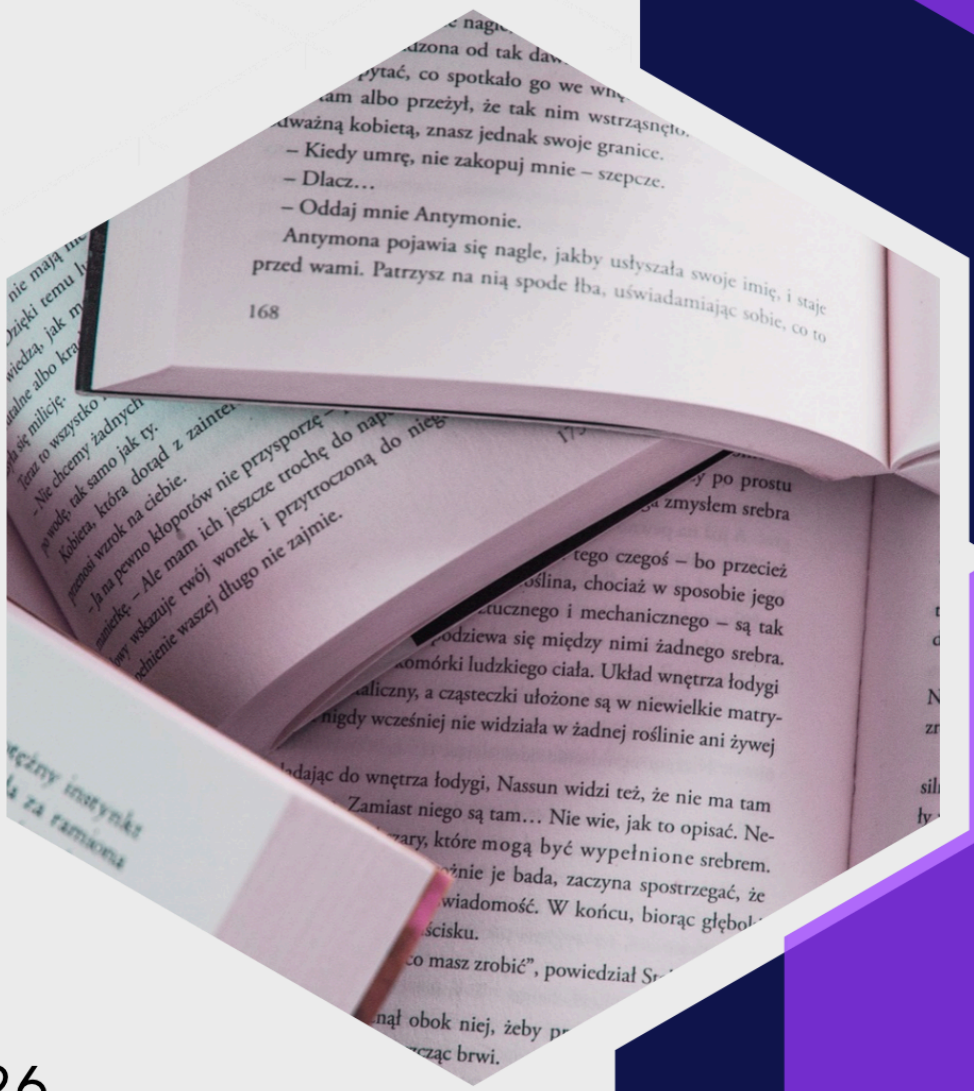
Ream

Ream Insights

HOW READERS DISCOVER, READ, AND SUPPORT FICTION



October 2026

Table of Contents

Executive Summary……03
The Fiction Reader Journey……...05
Discovery……...06
Reading & Retention……10
Community & Monetization……13
Cancellations……16
The Future of Ream Insights……..18
Citing Ream Insights & Media Inquiries……..……19
Definitions……..20
Methodology……..22
Limitations……..23
About Ream Insights……25

Executive Summary

The publishing industry has no shortage of sales data. It has far less data about what happens after a reader discovers a story.

Retail rankings, sales figures, reviews, and bestseller lists can tell us which books readers buy. They tell us much less about whether readers begin those books, how far they progress, where they stop, or how those behaviors differ by genre and discovery source.

Some digital publishing platforms provide individual creators with pieces of this information, but platform-wide behavioral benchmarks are rarely made public. Ream Insights was created to help close that gap.

