

Shopify Subscription App Comparison

Recharge vs Appstle vs Seal: the fee and the measured speed. Built by Kaspian Fuad, Shopify developer.

The two numbers that decide

Transaction fee + blocking time
Everything else is a tie-breaker.

Fee: Recharge 1.49%, others 0%
It compounds on top of Shopify Payments.

Speed: Seal 45 / Recharge 60 / Appstle 80
Milliseconds of blocking time, measured.

Recharge: what it costs

Starter \$99/mo + 1.49% + \$0.19
Per transaction, on top of card fees.

Plus \$499/mo + 1.34% + \$0.19
12-month contract, scalable rate.

\$25 entry, no fee first 50 subs
Only if installed after Feb 2026.

Recharge: who it is for

Mid-market to enterprise brands
Dr. Squatch, Bobbie, Good Ranchers.

Deep retention + dunning tooling
The reason the % can pencil out.

Skip it below 7 figures of subs
The fee is pure drag at small scale.

Appstle: what it costs

Free up to \$500/mo revenue
Real free tier, not a trial.

\$10 / \$30 / \$100 per month
Starter / Business / Business Premium.

0% transaction fee, all tiers
Flat monthly, no cut of your sales.

Appstle: who it is for

Growing SMB to mid-market
Recharge features, no % cut.

Build-a-box, loyalty, churn tools
The most features per dollar.

Heaviest widget of the three
80ms: budget speed against it.

Seal: what it costs

Free up to 50 active subscriptions
Cleanest way to test subscriptions.

\$5.95 / \$9.95 up to \$399/mo
Tiers gated by subscription count.

0% transaction fee, all tiers
Cost never scales against success.

Seal: who it is for

Small and early-stage stores
Lightest and cheapest to start.

Testing before committing budget
Free tier does the proving.

Scales awkwardly past a few hundred
Per-tier caps force upgrades.

The fee math (\$50k/mo in subs)

Recharge Starter: \$99 + ~\$745 fees
1.49% of \$50k, plus \$0.19 per order.

Appstle Business: flat \$30
No percentage, whatever your volume.

Gap is an order of magnitude
And it repeats every month.

Keep the widget from slowing you

Load it only on subscription PDPs
Not site-wide; use the app block.

Never run two subscription apps
Two widgets double the blocking time.

Measure before and after install
CrUX grader on a subscription PDP.

2026 watch: Recharge bought Skio

Acquired April 2026, ~\$105M
Both platforms still run separately.

No pricing merge confirmed yet
The lower-fee gap may not last.

Weigh it if you eyed Skio
Convergence on Recharge pricing is live risk.

How to pick in one line

Small or testing -> Seal
Lightest, cheapest, 0% fee.

Most growing stores -> Appstle
Best all-rounder, flat pricing.

Large and fee-tolerant -> Recharge
Only where retention beats the %.