



Winning the young ones – how NTM grew their young subscriber base by 500% within a year



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Winning the young ones



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**+500% growth among
young subscribers in
a year... How?!**



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We made it free!

...why?

...how did it work?

...what have we learned?

Who are we?

Sweden's 2nd largest
local news publisher

16 newsrooms

320 reporters

NT
MVT
CORREN
VIMMERBY TIDNING
VÄSTERVIKS-TIDNINGEN

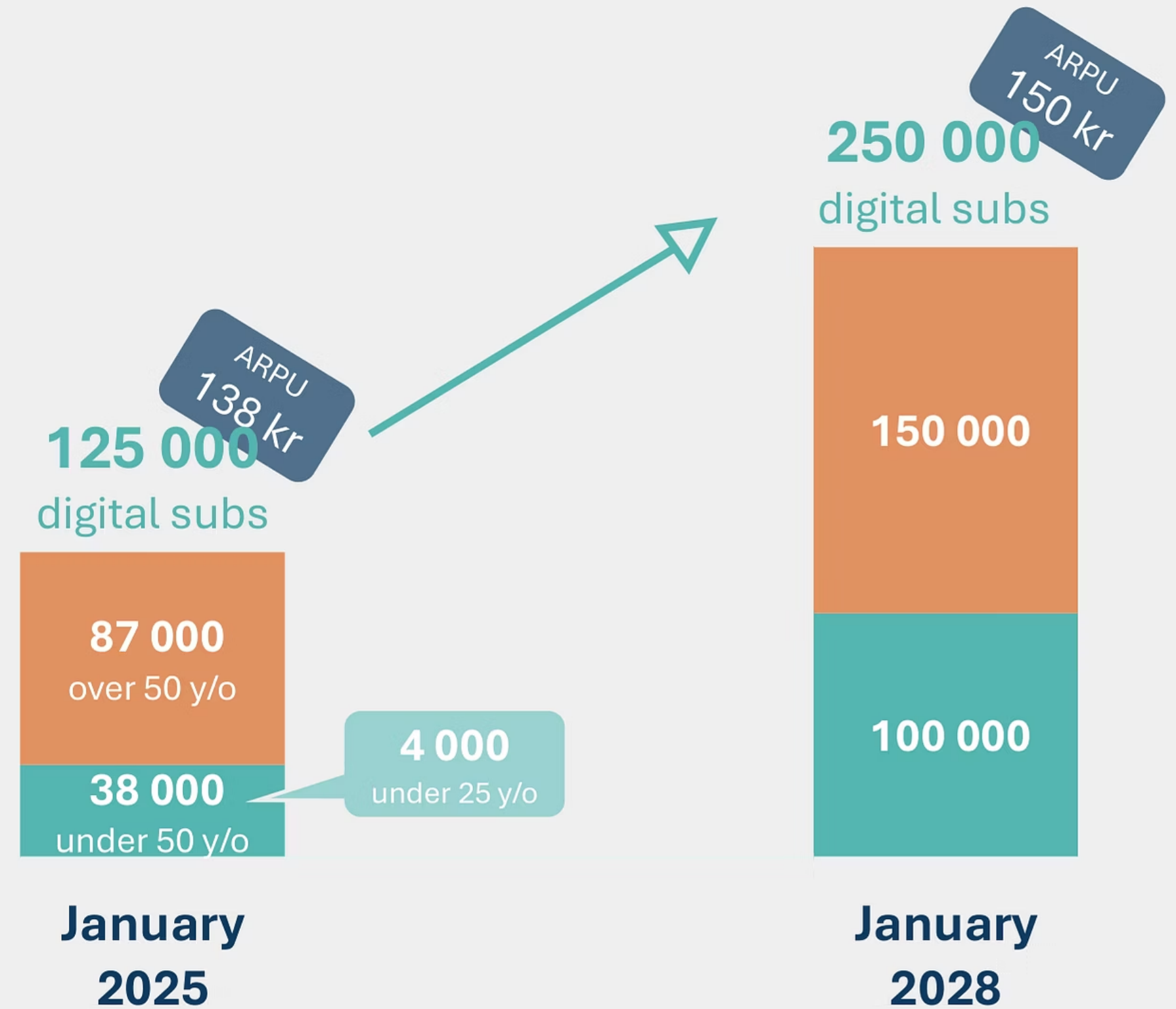
NORRBOTTENS-KURIREN
NSD
PT
NORRAN

UPSALA NYA TIDNING
ENKÖPINGS-POSTEN

ESKILSTUNA-KURIREN
STRENGNÄS TIDNING
KATRINEHOLMSKURIREN
SN

GA
GT
HELAGOTLAND

We started
off last year
with an
ambitious
goal...



2x growth in three years – and 3x growth in our target audience – was not going to be easy. We needed to do things differently.

In our editorial focus

In our relationship-
building

In our commercial
offering

We sharpened our editorial focus on our **younger audience**



All reporters have access to personal dashboards to **follow engagement**



... where we only show engagement data from **those under 50 y/o**



And reporters aim to write **towards the ~30 y/o audience**



The screenshot shows the KILKAYA dashboard with a table titled 'Artikellistan'. The table has columns for 'TITEL', 'BESÖK', 'ARTIKELVISNINGAR I MÅNDRUPP', 'LÄSNADENOM S. BEKUNDET', 'BERÖRDLJUP', 'JÖBBGRUPP', 'PUBLICERAS', and 'ANVÄNDARER'. The data is filtered by 'Hela NTM' and 'Today'.

TITEL	BESÖK	ARTIKELVISNINGAR I MÅNDRUPP	LÄSNADENOM S. BEKUNDET	BERÖRDLJUP	JÖBBGRUPP	PUBLICERAS	ANVÄNDARER
unt.se	Nu inleds rättegången mot de misstänkta för trippelmordet	1 754	2.1%	60%	nyheter	2026-02-18 07:00	uppdatera
rt.se	Misstänkta mordens avstängs i omfattande bygghärra	957	2.0%	67%	nyheter	2026-02-18 03:00	förklara
noan.se	Larm om brand på Skellefteå sjukhus: "Rikshälsning"	886	6.2%	50%	nyheter	2026-02-18 11:06	uppdatera
rad.se	Hemliga telefonsamtalen: "Då ska jag ha kickback"	793	5.3%	61%	nyheter	2026-02-18 00:01	förklara
ekur.se	JUST N2: Här går bombskyddet in - kopplas till nya giftskandalen	800	2.4%	47%	nyheter	2026-02-18 10:31	uppdatera
corren.se	Linköpingsförslaget för kiosk - bara sex av 290 har godkänts	671	3.1%	60%	nyheter	2026-02-18 04:00	förklara
ekur.se	Restaurang kan stänga - för att till kyka	656	2.5%	57%	nyheter	2026-02-18 05:01	uppdatera
noan.se	Hennes pappa dog inne på sjukhusbadrummet: "Inre värld"	619	2.5%	65%	nyheter	2026-02-18 01:00	berika
pt.se	Hemliga telefonsamtalen: "Då ska jag ha kickback"	570	2.5%	70%	nyheter	2026-02-18 03:30	förklara
corren.se	Larm om trafikolycka i industrimråde i Linköping	568	10%	57%	nyheter	2026-02-18 06:03	uppdatera
corren.se	Halva Mjöbry har för långt till mataffären - öppnar för ny butik	539	1.9%	64%	nyheter	2026-02-18 06:00	uppdatera
unt.se	Prågarna om trippelmordet som saknar svar	471	4.5%	70%	nyheter	2026-02-18 03:00	guide
kur.se	Överklagar bygget på Skorpasjön: "Önskar tryggheten"	476	1.9%	65%	nyheter	2026-02-18 05:00	uppdatera
pt.se	PNP har sålt Alfahuset i Djulev	457	4.2%	57%	nyheter	2026-02-18 03:00	uppdatera
rt.se	Bränder hyllar nyföreläsa: "Då tar jag med allt"	456	3.4%	69%	sport	2026-02-18 05:00	uppdatera
ekur.se	Besparingsarna i skolan står direkt mot eleverna	453	2.4%	55%	äskter	2026-02-18 05:30	uppdatera
helagoland.se	Slag till mot alkoholeverans på Skors torget	437	2.0%	63%	nyheter	2026-02-18 05:00	uppdatera
corren.se	Ordförande Träskörs lämnar LHC: "Känt det här ett tag"	430	3.2%	62%	sport	2026-02-18 09:41	förklara
noan.se	Vikessoffören Edvin, 37, omkom i källringolyckan	377	5.3%	59%	nyheter	2026-02-18 10:19	uppdatera

... and begun building **stronger relationships** through our socials



Friendly, accessible **reported-led content** on Instagram and TikTok, building our reporters as local "influencers"

+43%

Instagram
followers
across 16 titles

+200%

One
standout
title

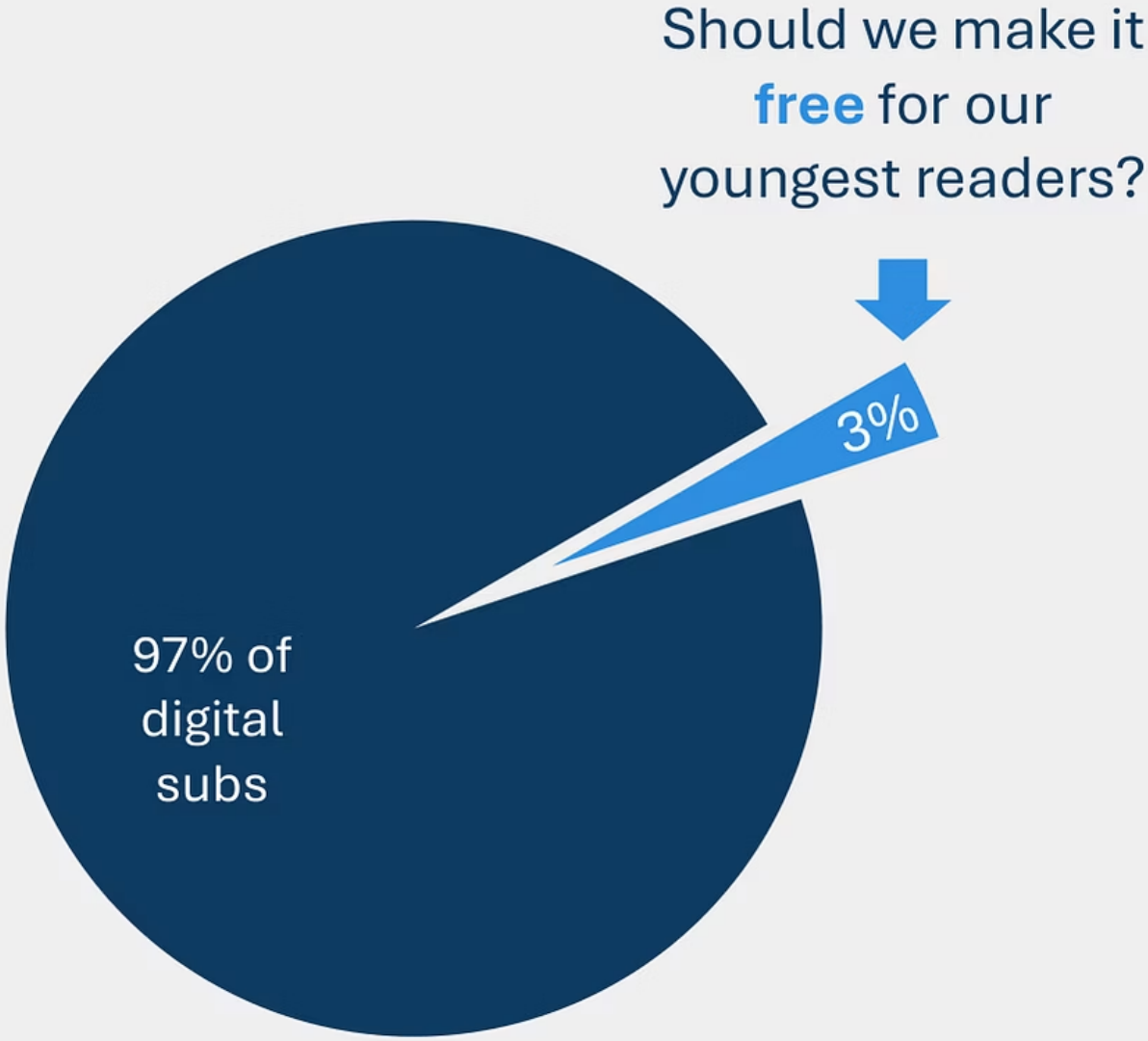
+180%

Reach
from video
content

... but struggled to find deals that converted our youngest readers



So we began discussing...



Thoughts...

- No relationship with core product = 0 willingness to pay
- We don't have time to wait for the perfect product
- We have to build a reading habit, now!

Hopes...

- Time with us = engagement
- An investment in the future
- Learning experience

Fears...

- Loss of revenue
- Account sharing
- Undue access

... and we decided to try it out on **two of our titles**

- › Editorial, commercial, development, analytics – **everyone was onboard.**
- › Limited test period – **june to august 2025.**
- › Transparent process **with distinct KPIs:**

- ✓ **2x increase** in subscribers under 25 y/o
- ✓ **<50% churn** from paying subs in age group
- ✓ **Minimal undue access**
- ✓ Long term, **30% conversion** to paying subs

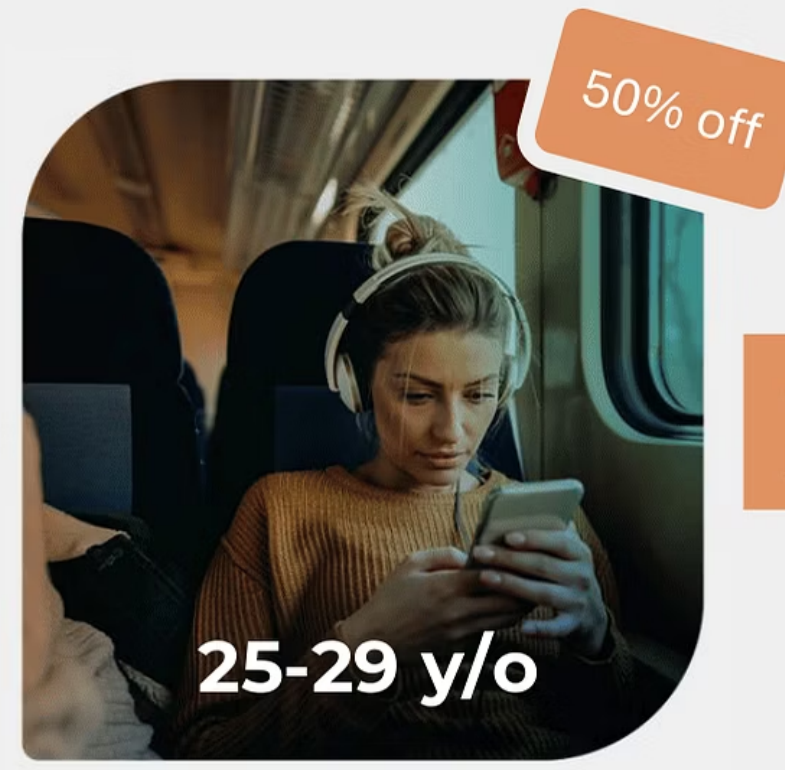


The offering



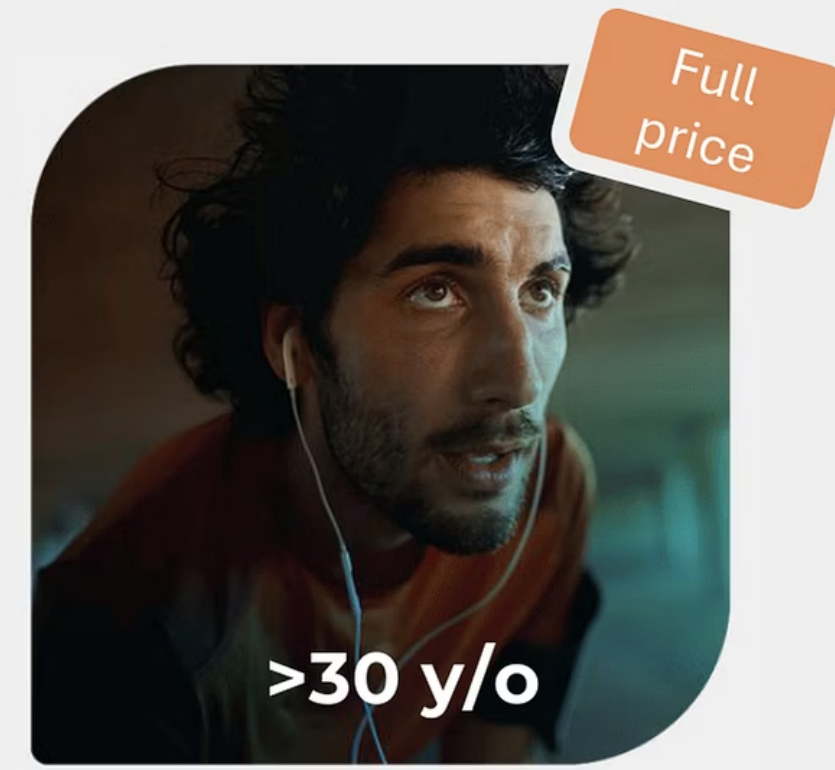
- ✓ Website/app.
- ✓ One session/user.

Opt-in
renewal



- ✓ Website/app.
- ✓ Membership discounts.
- ✓ One session/user.

Opt-out
renewal



- ✓ Website/app.
- ✓ Membership discounts.
- ✓ Multiple session per user.

The marketing



"We'll keep you posted – for free!"

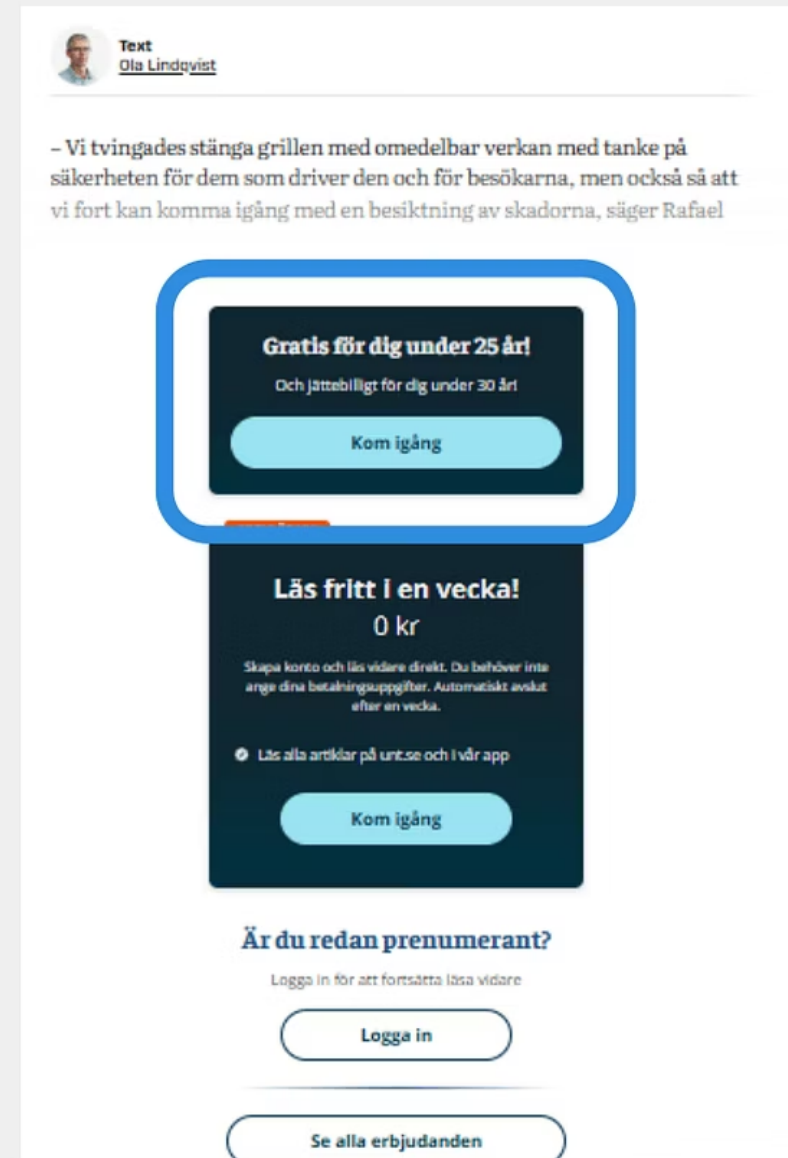
We went to where
are target group was.
Early summer, we
spread physical ads,
prints and hand-outs
across universities,
concerts and
graduation
ceremonies at higher
elementaries.



... and we put our (young) reporters
front and center of a video campaign on
Instagram and TikTok, highlighting
relevant examples from our local
journalism in a friendly, trustworthy and
light-hearted way.

