# Perplexity AI launches $42.5m fund to pay publishers for content use



Perplexity AI has unveiled a landmark initiative to share revenue with publishers, in a move designed to address one of the most pressing tensions between artificial intelligence platforms and the media industry: how to fairly compensate content creators whose work powers AI-driven services.

On 26 August, the San Francisco-based startup announced a $42.5 million fund to underpin its new model. At its centre is *Comet Plus*, a $5-a-month subscription service that will distribute around 80 per cent of revenue to participating publishers when their content is surfaced in AI results, clicked by users, or used in tasks performed by Perplexity’s AI assistant.

The scheme represents a notable departure from the advertising-driven model long dominated by Google. That ecosystem has been disrupted by what publishers call the “Google Zero” effect, where AI-generated summaries reduce traffic back to original sites. “We need fresh monetisation strategies,” said Jessica Chan, Perplexity’s head of publisher partnerships, positioning the initiative as an industry first.

The move follows mounting legal challenges. Publishers including *The Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes*, and in Japan, Nikkei and *Asahi Shimbun*, have accused Perplexity of copyright infringement and unauthorised scraping. Japanese plaintiffs allege reputational damage caused by erroneous AI outputs attributed to their brands.

Chief executive Aravind Srinivas has acknowledged these tensions, pitching the scheme as a “new revenue stream” for media companies. Perplexity now handles around 230 million monthly queries, underscoring both its rapid growth and the urgency of resolving disputes over intellectual property.

Early partners include *Time*, *Fortune*, *Der Spiegel*, *Entrepreneur* and *The Texas Tribune*. They will also gain free access to Perplexity’s Enterprise Pro tier, developer tools, and usage analytics provided by Scalepost.ai, a specialist in AI–publisher partnerships.

The company’s wider ambitions have been underscored by a bold $34.5 billion bid for Google’s Chrome browser, signalling its intent to challenge the dominance of traditional search.

Yet scepticism persists. