

Los Angeles Times to begin charging for online access

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The Los Angeles Times building is seen in downtown Los Angeles in 2007. The Times said Friday that it will begin charging online readers next month, the latest major US newspaper to require a subscription to its website.

The Los Angeles Times said Friday that it will begin charging online readers next month, the latest major US newspaper to require a subscription to its website.

The announcement by the Times comes two days after Gannett, the largest US newspaper chain, said it will begin charging for full online access to its 80 US dailies later this year with the exception of flagship [USA Today](#).

The Los Angeles Times, which is owned by the Tribune Co., which also owns the [Chicago Tribune](#) and Baltimore Sun, said that starting March 5,

online readers will be asked to buy a digital subscription.

Digital-only access to the newspaper will cost \$3.99 a week. The Times is also offering a package that includes the Sunday newspaper for \$1.99 a week.

Print subscribers will not be charged extra for online access and visitors to LATimes.com who are not subscribers can read up to 15 stories for free in a 30-day period.

The Times said [digital subscribers](#) will also be eligible for retail discounts, deals and giveaways.

Kathy Thomson, president of Los Angeles Times Media Group, told the newspaper that readers who access the Times through a mobile phone or tablet application will not have to pay for now, although the company will charge in the future.

Like other US newspapers, the Los Angeles Times has been grappling with declining print advertising revenue and falling circulation and seeking new sources of revenue.

The Tribune Co., which owns 23 television stations in addition to newspapers in Chicago, Los Angeles, Baltimore, Orlando and other cities, filed for [Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection](#) in December 2008.

The [Wall Street Journal](#), owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corp., has always charged online readers for full access to WSJ.com.

The New York Times began charging for full access to its website last March and the Times-owned [Boston Globe](#) followed suit in September. Another major newspaper, The Dallas Morning News, is also charging online readers.

The Los Angeles Times said its daily circulation had dropped to 575,000 for the six months that ended in September 2011, down from about 775,000 five years earlier.

The LATimes.com website was the third-most visited US newspaper site last year, according to Web tracking company comScore, trailing those of The New York Times and The Washington Post.

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