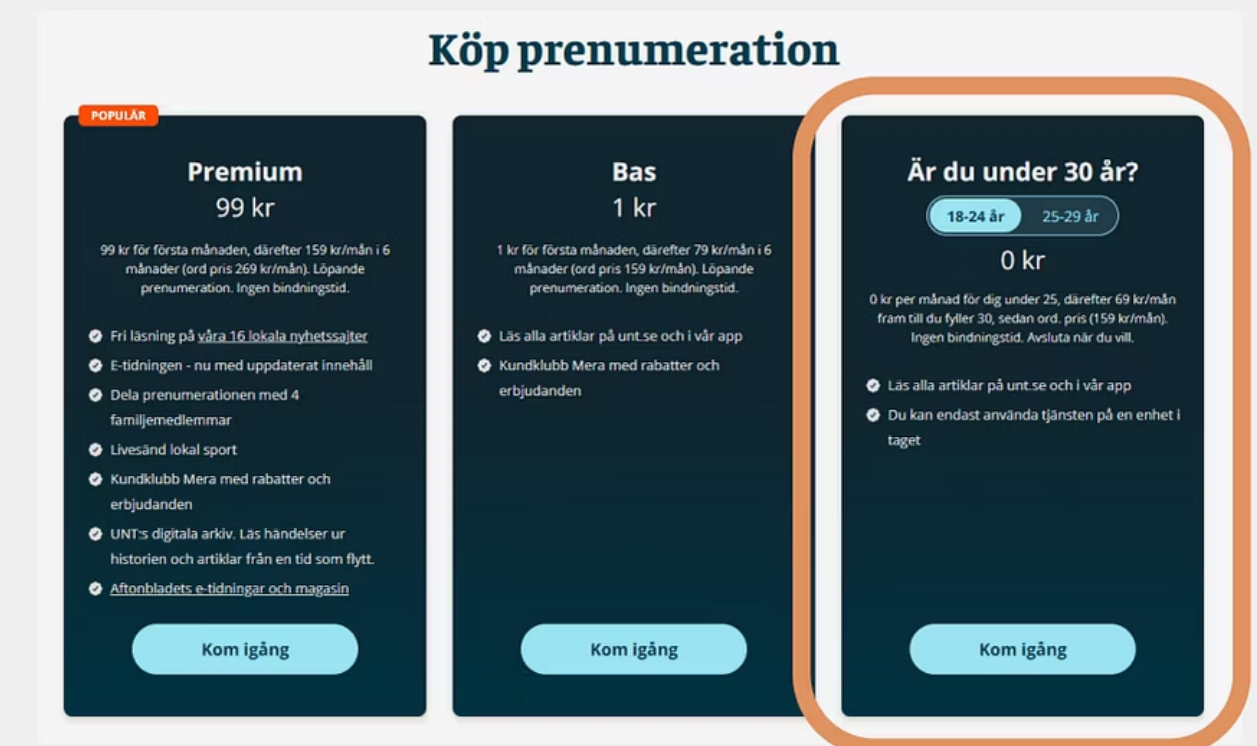
2.1 million views in target group!

The paywalls

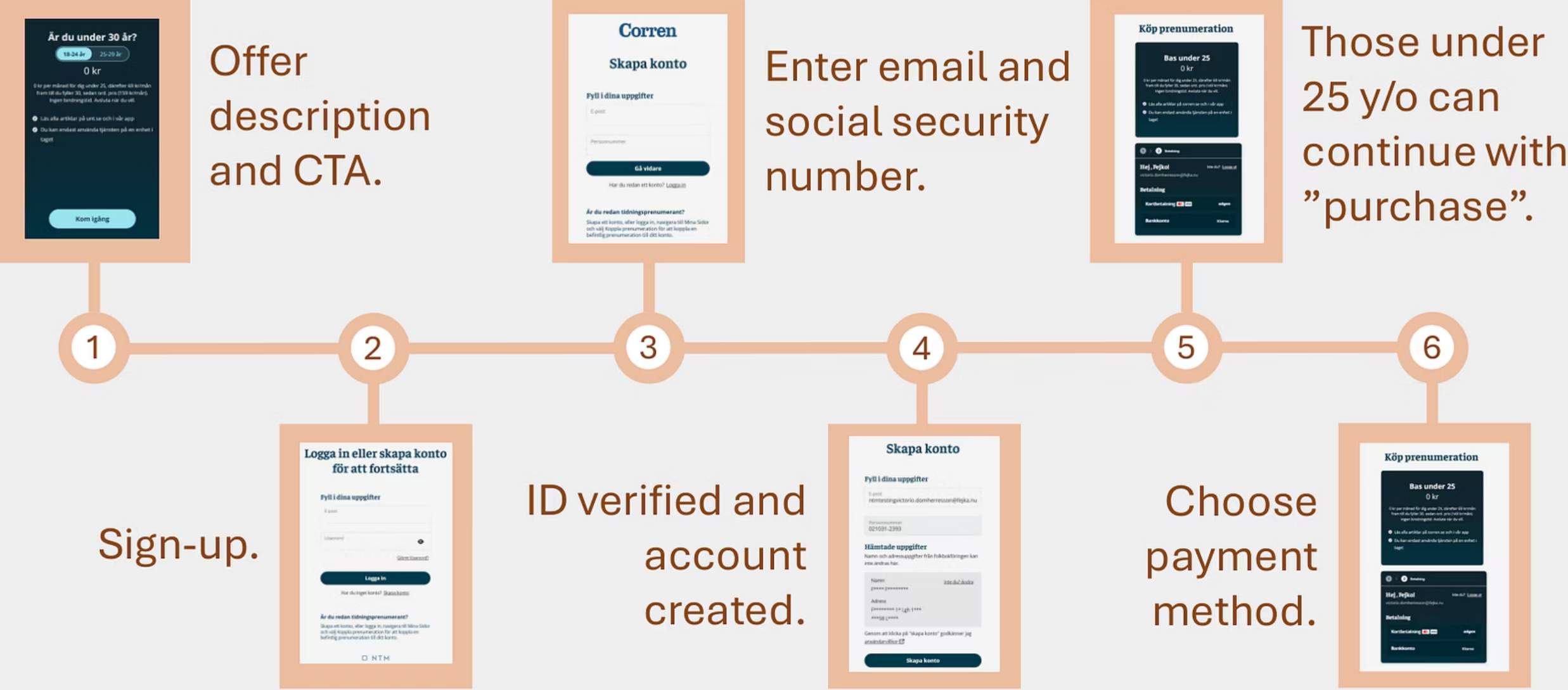


We put our offering in a custom paywall directed towards traffic from search and socials (~20% of our paywall traffic).

And we also made our free offering a mainstay in our main subscription landing page.



