

# Consumer Acceptance of Subscription-based DIY Home Repair Solutions in Urban Area

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**Abstract:** *The Hybridization of Home Services and the Urban Imperative.*

The exponential growth of the subscription economy, historically dominated by media and digital services, is now exerting significant influence over the tangible goods and service sectors, notably residential home maintenance and repair. This analysis focuses on the viability and consumer acceptance of subscription-based Do-It-Yourself (DIY) home repair solutions within high-density urban areas. The central tenet of the investigation is that the adoption of these novel solutions is fundamentally predicated upon the model's efficacy in mitigating consumer Perceived Risk (Related to Safety and project failure) while simultaneously enhancing Perceived Ease of Use (simplifying complex tasks and logistical burdens).

Urban economic friction- characterized by high professional labor costs and physical space constraints-has created a compulsory demand for DIY alternatives. However, this imperative is complicated by a pervasive skill gap, particularly among younger, digitally-native cohorts. Data include that a significant minority of homeowners attempting DIY project (20% overall) eventually require hiring a professional to correct their work, a rate that escalates dramatically among Gen Z (33%) and Millennials (29%). This high failure rate establishes a critical challenge for subscription providers: they must move beyond simply providing parts and basic instructional content to delivering an integrated solution that actively bolsters consumer execution competence and guarantees a safety net against costly failure. Ultimately, consumer acceptance will hinge on the subscription's ability to successfully deliver guaranteed, verifiable value that positions the recurring charge as essential financial and asset risk management, rather than as a discretionary convenience.

## I. INTRODUCTION.

The acceptance framework for subscription-based DIY home repair is inexorably linked to the specific economic and demographic dynamic governing metropolitan environments. The market viability for these solutions is not merely opportunistic but stems from demonstrable necessity driven by urban pressures.

### A. Defining the urban home Improvement Landscape

Rising urbanization globally has spurred corresponding growth in demand for home improvement and maintenance

products. Unlike suburban or rural markets. Urban areas often contain a dense mix of properties, including older home, condos, and apartments, where the focus of improvement is weighted towards maximizing functionally and aesthetic appeal within constrained spaces. This structural limitation mandates solutions that prioritize efficiency and logistical simplicity.

Demographically, the market is being reshaped by the increasing presence of millennial and Gen Z homeowners and renters. These younger groups are highly engaged with digital tools, including Augmented Reality (AR) tutorials, for project planning and digital engagement, suggest a receptive audience for subscription models that integrate advanced instructional technology with physical supplies.

### B. The Economic Pressure Point: The Cost Savings Imperative

The foundational motivation driving nearly half of all homeowners to undertake DIY projects is the imperative of cost reduction. This financial incentive is acutely pronounced in urban cores where the cost of skilled professional labor is acutely pronounced in urban core where the cost of skilled professional labor is prohibitively high. An Examination of major metropolitan areas, such as the San Jose-San Francisco-Oakland region, reveals that professional total compensation rates for service labor can exceed \$71 per hour. This high labor cost environment creates substantial friction, translating into significant savings opportunities for homeowners capable of performing even minor repairs themselves.

This quantifiable difference in cost establishes the foundation for the *Perceived Usefulness* (a core construct of the Technology Acceptance Model) of a subscription service. If the subscription fee- for instance, a \$50 monthly charge- can reliably prevent or substitute for even a single high-cost professional service call, the value proposition is immediate and financially compelling. However, the extreme cost of professional remediation in these and financially compelling. However, the extreme cost of professional remediation in these markets fundamentally alters the definition of failure tolerance. Because the subsequent cost of correcting a failed DIY project is amplified by high urban labor rates, the subscription model must offer embedded safeguards, such as professional diagnostics or backup, to ensure that the cost

savings incentive is ultimately realized rather than inverted by subsequent repair expenses.

### C. The Fixer-Upper Mentality in Younger Generations

The competitive nature of urban housing markets has fostered a willingness among younger generations to purchase properties requiring significant maintenance or work, often referred to as “fixer-uppers”. Nearly half of all homeowners (49%) view fixer-uppers as a beneficial opportunity rather than a drawback, with this sentiment rising sharply to 64% for Gen Z and 61% for Millennials.

This high initial willingness to engage in maintenance and repair work, often stemming from economic necessity in securing property, establishes a large, receptive target audience for subscription services. These consumers are actively seeking solutions that bridge their economic constraints with their ambition to enhance their living spaces. Their high acceptance of digital research methodologies further suggest that they are specifically seeking solutions that offer structured, guided learning and instructional content, moving beyond basic materials procurement.

## II. TAXONOMY OF SUBSCRIPTION-BASED DIY SOLUTION AND VALUE ENGINEERING

Subscription models for home repair are emerging in varied forms, each offering distinct value propositions tailored to specific customer needs and logistical constraints. Successful market penetration necessitates understanding and strategically combining these distinct models to maximize acceptance in the urban environment.

### A. Preventative Maintenance Subscriptions (Service-Centrics)

- The service-centric model is based on proactive, routine upkeep, such as plumbing inspections or HVAC checkups, scheduled to occur before major problems manifest. These plans often involve professionals and guarantee recurring, predictable service, which stabilize income for service providers.
- The value proposition here targets customers whose primary constraint is time or lack of expertise -including busy families, first-time homebuyer, and seniors. For these groups, the subscription mitigates risk avoidance and ensures convenience by placing the responsibility for complex, recurring tasks onto a third party.

### B. Guided DIY Kit and Parts Delivery Services (Material& Instruction-Centric)

This model is the most direct application of the DIY subscription concept, delivering specialized material, certified parts, and precise instructions for tasks ranging from routine from routine replacement (like air filters) to appliance or structural repairs. These services inherently cater to the “Right to Repair” movement by making necessary components and diagnostic information accessible to non-professional users.

These material- centric model reduce key friction points in traditional DIY: the consumer effort required for product selection, information retrieval, and evaluation of alternative sector (e.g., ALLDATA providing digital manuals and parts

integration with AutoZone) or appliance manufactures (e.g., Whirlpool offering self-repair guides and part sourcing) ,demonstrate the success of bundling certified knowledge with procurement, thereby significantly enhancing consumer confidence and lowering perceived difficulty.

### C. Tool and Equipment Access /Rental Models (Infrastructure-Centric)

A critical constraint in dense urban settings is the acute lack of physical storage space, particularly for bulky or expensive specialty equipment. The tool and equipment access model directly addresses this barrier by offering short-term rental or subscription-based access to necessary hardware.

By eliminating the necessity of tool ownership and permanent storage -an impractically for many apartment or combo residents-this subscription type transforms a negative urban constraint into a positive subscription feature. This dramatic increase in the physical Perceived Ease of Use enables urban dwellers to undertake project that would otherwise be entirely outsourced. Furthermore, stabilizing income through paid listing or subscription packages for equipment owners also benefits marketplace operators.

### D. Value Engineering: Designing Effrctive Tiered Pricing Structures.

The economic diversity inherent in urban populations necessities flexible pricing strategies. Developing multiple pricings tiers (Basic, Standard, Premium) is essential for aligning the subscription offering with diverse homeowner budgets and requirements. Tiered pricing, which allows subscribers to periodically reset their plan based on changing need, is praised by consumers for providing flexibility and control over their expenditure.

Successful blueprints for tiered subscription models can be derived from the automotive repair sector, where plans range from approximately \$19.99 to \$79.99 per month. These plans bundle essential like fluids changes and inspections with discounts on complex, high -cost repairs, effectively translating to predictable cash flow for the provider and reduced long-term cost volatility for the customer. The optimal model for urban acceptance is therefore a hybrid solution that combines the predictability of preventive service with the control of material delivery, allowing customers the flexibility to choose between DIY execution for simple tasks (like filter replacement) and professional involvement for higher complexity jobs, all within a unified, tiered payment structure.

## III. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF CONSUMER ACCEPTANCE IN HOME SERVICES

To analyze and predict consumer acceptance of DIY home repair subscriptions, it is necessary to ground the investigation in established behavioral economic and technology adoption frameworks.

#### A. The Subscription Economy Paradigm and value Perception

The recurring revenue structure of subscription models exerts a profound influence on consumer psychology, impacting buying habits, customer loyalty, perceived worth and personal budgeting behavior. Although this model offers stability and predictable income for businesses, the sector faces the significant challenge of “subscription fatigue.”

Despite the subscription economy’s impressive growth (over 300% from 2012 to 2018), consumers frequently lose track of their total recurring expenditures. A study revealed that consumer vastly underestimate their monthly subscription spend, estimating \$86per month initially, while itemized expenses showed the actual average spend was \$219-more than 2.5 time the estimate. This Aggregation of underestimated costs drives a high churn rate, with over one-third of consumers canceling as new subscription service within three months.

To survive this inevitable attrition, DIY repair subscriptions must offer tangible, non-discretionary value that transcends mere convenience, The service must be positioned as essential to assets protection and safety, differentiating it from easily cut discretionary spending categories like entertainment or apparel. Low initial pricing tiers, such as the \$19.99 Basic level observed in some service bundles, serve as a critical low-friction entry point, but provider must continuously reinforce the realized value- demonstrating prevented component failure or avoided professional service costs- to justify the sustained, recurrent expenditure and mitigate latent fatigue.

#### B.Application of the Technology Acceptance Model(TAM) and Extentions

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) provides a theoretical lens for evaluating the adoption of service platform, asserting that acceptance is predicted by the user’s Behavioral Intention, which is determined by two core beliefs: Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU).

**1.Perceived Usefulness (PU):** This refers to the degree to which a user believes that using the subscription service will enhance performance. In the context of urban DIY, this enhancement is primarily financial (cost Saving) and functional (successful repair or maintenance).

**2.Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU):** This is the degree to which the user believes that utilizing the system or service will be free of effort. For DIY subscriptions, this relates not only to the simplicity of the digital interface but also to the logistical friction of the physical process-easy tool access, simple ordering, and pre-sorted, labeled parts.

Extensions of TAM, such as incorporating control beliefs from the Theory of Planned Behavior, introduce the concept of **Self-Efficacy**. Self-Efficacy refers to the confidence level a user has regarding their ability to successfully perform the required behavior. For DIY repair. the Key obstacle to acceptance is the consumer’s low self-efficacy in complex repair. Subscription services bolster this confidence and ensure execution success.

The following analysis maps the specific challenges inherent to the urban DIY environment onto these theoretical

acceptance constructs, providing a framework for strategic service design.

Urban Factor/ Challenge	Relevant Subscription Model solution	TAM Acceptance Construct Addressed	Supporting Data
High professional Labor Costs	Flat-rate, preventative maintenance bundles	Perceived Usefulness (Financial Benefits)	3
Lack of Tool Storage Space	Tool Rental/Loan Programs,  Minimalist kit packaging	Perceived Ease of Use	4
Low Skill Levels/Safety concerns	Step-by-step video guides	Self-efficacy/ Perceived Behavioral Control	5
Customer Trust Deficit	Focus on known brands (OEMs)	Normative Beliefs/Trust Factor	5

#### IV. DRIVERS AND BARRIERS TO URBAN ACCEPTANCE: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

Consumer acceptance in the urban market is defined by a dynamic interplay between technological enablement, structural constraints, and pervasive psychological barriers related to competence and trust.

##### A. Facilitating Drivers: The Digital Enablement of DIY

The modern DIY consumers is highly digital. Widespread access to digital tools, AR tutorial, and “How-To” video has fundamentally lowered the initial knowledge barrier for undertaking complex projects. This instructional content has become a commodity; 90% of DIYers report researching projects online before visiting a physical store.

Successful model integrates this content directly with the supply chain. Appliance original equipment manufactures (OEMs) like whirlpool Provide self-repair sections, offering troubleshooting guidance alongside direct parts sales. Similarly, Automotive platform like ALLDATS bundle detailed repair manuals for thousands of vehicles with integration to parts retailers like AutoZone. This Strategy effectively combine reliable, expert knowledge with guaranteed parts quality, significantly boosting consumer self-efficacy.

##### B. Critical Barriers: Competence, Safety, and Failure Risk

Despite the accessibility of instructional content, a significant competence gap persists in the homeowner population. While 88% of American homeowners believe they are *knowledgeable* about home maintenance, less than 40% regularly maintain their home, including a discrepancy between self- perception and proactive behavior. This gap manifests as high execution risk.

