

Ultimate Guide to Subscription Box Trends for 2023



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DIY
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Do It Yourself Packaging

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Whether you are a small business, mid-sized, or enterprise, a subscription box is one way to increase sales. Over the years, subscription boxes have grown in popularity; however, the novelty started to wear off in 2018, meaning boxes needed to stand out with the value they provide subscribers and their unboxing experience.

In 2021, the global subscription box market was valued at US\$22.7 billion, and the market is projected to reach US\$65 billion by 2027.

[\(IMARC Group\)](#)



While subscription boxes were a way to bring experiences to the home during the pandemic, many consumers continue to use them as a way to shop for new products curated to their preferences.

Some of the most popular boxes during 2023 will be:

- Craft Projects
- Home Goods & DIY Home Décor
- Grocery Subscriptions & Meal Kits



TRENDING NOW

SUBSCRIPTION BOX CATEGORIES FOR 2023

1 BEAUTY & PERSONAL CARE

While beauty routines took a backseat during 2020, many beauty lovers are back to full-face looks and trying new products and trends. But beauty and personal care go beyond makeup, including products like:

- Skincare
- Hair care and color
- Beard and facial hair care
- Bath products
- Tattoo and piercing care



2 FOOD & BEVERAGE

Beyond your basic meal kits, food and beverage subscriptions bring new treats and cuisines to subscribers.

- International snack samplers
- Alcohol samplers
- Diet and allergy-conscious snack samplers



TRENDING NOW

SUBSCRIPTION BOX CATEGORIES FOR 2023



3

HEALTH & WELLNESS

With stress and anxiety still high for many, health and wellness subscriptions give subscribers new tools and techniques to manage their symptoms and health.

- Motivational subscription packages
- Rest and relaxation subscriptions
- Spiritual self-care
- Mental health subscription boxes
- Personal life coach crates



4

HOME GOODS

Boxes that offer unique home goods, décor accents, or domestic DIY projects help subscribers spruce up their space. These boxes offer a fresh environment or a change of pace.

- New home accents
- Plant of the month
- Wax melts/candles
- Professionally curated décor
- Home office décor boxes



TRENDING NOW

SUBSCRIPTION BOX CATEGORIES FOR 2021

5 FASHION & APPAREL

As with the return of beauty routines, fashion and apparel have made a comeback as we emerge from our homes looking for more than leggings and hoodies. Fashion subscriptions curate a selection of items and accessories based on the subscriber's personal style.

- Clothing subscriptions
- Accessory subscriptions
- Clothing rental subscription



6 PETS & ANIMALS

Pet owners use subscription services to restock necessities like medicine, food, and litter, but they also use these services to try new treats, toys, and other products.

- Holiday-themed pet boxes
- Treat subscriptions
- Toy subscriptions
- Essentials kits



[Source: The Dieline](#)

STATISTICS ON SUBSCRIPTIONS

SERVICES & SHOPPING

Combined, a total of 23% of shoppers using subscription users plan to continue their subscription.

WHILE SUBSCRIPTIONS JUMPED SIGNIFICANTLY DURING 2020 WITH 41% GROWTH FROM 2019, THE INDUSTRY HAS STABILIZED WITH A PREDICTED 17% GROWTH IN 2023. [Source: eMarketer](#)

SUBSCRIPTION BOX USAGE BY GENERATION

Many consumers tried out subscriptions during pandemic lockdowns, but plenty will keep up the habit. [Source: eMarketer](#)

22%

of Gen Z shoppers will continue using subscription services

34%

of Millennials shoppers will continue using subscription services

24%

of Gen X shoppers will continue using subscription services

13%

of Baby Boomers shoppers will continue using subscription services



STATISTICS ON SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES & SHOPPING

AUTO-REPLENISHMENT IS GROWING

With services like Amazon's subscribe and save and auto-ship available through sites like Chewy, many consumers are using these auto-replenishment services for essentials.



- **80%** of pet owners use auto subscription services for pet products
- **68%** of subscribers use their subscriptions for household staples

Families with babies are also more likely to purchase household staples through subscriptions.

[Source: Jabil](#)

PEOPLE PURCHASE SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THEMSELVES

- **86%** of subscription purchases are for the shopper

The top three reasons for subscribing include: a treat for oneself, to try something new, or the shopper had a discount code

[Source: Whistl](#)

STATISTICS ON SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES & SHOPPING

Subscription box industry analysis has found that 15% of online shoppers have at least one active subscription box.