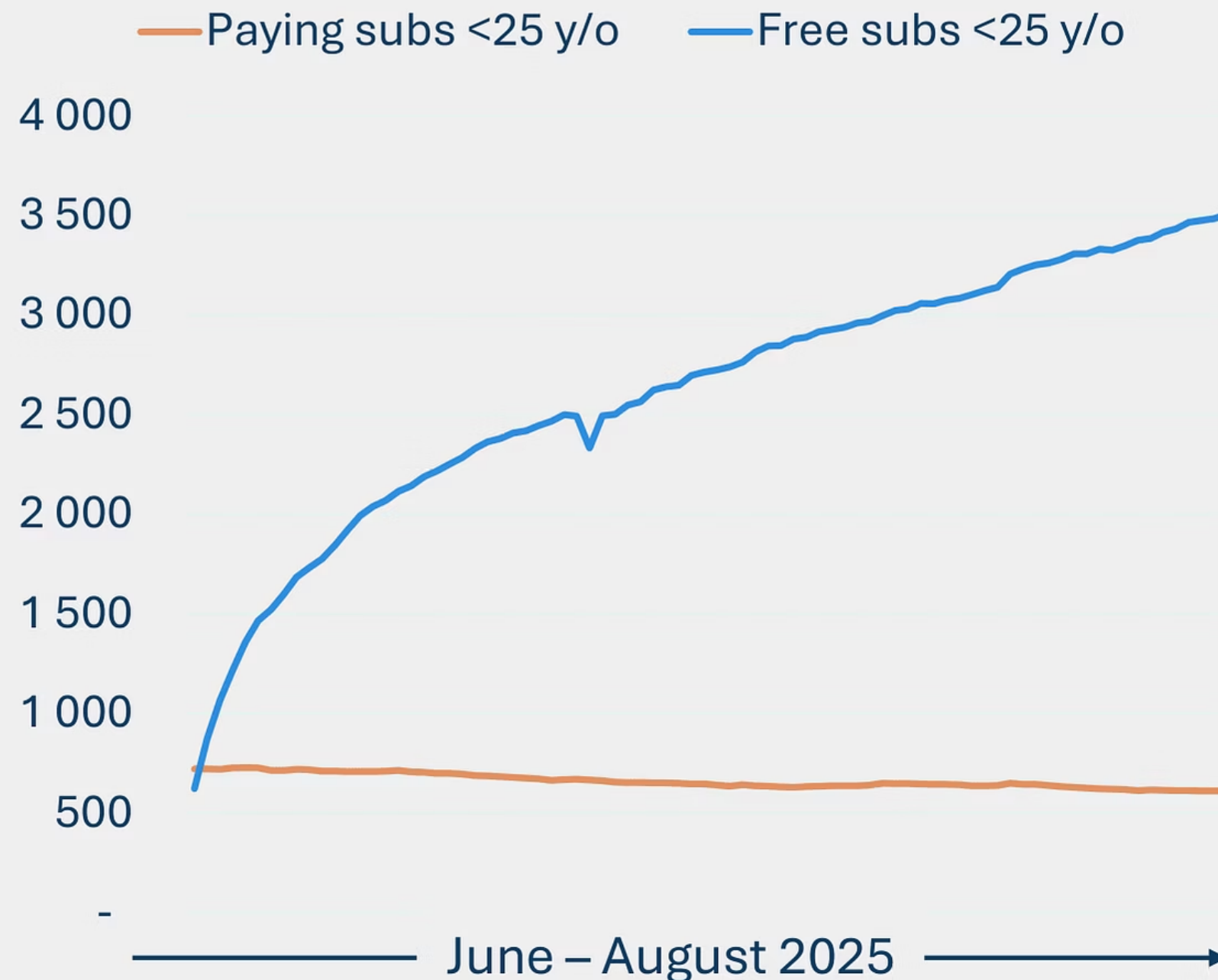
The signup-process



 3 more steps than we'd ideally like to have. Demand of payment info a hurdle.

 Foolproof age-verification. Payment info ensures smooth renewal to paid subscription.