Safety is a substantial concern, with 63% of homeowners reporting that safety is overlooked when they engage in DIY projects. This concern must be directly mitigated by subscription services through safety-focused instructions and carefully vetted, pre-packaged materials.

Crucially, the “Failure Tax” undermines the Perceived Usefulness of DIY. Twenty percent of all homeowners who attempt DIY eventually must hire a professional to correct their work. This Failure rate is alarmingly generational, reaching 33% for Gen Z and 29% for Millennials. The high subsequent cost of professional correction in urban areas means that the initial consumption of digital guidance, despite increasing Perceived Ease of Use for information gathering, does not reliably translate into execution competence. The subscription service must move beyond passive video consumption to provide interactive, diagnostic, and preventative guidance integrated directly with the physical kit to guarantee execution success and prevent the financial inversion caused by the failure tax.

#### C. Urban Infrastructure Constraints and Logistical Friction

Urban density imposes structural constraints on DIY activity. The acute lack of storage space- the absence of a garage or a utility room in many city dwellings- makes tool ownership impractical. Bulky equipment must be stored creatively (e.g., wall -mounted solutions, under-furniture bins), which introduces friction and complexity.

This constraint is strategically leveraged by subscription models offering just -in-time materials and tool delivery or access. By eliminating the necessity of permanent storage and optimizing kit packaging for minimalist space, these subscription services transform the major urban pain point into a core service benefits, significantly enhancing Perceived Ease of Use for high -density residents.

#### D. Trust Deficit and Regulatory Hurdles

A significant obstacle to platform adoption is a general trust gap within the home improvement industry. Homeowners are highly concerned about unreliable contractors and report placing the least trust in third-party platform (14%) when selecting service providers. Furthermore, nearly 30% of homeowners report a negative experience with a professional sourced via a third-party platform.

This trust deficit strongly favors subscription model offered directly by recognized, established brands (e.g., Manufactures like whirlpool) or by highly specialized niche providers who can leverage strong customer loyalty. Distrust of general aggregators necessitates that DIY subscription providers build acceptance through highly curated experience, verified parts sourcing, and transparent supply chains, fostering brand equity that replaces generalized platform trust.

An additional critical barrier is the friction created by manufacture warranties. many consumers worry that engaging in DIY repair or using independent shops with non-OEM parts could void existing product warranties. Subscription services

offering repair kits must legally navigate this “Right to Repair” landscape, ensuring that their supplied parts and instructional methods do not jeopardize the homeowner’s long-term product viability. provides may need to explicitly offer their own warranty or insurance backing to mitigate the consumer’s perceived regulatory risk.

### V. GENERATIONAL ACCEPTANCE DYNAMICS AND TARGETED INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

The analysis of DIY failure rates reveals profound generational differences that mandate tailored subscription feature sets and the probability of a successful DIY completion.

The high rate of subsequent professional intervention (20% overall) underscores that enthusiasm alone is insufficient. Gen Z (33%) and Millennials (29%) rely on professionals to fix their DIY work at rate dramatically higher than Gen X (18%) and Boomers (11%). These trends highlight that younger cohorts, despite their digital literacy and attempting repairs, significantly overestimate their competence, resulting in economically detrimental project failure.

Table: Generational DIY Failure Rate and Strategic Implications

Home-owner Cohort	Rate of Subsequent Professional Intervention (%)	Primary Motivation for Subscription	Required Subscription Feature Focus
Gen Z	33%	Access to fixer-upper properties, self-reliance	Extreme instructional guidance, pre-packaged safety assurance, professional helpline access to mitigate failure risk
Millennials	29%	Cost savings, Functional improvement	Convenience Streamlined logistics, integrated maintenance Schedule.
Gen X	18%	Efficiency, time management	Priority scheduling for preventative maintenance
Boomers	11%	Proactive maintenance stability	Comprehensive hands-off service bundle; low-complexity DIY option only.

#### A. Segment-Specific Interventions for younger consumers

Given their disproportionately high failure rate, Gen Z and Millennial Acceptance is most responsive to feature that



bolster Perceived Ease of Use and Self-Efficacy. Subscriptions targeting this cohort should focus on minimizing project complexity. This includes delivering kits with components that require minimal technical integration, providing only the necessary single component rather than a comprehensive toolbox, and implementing highly interactive diagnostics and troubleshooting support (e.g., video chat with certified technicians).