So what happens after a reader discovers a book?

For this inaugural Ream Insights report, we analyzed 90 days of aggregated reading, discovery, sales, and membership activity on Ream, ending October 1, 2026. The analysis includes more than 10.2 million tracked reading interactions and examines reader behavior platform-wide and across five genres: Drama, Erotica, Fantasy, Romance, and Science Fiction.

Several patterns emerged:

- **Nearly 2 in 3 story starts reach halfway.** 64.1% of measured Ream story starts reached at least half of all currently available chapters. 54.7% reached 75%, and 40.8% reached every chapter currently available. For ongoing serials, reaching 100% means catching up to all available chapters, not necessarily completing a finished story.
- **The earliest chapters appear to be a critical retention window.** Across all measured story starts, 84.4% reached the 10% milestone and 73.6% reached 25%. That means roughly one in four starts did not reach the quarter mark, making the opening portion of a story one of the clearest points of reader loss in overall retention.
- **Reader retention differs by genre.** Erotica had the strongest measured retention among the five genres analyzed, with 70.4% of starts reaching halfway through the available chapters and 49.7% reaching all available chapters. Romance reached 63.0% and 34.3%, respectively, while Fantasy reached 57.9% and 32.2%. Science Fiction experienced the steepest decline between the 10% and 25% reading-progress milestones, falling from 81.0% to 55.4%, although its smaller sample size warrants caution.
- **Romance accounts for over 50% of tracked reading interactions.** Approximately 5.52 million of Ream's 10.2 million tracked reading interactions occurred in Romance, illustrating its prominence in the platform's reading activity.
- **More than half of reported membership cancellations cite financial reasons.** Financial reasons accounted for 52.1% to 59.6% of reported cancellation reasons across Romance, Erotica, Fantasy, and Drama.

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- **Nearly nine in ten attributed story visits originate within Ream.** Internal Ream Discovery generated 86.6% of attributed story visits, although that includes returning readers and doesn't necessarily represent first-time discovery of an author.

Taken together, the data suggests that the reader journey cannot be understood through sales alone. Discovery, the decision to begin reading, early-story retention, long-term reading progress, and membership behavior are distinct parts of the reader journey, and each reveals something different about how fiction audiences behave.

This report explores those stages individually, with the goal of giving authors and the publishing industry a clearer picture of what readers do after they find a story.

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The Fiction Reader Journey

Reader behavior doesn't begin or end with a book sale. Ream Insights looks at multiple stages of the reader journey to better understand how readers discover fiction, engage with stories, and build ongoing relationships with authors.

DISCOVERY → READING START → READING PROGRESS → FOLLOW → MONETIZATION → CANCELLATION

Discovery: Where do readers find stories?

Reading Start: After arriving at a story, do they begin reading?

Reading Progress: Once they start, how far do they read?

Follow: Do readers choose to stay connected with the author?

Monetization: Do readers become paying supporters of the author?

Cancellation: When a paid membership ends, why does the reader say they left?

A Note About This Journey

This is a framework for understanding the different stages of reader behavior, not a single conversion funnel. The metrics in this report are not currently cohort-linked, meaning we cannot assume that readers counted at one stage are the same readers counted at the next.

As Ream Insights develops, connecting these behaviors could help answer an even bigger question: How does someone go from discovering a story to becoming a long-term reader and supporter of an author?

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Discovery

Discovering a story is one thing. Deciding to read it is another. Understanding where readers find fiction, and whether those visits turn into actual reading, reveals which discovery pathways lead to meaningful engagement.