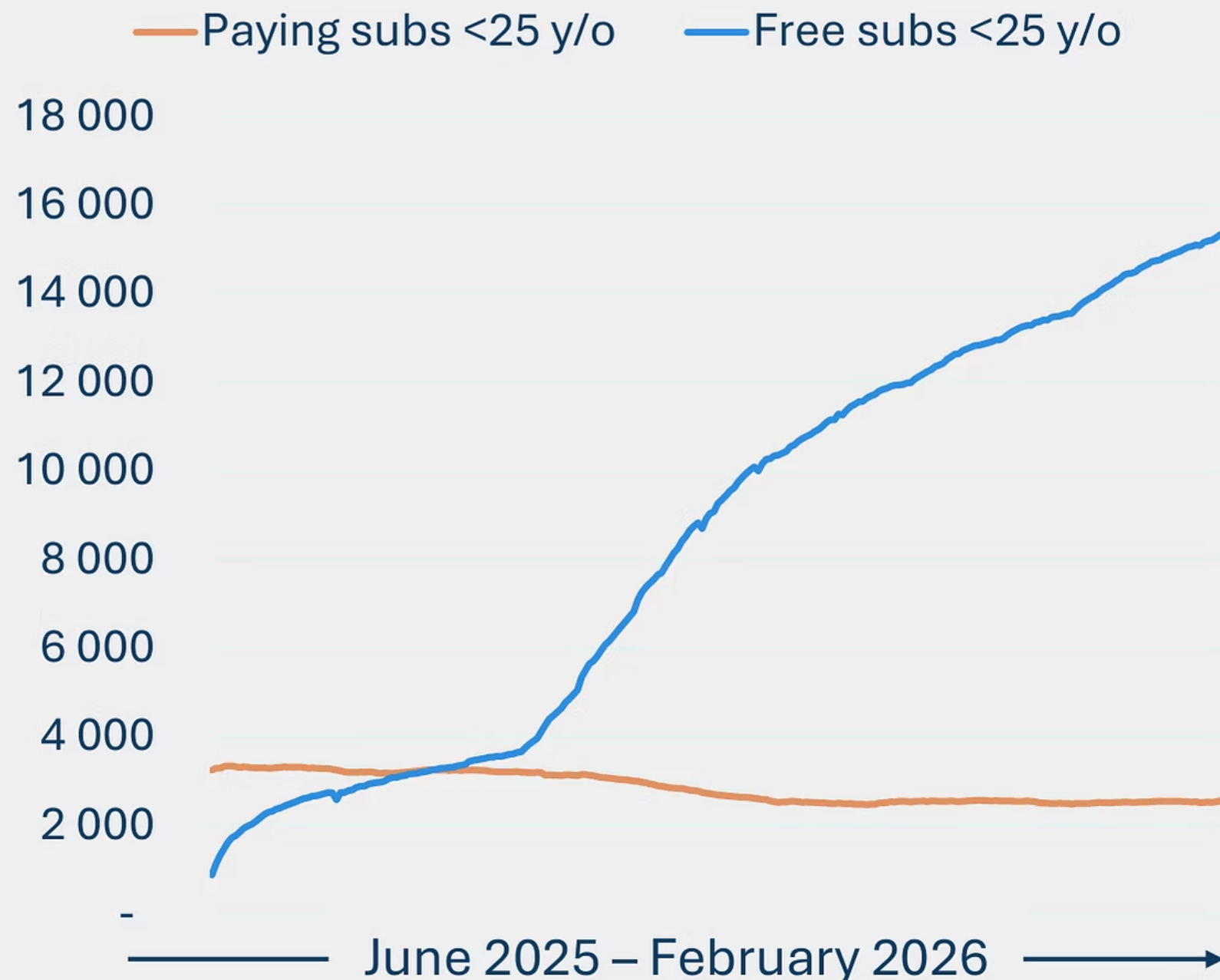
... and the results after our test period



- ✓ We had grown our subs <25 y/o by **3.5x**.
- ✓ **Only 2%** of our free subs had switched from paid subscriptions.
- ✓ No signs of broad undue access.
- ✓ **More than 90%** of our free subscribers were completely new customers relations!

... It was too early to evaluate conversions, nevertheless these results made us confident in a **company-wide launch**.

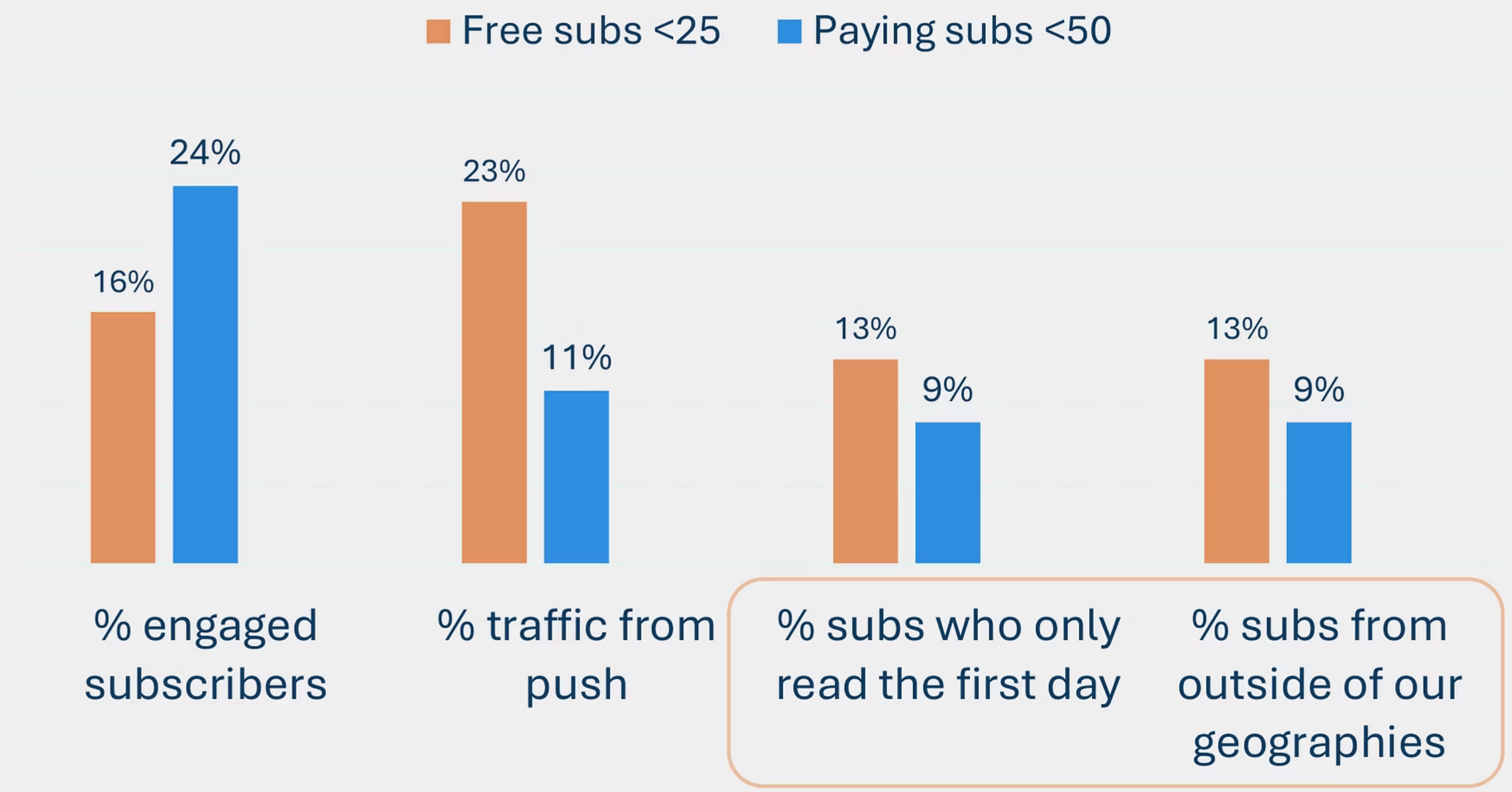
In september 2025 we launched across all our brands - results so far



