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From Birchbox to Whimseybox, Giving the Gift that Really Keeps on Giving

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[Dec 11, 2012](#) Posted by [Meredith Deliso](#)



The monthly subscription has long been a holiday gift staple, whether it's getting your mom a year's supply of *Martha Stewart Living* magazine or that dairy lover in your life a Cheese of the Month Club membership. But now, there's a new subscription service that's rising in popularity that caters to any number of interests: the gift box.

Have a girlfriend who can't get enough of beauty samples? [There's a box for that](#). A sibling who's knee-deep in glitter, at work on the next DIY project? [There's a box for that](#). Dog owner who spoils her pooch? [There's a box for that, too](#). These services generally range from \$10 to \$20 a month, and arrive every four weeks as a curated box of products tailored to your needs and interests.

Julie Kenney, founder of [The Gifting Experts](#), an online gift-giving guide, has been following the rise of monthly gift box subscriptions since late 2010. Her [Pinterest board](#) on the subject is one of the most popular boards for new followers.

"I think monthly gift boxes have become popular due to the increase in cyber shopping," said Kenney. "Every year it gets harder to know what to gift someone, even someone who is a close friend or family member. We are exposed to so many products throughout the year, it is time consuming and frustrating to know whether or not a certain product will be a long-lasting gift."

Alicia DiRago has seen the demand for monthly gift boxes this holiday season first-person. As the founder of Whimseybox, a subscription service that delivers a selection of DIY craft products each month, she's sold more gift subscriptions than non starting since a week before Thanksgiving.

"Throughout the year people purchase gift subscriptions, but I can tell that there's a lot of holiday purchasing going on," said DiRago."

The entrepreneur will celebrate her first anniversary later this month since founding Whimseybox last December as a way to inspire fellow craft lovers with products and project ideas – and make it easier in the process. DiRago was inspired by Birchbox, a monthly subscription service for women and men that delivers a handful of beauty samples and treats each month. Like Birchbox, the contents of each month's Whimseybox is a surprise.



“There’s something fun about the discovery aspect of it – you don’t know what you’re going to get,” said DiRago. “It’s a chance to do something different, whether it’s a different project or a different mascara than you’ve ever used before.”

As a gift giver, a monthly gift box subscription can also take the pressure off. There are dozens of services, covering topics in beauty (there’s Birchbox, as well as [Goodebox](#) and [Glossybox](#)), kids crafts ([BabbaBox](#)), art ([Art in a Box](#)), artisan foods ([Knoshbox](#)), eco-friendly goods ([Conscious Box](#)), pets ([Barkbox](#)), and even more that don’t necessarily have “box” in the name. There’s even a monthly box devoted to [saltwater lures](#) for fishing. With such variety, you can easily find something your friends and family have an interest in, but you might not know anything about, and help them discover new products related to that each month.

“Everyone can pick up a gift card, but if you know a simple interest or hobby the person you are gifting has, you can really up the ante,” said Kenney. “I like that monthly gift boxes are a one-time, easy buy for the purchaser but a multiple surprise gift for the receiver. Most monthly gift subscriptions are curated so you know your special someone will be receiving a gift they will love.”

Since subscriptions can take up to four to six weeks to arrive, Kenney recommends ordering early, or contacting customer service to find out the best time to pre-order so you get the first box in time for the holidays. Though with gift exchanges drawing near, gift boxes can also make a great gift when you need something on short notice.

“You don’t necessarily need to have the box in hand to give someone,” said DiRago, who offers sending an email alert to the recipient that Whimseybox is on its way, or you could print out the gift certificate. “When it’s too late for even overnight delivery, it’s a handy last-minute gift.”



Most gift box subscription services also have options of giving 3, 6, or 12 months, so you can find the price point that works best for you and your budget while also providing a long-lasting gift.

“It’s a unique gift in that the moment doesn’t just last for one day,” said Birchbox co-founder Katia Beauchamp. “It really is the gift that keeps giving!”

Have a monthly gift box subscription you love? Share in the comments!

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