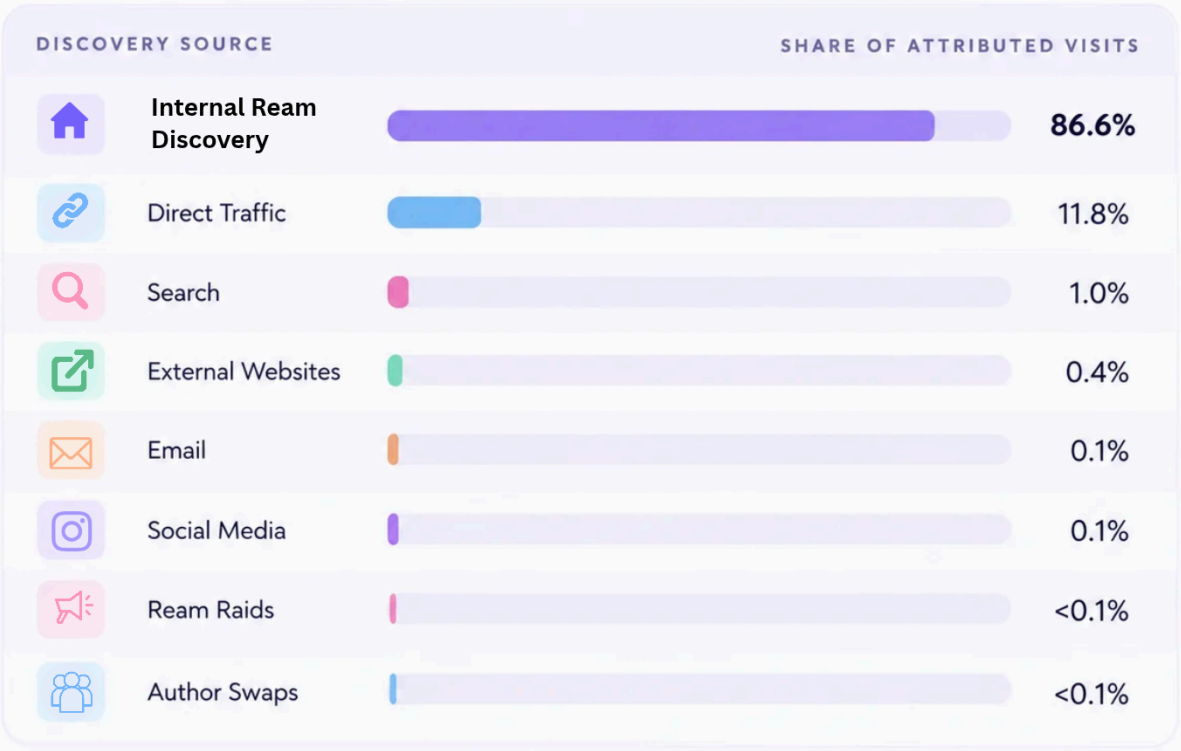
Ream's discovery data tracks attributed story visits across sources including internal Ream discovery, direct traffic, external search engines, external websites, social media, email, Ream Raids, and author swaps. Across the five genres analyzed, one pattern was particularly consistent: **readers discovering stories within Ream frequently went on to open the first chapter.**

Most attributed story discovery on Ream happens within the platform itself. During the 90-day reporting period, 86.6% of attributed story visits came from Internal Ream Discovery, making it by far the largest measured source of discovery.

READER INSIGHTS

Share of Attributed Story Visits by Source

Internal Ream Discovery was by far the largest measured source of discovery, accounting for **86.6%** of attributed story visits.



The large share of visits attributed to Internal Ream Discovery suggests that readers frequently navigate to stories from within Ream rather than arriving through a trackable external referral. However, there are several ways this could happen, and **Internal Ream Discovery should not necessarily be interpreted as Ream introducing a reader to an author for the first time. Internal Ream Discovery includes both readers encountering unfamiliar stories and existing readers returning to authors they already know.**

A reader may discover a new author while browsing Ream, explore additional stories from an author they already follow, or return to a familiar author through recommendations, promotions, or other areas of the platform. Readers may also have originally discovered an author through an external channel, meaning internally attributed visits do not necessarily indicate where the reader first discovered that author.

This distinction matters. The data shows where the attributed story visit originated immediately before the reader reached the story, but it does not necessarily tell us where that reader first discovered the author.

How Discovery Sources Compare

Different discovery sources produce different patterns of reader engagement. To understand these differences, Ream Insights compared reading-start conversion, paywall-view frequency, and average active reading time across discovery sources.

