radio and television.
Read Aditya's here



Marina Hyde has worked for the Guardian since 2000 writing sharp, wickily funny columns on current affairs, celebrity and sport. Her latest book is called *What Just Happened?*
Read Marina's here

Diverse debate, delivered every Saturday.

Sign up for Matters of Opinion

Every Sunday
Guardian columnists and writers on what they've been debating, thinking about, reading, and more
Sign up here

More emails highlighting the Guardian's breadth and depth across key formats

New onboarding experience email deepdive:

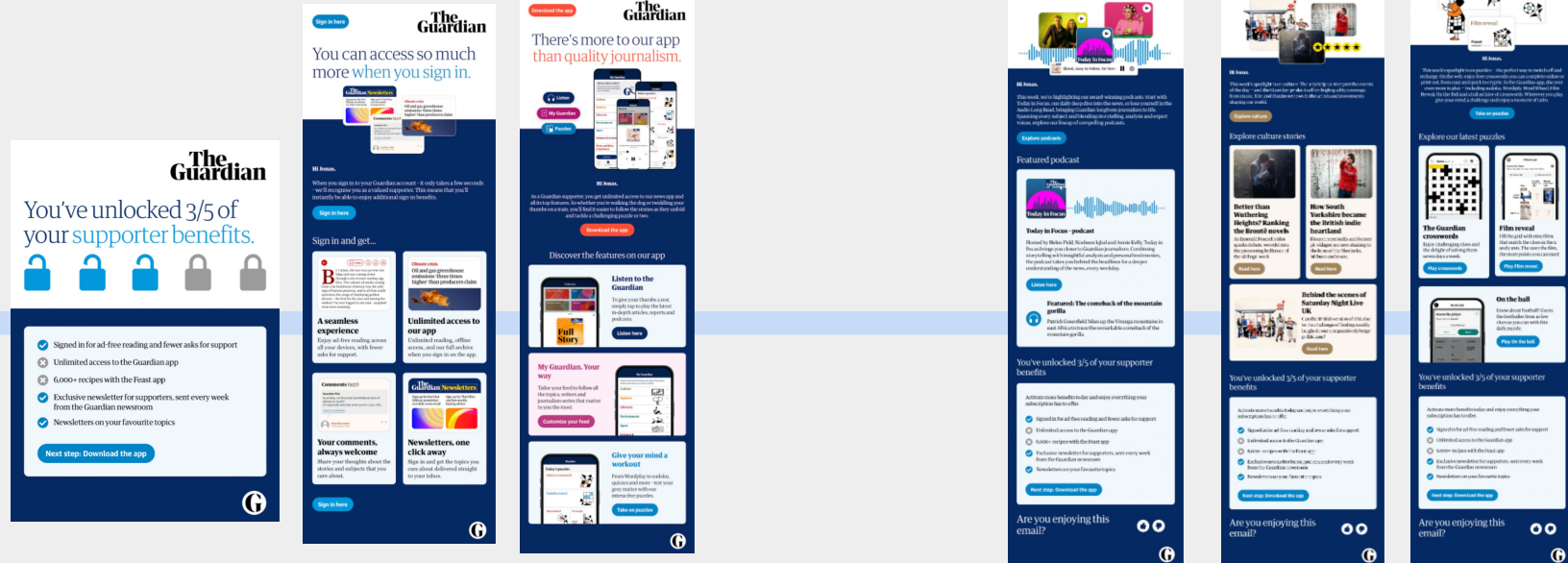
Day 30

"This makes me feel so appreciated."



A day-30
thank-you email
from the editor
with a benefits
recap

Early life : Months 2-4



More emails continuing to promote benefit activation

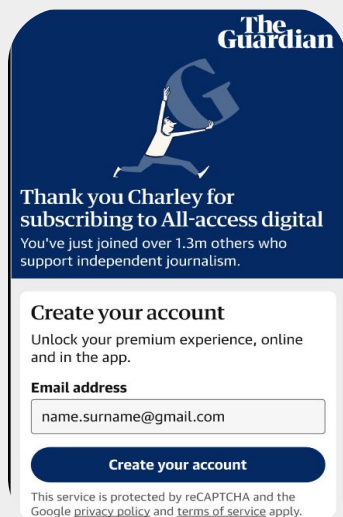
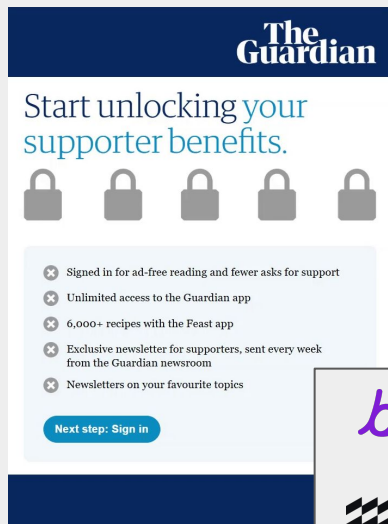
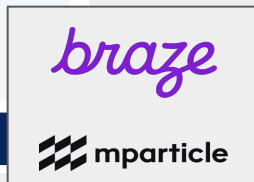
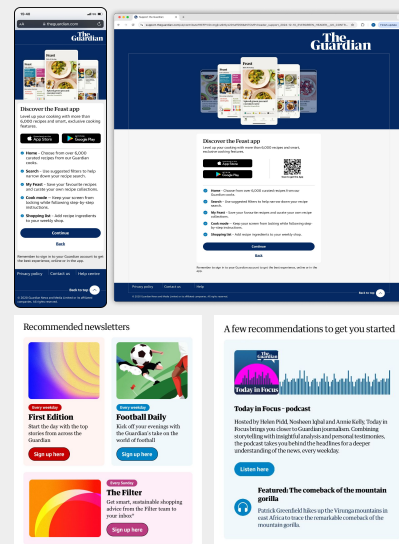
Weekly engagement emails highlighting the Guardian's breadth and depth across key formats

In summary, core updates include:

Optimised sign in experience: Embedded sign-in flow and passcodes

Utilising new martech capabilities: personalisation, multichannel

UX, UI and scalable content management: responsive experience, editable frameworks



Results

Targets

Our challenge: 57% of the All-access digital base made only 0 or 1 HVA

Our goal is to reduce this to 40%

Results

Web Onboarding flow:

- 87% sign-in rate within 24 hours (+7.3pp vs average)
- 35% app downloads in the first 10 days

Email programme:

- Not statistically significant yet
- 20% control group
- Primary KPI: month 5 churn rate

Next steps

Continue High Value Action optimisation

- Increase personalisation across journeys
- Extend on site the onboarding flows

Final takeaway

By reimagining onboarding around meaningful customer actions and extending engagement through the first four months, we're building stronger habits, deepening value, and delivering promising early uptake of high value actions.

Any questions?

**The
Guardian**