[Source: Charge Bee](#)

WHAT CONSUMERS LIKE ABOUT SUBSCRIPTION BOXES

64%

want to try new products

63%

appreciate the convenience

55%

are looking for variety



[Source: National Retail Federation](#)

GET THE LOOK

DESIGN TRENDS FOR BOXES IN 2023

There are so many options when it comes to creating custom boxes and packaging for your subscription products. DIY custom printing even allows you to print off small batches—or even just one box—so you are able to change up your designs monthly, seasonally, or annually.

TOP 10 PACKAGING DESIGN TRENDS FOR 2023

Choosing your packaging should be a top concern that falls right after selecting box contents. The package is going to form the first impression with the customers and convey the value of your box. Make sure your package is cohesive with your brand and created for the unboxing experience. Here are some of the best package design trends for 2023:

1 SUSTAINABILITY & GREEN DESIGNS

The top global sustainability trend for 2022 is consumer consciousness of the environmental impact. Packaging and product consumptions are front and center for this trend, with more consumers than ever considering the long-term effects of their purchasing habits.

When it comes to design, green designs aren't literally green—in fact, they are typically brown. Using brown Kraft board can create a package that screams “earth-conscious.” Minimalizing packaging material, including fillers, is also an option. For example, HelloFresh reduces ice packs in their boxes during colder months when food can sit outside without spoiling.



[Source: SUCCULENT SUBSCRIPTION BOX](#)

GET THE LOOK

DESIGN TRENDS FOR BOXES IN 2023

2

MINIMALISM



Source: brooklyncandlestudio

Minimalism applies to more than a sleek box design. Minimal filler and right-sized boxes show a commitment to using less. Although those sleek, simple designs are still appealing to the human eye.

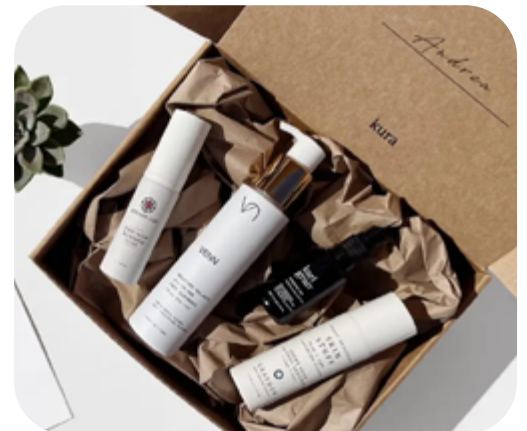
If you want to get started with minimalist design, consider your existing design and ask what you could take away to clear up the message.



Source: Cloth And Paper



Source: Public Goods



Source: Kura

GET THE LOOK

DESIGN TRENDS FOR BOXES IN 2023

3 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Brands are under the social microscope. 70% of consumers are interested in how brands contribute to addressing social and environmental issues. But where to start when it comes to design?

You could have artists with a cause design the work for your boxes or communicate your social responsibility commitments on your boxes. The design is just the beginning. Use the core values of your brand and audience to select the causes your box and company can contribute to.



Source: [Life Without Plastic](#)

4 FRUSTRATION-FREE PACKAGING

Nobody wants to break out the kitchen scissors to pry into a blister pack. Frustration-free packaging is about securing your items for transit but making it easy and painless to open them once they've arrived. In subscription services, this can get tricky, as you likely have to secure multiple items in one box, and suppliers for your samples may send items in tricky packaging.

Consider how you can reduce overall packaging usage and make the unboxing experience straightforward and sans extra equipment to open.



Source: [Yisrael Family Farm](#)

GET THE LOOK

DESIGN TRENDS FOR BOXES IN 2023

5 RETRO DESIGN ELEMENTS

Retro design is having a major moment in design right now. Consumers aren't just craving simpler times — the retro movement is bolstered by a rise in thrifting and using second-hand items as part of a sustainable lifestyle. But that nostalgia factor is still there, as seen in the revival of 90s and Y2K fashion and design elements.

Whether it's part of your overall theme or a simple “throwback” edition for one box, embrace design elements of eras gone by this year.