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Engagement by Discovery Source

Discovery Source	Reading Start Rate Percentage of attributed discovery visits that resulted in a reading start.	Paywall Views per 100 Visits Calculated by dividing recorded paywall-view events by page views.	Avg. Reading Time Average active reading time per reading session.
Internal Ream	80.9%	27.9	15m 13s
Direct	78.3%	30.5	13m 23s
Search	76.0%	35.3	10m 00s
External Websites	22.3%	85.9	10m 58s
Email	76.2%	39.6	5m 54s
Social Media	27.1%	76.1	6m 54s
Ream Raids	58.3%	75.0	18m 53s
Author Swaps	45.5%	83.3	7m 41s

The data shows that:

- **Internal discovery combines high reading-start conversion with sustained engagement.** Approximately 81% of attributed visits resulted in a reading start, with readers spending an average of 15 minutes and 13 seconds actively reading.
- **Search and email generate similar reading-start rates but different reading times.** Both converted approximately 76% of attributed visits into reading starts, although Search recorded roughly four additional minutes of active reading time compared to email.
- **External websites and social media recorded lower reading-start rates but relatively high paywall-view frequencies.** External websites generated approximately 86 paywall views per 100 attributed visits, while social media generated 76.
- **Ream Raids recorded the longest average reading time**, at 18 minutes and 53 seconds, alongside a 58.3% reading-start rate. However, promotional traffic samples were relatively small, so these findings should be considered exploratory.

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Internal Discovery Drives Reading Starts

Internal Ream discovery was the largest source of measured reading starts across the five genres analyzed. Start conversion from internal discovery ranged from 70.3% for Erotica to 85.3% for Fantasy.



Direct Traffic Also Converts Strongly

Readers arriving directly at stories also frequently opened the first chapter. Fantasy had the highest measured direct-traffic start conversion among these genres, at 87.8%, while Romance and Science Fiction both exceeded 80%.

Romance also showed similar average active reading times between internally discovered readers and direct traffic: approximately 15 minutes and 43 seconds from internal discovery versus 14 minutes and 28 seconds from direct traffic.

Social and External Traffic Show a Larger Gap Between Visiting and Starting

In Romance, 84.8% of internally attributed story visits resulted in a first-chapter open, compared with 41.6% of external visits and 24.6% of social visits. Erotica showed an even wider

difference: 70.3% for internal discovery, compared with 10.6% for external traffic and 12.1% for social traffic.

These differences should not be interpreted as evidence that social media or external promotion inherently produces less-engaged readers. Reader intent, the type of link or campaign, individual stories, authors, audience composition, and traffic volume may all contribute to the observed differences.

Social and external samples were also much smaller than internal and direct traffic in several genres, making those figures more sensitive to individual campaigns and reader behavior.

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Reading & Retention

Getting a reader to open the first chapter is only one part of the story. Ream's reading data allows us to look beyond the initial start and examine how far readers continue through the chapters available to them.

Across all genres during the 90-day analysis period, Ream recorded 69,434 story starts. Of those starts:

- **84.4%** reached at least 10% of the available chapters
- **73.6%** reached at least 25%
- **64.1%** reached at least halfway
- **54.7%** reached at least 75%
- **40.8%** reached every chapter currently available

Across all reading activity, readers averaged 65.6% story progress.

These numbers show that reader drop-off does not happen at a single point. Some readers decide early that a story isn't for them, while others continue through much of the available story before stopping.

READER INSIGHTS

Reader Retention by Genre

Percentage of readers reaching each reading-progress milestone, by primary genre.

Higher percentages indicate more readers reaching that point in a story.

Genre	Avg. Progress	10%	25%	50%	75%	100%
All Genres	**65.6%**	**84.4%**	**73.6%**	**64.1%**	**54.7%**	**40.8%**
Drama	58.3%	**86.2%**	69.5%	56.2%	45.6%	35.4%
Erotica	**70.9%**	**92.9%**	**81.4%**	**70.4%**	**60.5%**	**49.7%**
Fantasy	57.9%	**79.2%**	68.9%	57.9%	45.1%	32.2%
Romance	62.7%	**81.2%**	71.4%	63.0%	53.2%	34.3%
Science Fiction	50.9%	**81.0%**	55.4%	45.7%	40.7%	25.5%

Based on reader progression data across Ream.

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Retention by Genre

The platform-wide retention numbers give us a useful benchmark, but genre-level data shows why a single benchmark cannot tell the whole story. Across the five genres analyzed, readers showed different patterns in how quickly they dropped off, where retention stabilized, and how often they reached all currently available chapters.

