

# Roularta Increases Customer Engagement and Digital Subscriptions with Dynamic Paywall Strategy

## About

Roularta Media Group is a Belgian multimedia group with over 1,308 employees that produces a consolidated turnover of circa 300 million euro. As a true multimedia group, Roularta's family of brands spans newspapers, magazines, local media, digital products and services, as well as events, trade shows, and books. Through Trends Business Information, Roularta also houses all financial and marketing data for every Belgian company.

## Challenge

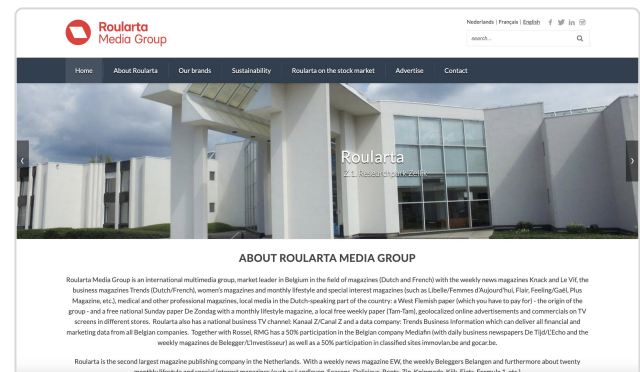
In today's rapidly changing media landscape, publishers are continuously searching for innovative ways to capture and maintain readers' attention. In 2022, Roularta set a new North Star Goal to achieve 75,000 digital subscribers in Belgium by 2025 – an ambitious goal for a relatively small market. To achieve this goal, they needed to rethink their approach to paywalls, finding ways to better engage readers with a more personalized approach.









## Solutions

### Real-time look-alike modeling

Last year, Roularta successfully worked with BlueConic to create a new [revenue-generating product based on look-alike modeling](#). By taking a privacy-first approach, and utilizing AI Workbench with Listeners, they were able to mitigate consumer data risk with consent

management, expand target audiences by as much as 6x, and launch a dedicated look-alike model to boost revenue.



Name	Number of pro...
 Audience Automotive	64.8k
 Audience Automotive+LaL	418k
 Audience Basketball	2.21k
 Audience Basketball+LaL	304k
 Audience Beauty	503k
 Audience Beauty+LaL	511k
 Audience Beleggers Large Budget	109k
 Audience Beleggers Large Budget+LaL	1.27M

## Personalized experiences

Roularta started by reviewing their pre-existing one-month free trial subscriptions to print and digital. Their intention was to build a direct relationship with readers and use that data for traditional, direct marketing initiatives with a focus on engagement.

Prior to implementing a dynamic paywall strategy with BlueConic, every reader had the same experience regardless of their status. It didn't matter if the person was visiting the site anonymously, were a registered user, or a subscriber from the free trial. The publications they were consuming made no difference, and neither did their level of engagement. There was ample opportunity for Roularta to personalize experiences based on the factors listed above and other attributes.

Initial tests revealed that trial subscriptions are a good incentive, but they needed to revisit the length of the trial and reconsider the freemium model so as not to devalue their high quality content. To do this, they needed to focus on engagement through personalization. By creating more personalized experiences – delivering the right content to the right person at the right time - they were able to increase engagement and in turn, subscriptions.

## Dynamic data-driven paywall strategy

You can't just jump into a paywall strategy and expect immediate results. Roularta took the time to properly segment readers by status (anonymous, registered, subscriber), engagement level (high or low), and the type of content they consume (print or digital). By doing this up front, and through trial and error,

they were eventually able to better understand what type of content generates better engagement and more conversions for each segment.

“**The great thing about working with a CDP that grows with you is that you can start with simple use cases, test, analyze results, and then progress to more advanced use cases. Making deliberate, incremental changes pays off in the long run.**”

Kim Vansteenkiste  
Customer Journey Manager, Roularta

## Results

By leveraging data modeling and analytics to create more personalized experiences, Roularta successfully attracted and retained a growing readership, significantly boosting digital subscriptions. The implementation of the dynamic data-driven paywall strategy produced remarkable improvements in page access, recirculation, and reader engagement. Roularta saw a staggering tenfold increase in subscriptions, with 70% of new subscribers opting for digital access. This success motivated them to expand the strategy to other brands and explore the use of lifecycle data for deeper insights. As the digital era continues to unfold, Roularta's data-driven approach is a shining example of how publishers can thrive by putting their readers' interests at the heart of their strategy.