Source: [Kamilla Oblakova](#)



Source: [World Brand Design](#)

6 HIGHLIGHT YOUR THEME

Use illustrations on your package that showcase your theme. You can turn them into patterns for specific sections of your design. This gives intriguing hints at what's inside to help perpetuate your brand. When you are sending items to a niche audience, they will appreciate this design direction.



Source: [The Dieline](#)

GET THE LOOK

DESIGN TRENDS FOR BOXES IN 2023



Source: [99Designs, Vlastislav](#)



Source: [Universal Yums](#)



Source: [LOOKFANTASTIC](#)

7 STORY-DRIVEN

Plenty of packages are using a character or series of characters to help tell their brand story. You can use illustrations that are consistent with your brand image to portray specific scenes, holidays, seasons, events, and more.



KEEP ITEMS SAFE WITH PROTECTIVE PACKAGING

- Having personalized packaging shows a customer-centric approach.
- Discourage porch thieves with packaging that doesn't show contents.
- Incorporate Sustainable, environmentally friendly packaging.
- Use clear typography that isn't cluttered by wordiness or design.

CURATING YOUR SUBSCRIPTION CONTENTS

To really succeed, subscription boxes need to be customer-centric and focused on the experience. Gimmicks and sales pushes aren't going to cut it. The products and activities inside have to continually provide value to keep consumers subscribed.



[Source: Shaker & Spoon](#)

THINK “INSIDE” THE BOX

There are so many aspects that shift when you confine your thinking to a box. First, there is the physical printing of that outer carton, but every surface of the package inside and out can include imagery, design, and messaging.

Customers will not stay subscribed to boxes that are useless or repetitive. Most consumers are looking to boxes to help them try new things and save time from doing the shopping themselves. The contents should be focused on curating collections that are based around a theme or concept, like health and beauty, fashion, or meal kits.

Curation Services make up 55% of total subscriptions and are by far the most popular

- 25% subscribe to a curation subscription because they want to try something new
- 24% subscribe to a curation subscription because it was recommended by someone
- 28% say that a personalized experience is the most important reason for continuing to subscribe

[Source: McKinsey](#)

CURATING YOUR SUBSCRIPTION CONTENTS

APPEAL TO YOUR NICHE

Understanding a very select audience is going to increase the likelihood of a raving fan base. You want to offer a box that becomes popular as a highly valued or sought-after item in your niche. This could even include collectible packaging, convenient solutions, and personalized boxes.



WHEN YOU ARE HITTING A VERY SPECIFIC NICHE:

- You may have an easier time negotiating with suppliers on select inventory quantities.
- You will be able to focus on a singular product while controlling the overall contents and costs.
- You will have an easier time selecting influencers who appeal to the same target audience.
- Be wary of getting too specific. You will need to continue sourcing products that fit your focus. Too narrow of a theme might make it hard to keep offering new products.
- You could potentially make money from brands that are willing to pay to participate in your box.

CURATING YOUR SUBSCRIPTION CONTENTS

KEEP IT COOL

In order to keep customers excited about every box, products need to stay fresh and cool. This may take quite a bit of research on your part.