We found that:

- **Erotica Retains Readers Most Consistently.** Erotica recorded the highest retention at every measured milestone, with 92.9% reaching 10% of available chapters and 49.7% reaching all available chapters, compared with platform-wide benchmarks of 84.4% and 40.8%, respectively.
- **Romance Closely Tracks the Platform Through the Middle.** Romance retention closely followed the platform benchmark at the halfway milestone (63.0% versus 64.1%), but fewer readers reached all available chapters (34.3% versus 40.8%).
- **Drama Hooks Readers Early, but Loses More Later.** Drama exceeded the platform benchmark at the 10% milestone (86.2% versus 84.4%), but fell below it by halfway (56.2% versus 64.1%), indicating greater drop-off later in the story.
- **Fantasy Experiences More Drop-Off Near the Beginning.** Fantasy showed weaker early retention, with 79.2% reaching 10% of available chapters, but its retention closely matched Drama by the 75% milestone (45.1% versus 45.6%).
- **Science Fiction Shows the Most Pronounced Early Decline.** Science Fiction experienced the steepest decline between the 10% and 25% milestones (81.0% to 55.4%), although its smaller sample of 691 story starts warrants caution.

Discovery vs Retention

Interestingly, the genre with the strongest reading retention did not have the highest reading-start conversion. Erotica recorded the highest retention across all measured story-progress milestones, yet its internal reading-start conversion rate of 70.3% was below the platform-wide rate of 80.9%. This illustrates why discovery conversion and reading retention should be evaluated separately.

What This Means for Authors

The data suggests readers consuming different genres show different patterns in when they continue and when they leave. That makes genre-specific benchmarks particularly useful. A Fantasy author comparing their reader retention only with the platform-wide average may come to a very different conclusion than one comparing their story with other Fantasy stories.

It also reinforces the value of looking beyond a single completion metric. Where readers leave can be as informative as whether they reach the latest available chapter. A story losing readers immediately after they begin presents a different pattern from one that retains most readers

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through the halfway point before experiencing a later decline. Those patterns can give authors another source of information when evaluating openings, pacing, story structure, and future publishing decisions.

Beyond Reading: How Readers Engage With Stories

Reading progress tells us how far readers continue through a story, but it does not capture every form of engagement. Readers also interact with fiction through comments and ongoing discussions.

During the 90-day reporting period, Ream recorded **14,653 comments**. This highlights an additional dimension of fiction engagement that reading progress alone cannot measure. While the data demonstrates community participation, it does not establish whether commenting is associated with stronger reading retention.

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Community & Monetization

Reading behavior tells us how audiences interact with stories. Community and monetization data provides another view of the reader relationship: **which readers choose to maintain an ongoing connection with an author.**

On Ream, readers can follow an author for free, become a paid member of an author's page, or purchase one of their stories as a one-time sale. During the 90-day analysis period, all five genres examined generated new follower relationships, new paid memberships, and new one-time sales.

Unlike the Discovery and Reading sections of this report, these metrics operate at the author-page level. If an author publishes at least one story in a selected genre, their page is included and their entire membership and follower audience is counted. The figures should therefore be understood as relationships attached to authors who publish in each genre, rather than memberships or follows generated exclusively by stories in that genre.



Erotica Added the Most New Paid Memberships

Erotica authors recorded 1,898 new paid memberships during the 90-day period. Combined with Erotica's strong reading retention, this highlights substantial activity across both reading engagement and paid memberships, although the data does not establish a causal relationship.

Science Fiction Shows Strong New Membership Activity Relative to Its Existing Base

Science Fiction authors recorded 348 new paid memberships during the reporting period, compared with 1,399 active paid membership relationships in the latest snapshot. While these figures cannot be used to calculate a membership growth rate, they highlight notable new membership activity relative to the genre's smaller existing base.

Following Extends the Reader Relationship Beyond Paid Membership

Across every genre analyzed, follower relationships substantially outnumbered active paid membership relationships. This free relationship layer matters because not every reader who wants to maintain a connection with an author is necessarily ready to become a paying member.

However, these figures should not be interpreted as follower-to-member conversion rates. Followers and members are overlapping populations, readers can maintain relationships with multiple authors, and the data does not establish that current members previously followed an author before subscribing.

Subscription Churn Trends

Stripe's subscription analytics showed that subscriber churn decreased by 2.2% and net monthly recurring revenue (MRR) churn decreased by 26.9%, both in relative terms, during the 90-day reporting period compared with the preceding period. This means the rate at which subscribers were leaving declined, while recurring revenue losses after accounting for expansion among existing subscribers also decreased. These findings complement Ream's cancellation survey data, providing additional context about the financial stability of recurring fiction memberships.