#### *B. Segment-Specific Interventions for Older consumers*

Gen X and Boomers, who demonstrate much higher execution success and often seek convenience, are motivated hassle. Subscription offering for this group should emphasize automated preventative maintenance scheduling and high-value, quality-assured parts delivery. They are less likely to require extensive educational content and prioritize reliability and professional assurance within the hybrid model.

#### *C. Addressing Latest Resistance: Subscription Fatigue*

To Safeguard acceptance across all cohorts, subscription models must proactively counteract the tendency for consumer to lose tract of recurring spending. The recurring charge should be positioned as preventative cost insurance-a necessary maintenance expenditure that avoids future catastrophic costs. Transparency in billing, along with offering flexible mechanisms for pausing, canceling, or easily adjusting service tiers based on changing life circumstances, is critical for minimizing churn and maintaining trust.

### VI. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS AND RETAILERS

The successful deployment of subscription-based DIY home repair solutions in urban markets requires strategic alignment between execution, digital support, and consumer behavioral expectations.

#### *A. Optimizing the Offering: Bundling Kits with expert Diagnostic Access*

Given that a Significant segment of DIY attempts will fail and require professional intervention, a strategic necessity is the inclusion of a professional "Safety net" within the subscription tier. This feature provides subscribers with immediate access to certified experts via integrated communication channels (e.g., video or phone support) for initial diagnosis, troubleshooting, or mid-project advice. This expert access reduces the perceived risk of DIY engagement and, if offered as a value-added component, minimizes the likelihood of an expensive physical service call. Furthermore, integrating the supply chain is paramount. Retailers that can bundle repair manuals, verified parts procurement, and digital guides, replicating successful model seen in the automotive industry, ensure brand loyalty and quality control. This integrated approach directly address consumer concerns regarding product quality, availability, and sourcing.

#### *B. Retention and churn Mitigation Strategies*

Customer retention is directly correlated with long-term profitability, as customer acquisition costs are often substantial. Given the general distrust of third-party aggregation, subscription must focus on generating positive

word -of -month endorsement, turning existing subscribers into brand ambassadors to drive organic growth.

For materials-centric model, the recurring delivery and "unboxing experience" must consistently reinforce personalization, quality, and realized value to justify the ongoing payment and combat high initial churn. The packaging and preparation of the DIY kit itself are physical manifestations of the Perceived Ease of Use.

#### *C. Digital Strategy: Establishing Authority and Efficacy*

The DIY research process is overwhelmingly digital; 90% of DIYers research online before a purchase, and 59% utilize mobile devices in store for additional product information. Consequently, the subscription platform must be built on a mobiles first architecture, providing a seamless omni-channels experience. Platform features should include mobile access to instructional contents, interactive shopping lists, mobile coupons, and inventory alerts to enhance the purchasing and execution process.

### VII. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Consumer acceptance of subscription-based DIY home repair solutions in urban areas is fundamentally driven by the severe economic pressure points of high professional labor costs and logistical constraints related to limited living space. The adoption model is primarily predicated on the subscription's ability to deliver guaranteed realized cost saving by successfully mitigating Perceived Risk and enhancing Self-Efficacy.

The analysis concludes that the optional market solution is a hybrid subscription model. This model must combine the risk-avoidance predictability of preventative maintenance scheduling with the logistical efficiency of highly curated, just-in-time DIY kit delivery ,Specifically designed to bypass urban constraints (tool storage, complex material sourcing).Critically ,this hybrid approach must integrate immediate access to expert diagnostic support to serve as a low-cost safety net, thereby reducing the high execution failure rates observed among younger urban homeowners and preventing the financial-not discretionary convenience-providers can overcome the challenges of subscription fatigue and sustained churn.

Future research should focus on quantifiable methodologies that link specific instructional techniques (e.g., comparing the efficiency of simply video tutorials against AR or interactive diagnostic guidance) to measurable reductions in generational DIY failure rates. Longitudinal studies are also necessary to track customer lifetime value and churn mitigation strategies specific to the home service sector, providing empirical evidence on how continuous value demonstration effectively combats subscription fatigue in ahigh-cost urban environment.

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