- ✓ We have grown our subs <25 y/o by **5x**.
- ✓ **3%** of free subs have switched from paid.
- ✓ Still no signs of widespread undue access.
- ✓ **88%** of free subscribers are brand new.

... To this day, **350** readers have outgrown our free tier. **110** of these have opted to continue with our paid subscription = **30%** opt-in conversion rate so far.

So what do we know about our new readers?



By and large, they read more or less the same material as older subscribers.

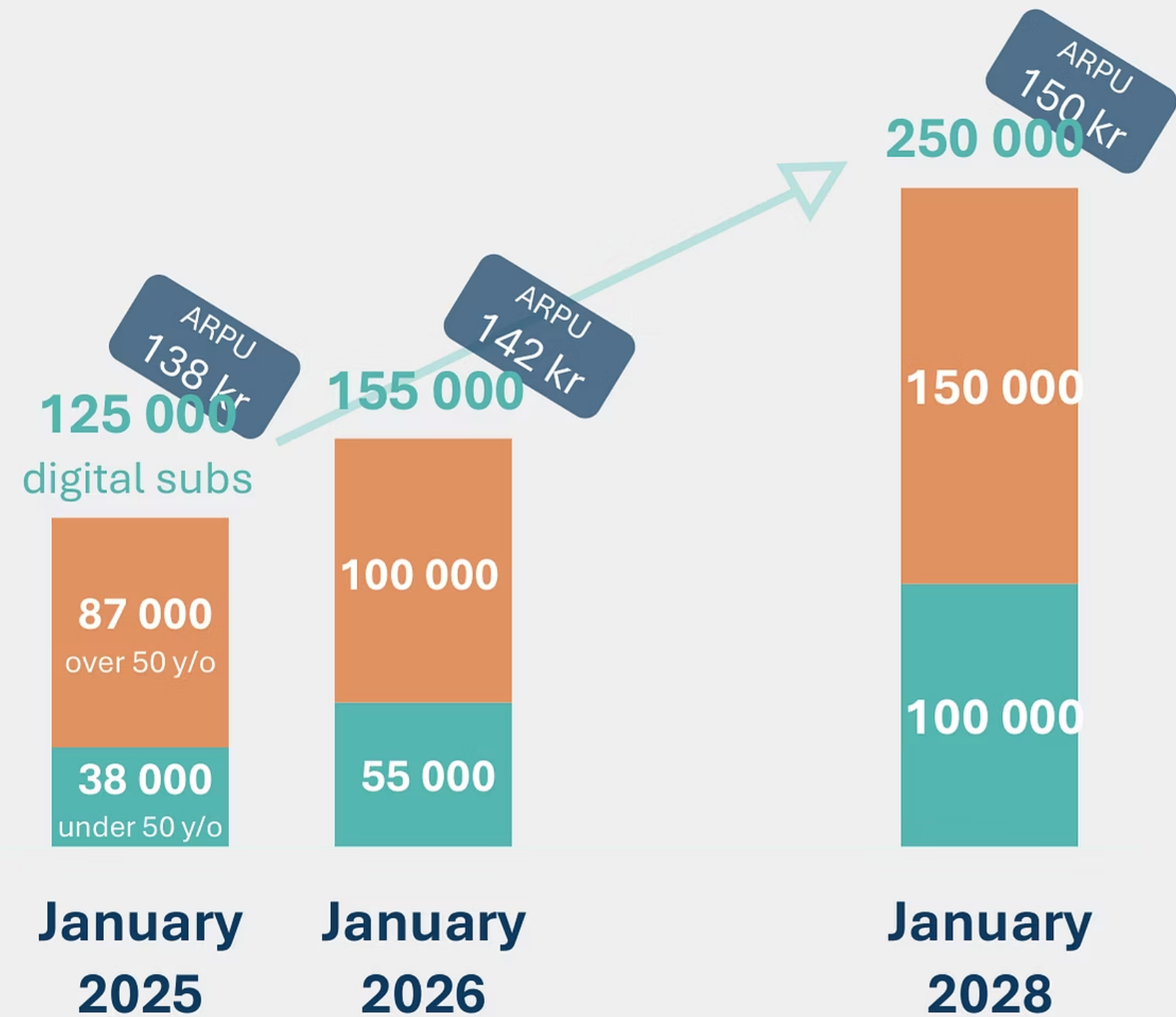
Makes ut fairly confident we are attracting the "right ones".

All in all, the tough part is ahead of us...

- › They are with us, and growing, and it seems we're attracting the "right ones".
- › Now we are fully focusing on increasing **conversion** and **engagement**.

- ✓ 25' free subs by 2027 with a conversion rate of 40%
- ✓ We have switched to opt-out renewal to paid sub
- ✓ Various upgrade offerings to premium packages
- ✓ Tailored onboarding (on/off site)
- ✓ App downloads and development
- ✓ Newsletters and re-activation strategy

...but we are
on our way
towards **our**
long term
goal.





Henrik Ekwall-Larson
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NTM Media

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