The Value of Recurring Reader Support

Stripe's subscription analytics reported monthly average revenue per user (ARPU) of $10.75 during the reporting period. This figure provides a benchmark for the average monthly revenue associated with paying subscribers on Ream, offering insight into the economics of recurring fiction memberships.

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ARPU represents an average across Ream's subscription activity and should not be interpreted as a guarantee of individual author earnings. It also does not represent net author income after platform and payment-processing fees.

Early Observations From Single Sales

Ream rolled Single Sales out of beta in August 2026, allowing authors to sell individual ebooks and audiobooks directly to readers alongside serialized fiction and memberships. Although Single Sales is too new to establish reliable long-term purchasing benchmarks, early activity offers an initial glimpse into how readers are engaging with direct ebook purchases.

During September 2026, Erotica accounted for approximately 67% of the platform-wide Single Sales. **This does not mean Erotica is the bestselling genre on Ream.** Rather, it reflects the concentration of early purchasing activity among authors publishing in Erotica. Genre-level reader counts may also overlap and should not be interpreted as mutually exclusive shares of unique purchasers.

These early figures suggest that Single Sales adoption differs across genres, but they do not establish differences in purchasing propensity. Genre catalog size, available titles, promotional activity, and the timing of feature adoption may all influence the results.

As the dataset grows, future Ream Insights reports will examine purchasing behavior in greater depth, including sales by genre, purchasing frequency, and the relationship between individual book purchases and recurring memberships.

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Cancellations

Cancellation counts alone can be misleading when comparing genres because some genres have substantially more paid memberships than others. To better understand why readers say they cancel, we looked at the distribution of reasons among readers who provided a cancellation reason.

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Reported Cancellation Reasons by Genre

Cancellation Reason	Romance	Erotica	Fantasy	Drama
Financial reasons	**52.1%**	**54.2%**	**59.6%**	**54.4%**
Author not active enough	15.1%	9.5%	6.0%	10.9%
Got what I wanted	13.2%	13.6%	11.6%	14.0%
Other	10.3%	11.2%	12.3%	11.4%
Lost interest	5.3%	7.3%	6.8%	6.2%
Ream features/services	1.5%	1.8%	1.9%	1.0%
Didn't receive expected benefits	1.4%	0.9%	1.1%	1.6%
Quality issues	1.1%	1.4%	0.6%	0.5%

Percentages represent the distribution of reported cancellation reasons among readers who provided a reason within each genre. The cancellation survey is optional, so these percentages should not be interpreted as representing every cancelled membership. Percentages may not total exactly 100% due to rounding.

Financial Reasons Dominate Across Genres

Financial reasons were the most commonly reported cancellation reason in every genre shown, accounting for more than half of reported reasons in Romance, Erotica, Fantasy, and Drama. What's particularly notable is the consistency. Despite substantial differences in audience size and reading behavior between these genres, financial reasons represented between 52.1% and 59.6% of reported cancellation reasons.

Author Activity Shows Greater Variation

Author inactivity varied more substantially by genre. It represented 15.1% of reported reasons in Romance, compared with 9.5% in Erotica, 10.9% in Drama, and 6.0% in Fantasy. By comparison, reasons directly related to expected benefits, quality, or Ream's features and services each represented a relatively small share of reported reasons across these genres.

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Science Fiction Shows a Different Pattern

Science Fiction showed a different pattern, with author inactivity cited more frequently than financial reasons among respondents; however, its smaller cancellation sample makes this an observation for future research rather than an established genre-wide trend.

What This Might Mean

A canceled membership does not necessarily indicate an unhappy reader. Financial circumstances, receiving the content they wanted, and author activity all appear in the reported reasons, reinforcing the importance of understanding why memberships end rather than treating every cancellation as the same outcome.

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The Future of Ream Insights

This inaugural report is the beginning of a larger effort to make more data about independent fiction publishing publicly available. As Ream grows, we hope to expand both the scope of our research and the questions we can answer about how readers discover, engage with, and support fiction authors.

Understanding Discovery More Deeply

One of our priorities is to better understand how readers discover fiction within Ream itself. While this report distinguishes Internal Ream Discovery from external sources, we want to go further by examining the specific pathways readers take within the platform, including genre browsing, recommendations, author pages, promotional events, and other discovery features.

We also want to better distinguish readers discovering an author for the first time from existing readers returning to familiar authors or exploring additional stories. This could help us identify which discovery experiences are most effective at introducing readers to new fiction, encouraging reading starts, and building lasting author-reader relationships.