FIGURE OUT WHO FALLS IN YOUR TARGET MARKET

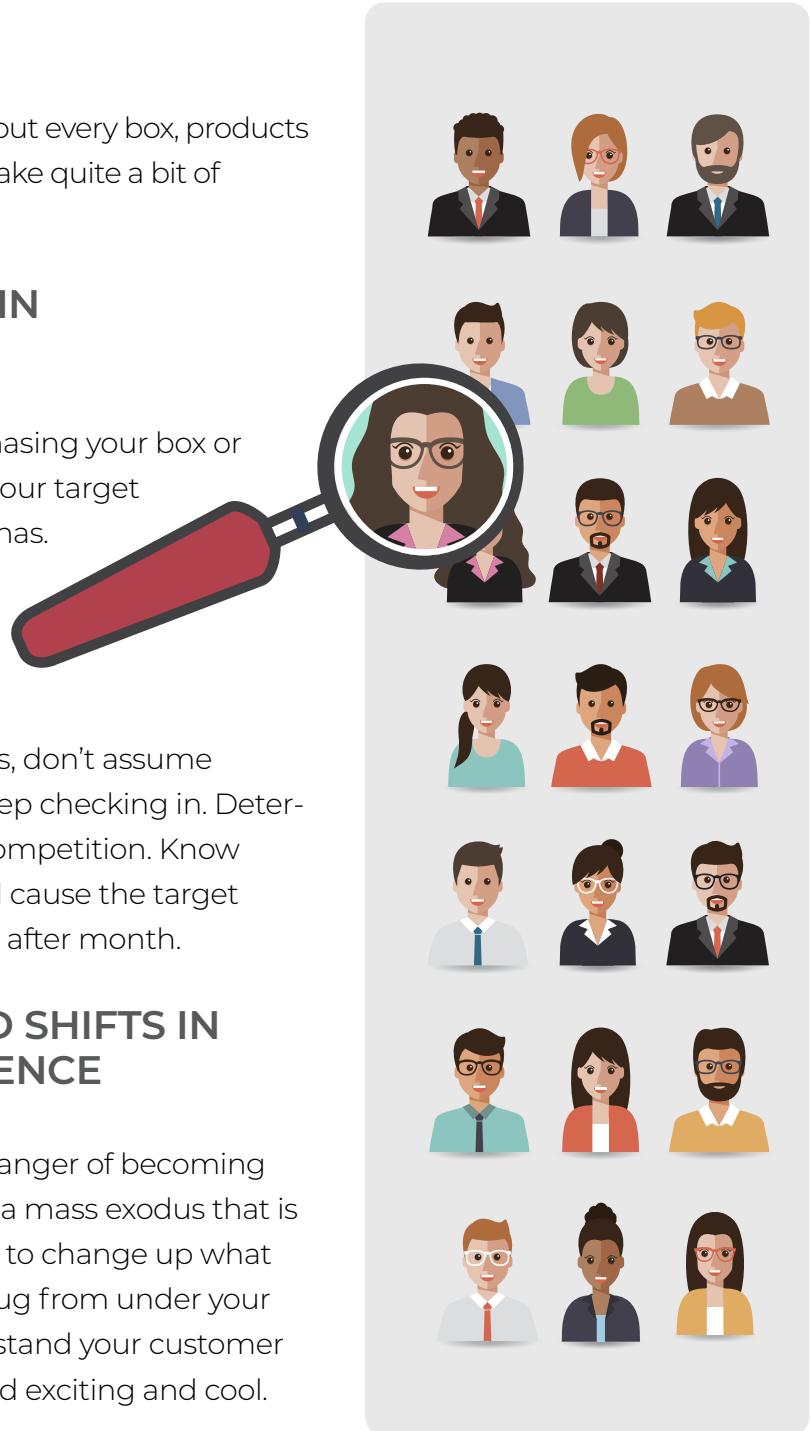
Don't assume you know who is purchasing your box or why they are sticking around. Know your target audience and form clear buyer personas.

FIGURE OUT WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS WANT

Once you understand your customers, don't assume you know what they like or dislike. Keep checking in. Determine what sets you apart from the competition. Know what are the top motivations that will cause the target audience to buy your product month after month.

WATCH FOR TRENDS AND SHIFTS IN STYLE/INTEREST/PREFERENCE

Don't stick with the status quo. The danger of becoming stagnant is very real and could cause a mass exodus that is hard to bounce back from. Find ways to change up what you are offering without pulling the rug from under your customers' feet. The more you understand your customer the more you will know what they find exciting and cool.



CURATING YOUR SUBSCRIPTION CONTENTS



TRY IT OUT FOR YOURSELF

Are you testing out the items you are packing into boxes? Know what your customers are getting and keep asking: is it worth it? Make sure your items fit in your box and the unboxing experience will go smoothly. The earlier you can decide if your box is working, the better.

ESTABLISH A CALENDAR

Plan out boxes that flux with the seasons, weather, or holidays. In order to have boxes ready-to-go well in advance and shipping out on time, you will want to have your boxes planned out months ahead of time. You can then give sneak peeks on the next box to really get your subscriber base revved up about every box.

FIND UNIQUE SOURCES

The best boxes are going to have collections of brands and products that your audience would never consider on their own. Most of the time it is the experience and variety that people are looking for when they sign up for a box. Be creative with the various places you choose to source items for your box.

It can be really beneficial to reach out to creators and small businesses and see if they have an interest in making a special product that is exclusive to your box. This can help market them and increase the chance that they will push their audience to check out your box.

DESIGNING CUSTOM BOXES FOR SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES

Creating a specialized box will really make a big difference for your subscription package. Check out our [helpful design tools](#) or [pre-made design templates](#) to find the right fit for your custom box.



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