Future Ream Insights research could explore whether readers who participate in story discussions demonstrate different reading habits, retention patterns, or levels of engagement compared with readers who do not comment.

Help Us Build Better Fiction Benchmarks

Ream Insights is built on aggregated platform data, and the continued growth of the Ream community will help us develop more comprehensive research.

As more authors publish their stories and more readers discover fiction on Ream, we'll have opportunities to study a wider variety of genres, publishing models, story lengths, and reader behaviors. Larger and more diverse datasets can also help us produce more detailed benchmarks, including for genres that currently have too little activity to analyze reliably.

Authors and readers can help make this research possible simply by being part of the Ream community.

If you're an author, you can publish your fiction on Ream, whether you're building a paid membership, selling ebooks, or sharing stories with readers for free. If you're a reader, discovering and supporting authors on Ream contributes to the broader reading activity we're working to understand.

Our goal is to make these findings available not just to Ream creators, but to the wider publishing industry, including authors, educators, publishers, and researchers. **The more we learn about how fiction readers behave, the more useful the data becomes for everyone.**

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Citing Ream Insights & Media Inquiries

Ream Insights is designed to help authors, publishers, journalists, educators, researchers, and the wider publishing community better understand how readers engage with fiction, and we want this data to be useful.

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Need More Data?

If you're working on a story, paper, presentation, class, or industry analysis, we may be able to provide industry professionals with additional platform-wide or genre-level data related to reader discovery, reading behavior, story retention, memberships, reader following, cancellations, and genre differences.

For media inquiries, additional data, or permission for uses not covered above, please message:

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Definitions

Unique readers: Logged-in readers are deduplicated using their Ream account, meaning the same logged-in reader is counted once across all selected stories during the reporting period. Logged-out readers are identified by an activity-session key rather than a persistent identity, so the same anonymous reader may be counted more than once if they return in separate sessions. Unique-reader figures therefore represent deduplicated logged-in readers plus identified anonymous reading sessions, rather than perfectly deduplicated individuals.

Reading interactions: Triggers when readers reach new chapters, intentionally leave or enter a story, open a comments section, view a paywall, navigate from the story to checkout, reading position, and more.

Story start: A story start occurs when a reader opens the first chapter. It does not necessarily mean the reader continued reading beyond the opening of that chapter.

Reading progress: The percentage of currently available chapters reached by a reader. A 100% reading-progress milestone means the reader reached all chapters available at that time, including for unfinished serials.

Discovery page view: An attributed activity session associated with a story's discovery source.

Start conversion: The percentage of Discovery page views that resulted in the reader opening the first chapter.

Average reading time: Average active reading time among measured reading sessions attributed to a particular discovery source. Sessions with no recorded active reading time are excluded.

Active paid memberships: Active paid reader-to-author membership relationships attached to qualifying author pages. These are not unique-reader counts. A reader subscribed to three qualifying authors contributes three active memberships.

Followers: Reader-to-author follow relationships attached to qualifying author pages. A reader following five qualifying authors contributes five follower relationships. Essentially, a follower is a free newsletter subscriber.

New memberships / new followers: Membership or follower relationships created during the selected 90-day reporting period.

Cancellations: Paid membership relationships canceled during the selected reporting period. A reader may therefore account for multiple cancellations if they cancel memberships to multiple authors.

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Cancellation reasons: Readers are invited to select a reason when canceling a membership, but responding is optional. Cancellation-reason findings therefore describe survey respondents rather than all canceled memberships.

Internal Ream Discovery: Traffic originating from within Ream, including Ream discovery surfaces, Search, For You, Genre Pages, and more.

Direct Traffic: Visits without identifiable referral information. This can include entering a URL directly, opening a bookmark, or clicking links from apps, private messages, or other sources that do not pass referral data.

Search: Traffic from external search engines, such as Google, Bing, DuckDuckGo, and Yahoo.

External Websites: Traffic referred from websites outside Ream, such as author websites, blogs, and other web pages.

Social Media: Traffic referred from social platforms, such as Instagram and TikTok.

Email: Traffic referred from email links, including newsletters.

Ream Raids: Ream's promotional events where participating books are made free for readers during the promotion.

Author Swaps: Cross-promotional campaigns in which authors promote participating stories to their audiences inside Ream.

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Methodology

This report analyzes reader behavior on Ream during the 90-day period ending October 1, 2026. Platform-wide figures include all genres and authors. Genre-level analysis focuses on Drama, Erotica, Fantasy, Romance, and Science Fiction.

Reading progress is calculated based on chapters, rather than word count. For ongoing serials, reaching 100% means a reader reached the latest chapter available during the analysis period. It does not necessarily mean the story itself was complete.

Retention percentages represent the share of story starts that reached each chapter-based progress milestone.

Stripe Subscription Analytics

Subscription retention and monthly recurring revenue churn are sourced from Stripe's subscription analytics. The Stripe reporting period was configured to July 1 through October 1, 2026, consistent with the reporting window used for Ream Insights.

Subscriber churn and recurring revenue churn are distinct measures and should not be used interchangeably. Stripe's subscription analytics may also use different populations and calculation methods from Ream's internal membership reporting.

These metrics describe subscription relationships rather than individual story-reading behavior. They should not be interpreted as demonstrating that reading retention causes membership retention.

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Limitations

This report analyzes observed behavior on Ream and should not be interpreted as representative of all fiction readers or the publishing industry as a whole. Ream's catalog, reader population, publishing formats, and direct-to-reader model may differ from those of other platforms and markets.

Data collection period

The analysis covers the 90 days ending October 1, 2026. Ream's current analytics dataset began collecting these metrics only recently, so longer-term historical comparisons are not yet available. Future reports will be able to examine quarter-over-quarter and eventually year-over-year changes as the dataset matures.

Unique readers are not perfectly deduplicated individuals

Logged-in readers are deduplicated using their Ream account across the selected stories and reporting period. Logged-out readers are identified using an activity-session identifier, meaning the same anonymous person may be counted more than once if they return in separate sessions.

"Unique readers" should therefore be understood as deduplicated logged-in readers plus identified anonymous reading sessions, rather than a perfectly deduplicated count of individual people.

Reading progress is chapter-based

Reading progress is measured using available chapters rather than word count. Stories with different chapter lengths may therefore not be directly comparable based on progress percentage alone.

For ongoing serials, reaching 100% means the reader reached all chapters available at that time, not necessarily that they completed a finished book.

Genre populations differ substantially in size

Audience sizes and reading volumes vary substantially across the five genres included in the primary comparison. Findings based on smaller populations should therefore be interpreted more cautiously.

Discovery data shows association, not causation

Differences in start conversion and reading time between discovery sources should not be interpreted as evidence that the source itself caused the observed reader behavior. Reader

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intent, individual authors and stories, marketing campaigns, link placement, genre, audience composition, and other factors may contribute to differences between sources. Discovery channels with particularly small samples should not be generalized to broader reader behavior.

Membership metrics are author-level relationships

Membership and follower figures represent reader-to-author relationships, not unique readers. One reader who follows or subscribes to multiple authors can therefore contribute multiple relationships.

Additionally, genre membership data includes the full membership and follower audience of an author page if that author has at least one story in the selected genre. These figures should therefore be described as memberships attached to author pages that publish in a genre, not memberships generated exclusively by that genre. Authors publishing across multiple genres may consequently appear in multiple genre-level membership analyses.

Cancellation responses are voluntary

Readers are not required to provide a reason when canceling a membership. Cancellation-reason findings represent only readers who chose to respond and should not be generalized to all cancellations.

Results are descriptive, not causal

This report identifies patterns and differences within aggregated Ream data. It does not establish why those differences exist. For example, higher retention within one genre does not demonstrate that the genre itself causes readers to continue reading, and differences between high- and low-performing discovery sources do not establish that changing traffic sources would produce the same outcomes for an individual author.

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About Ream Insights

Ream Insights is an ongoing research initiative from Ream that uses aggregated platform data to explore how fiction readers discover, read, engage with, and support stories and authors. Looking beyond traditional publishing metrics such as sales, rankings, and reviews, our research examines reader behavior throughout the journey, from discovering a story to reading, following authors, and maintaining paid memberships.

Through regular reports and annual research examining broader fiction trends, Ream Insights aims to make behavioral data more accessible to authors, publishers, researchers, and the wider publishing industry. Our goal is to deepen the industry's understanding of how readers interact with fiction. All findings are based on aggregated platform data and do not identify individual readers or disclose individual authors' private analytics.

Please visit our site insights.reamstories.com for more information.

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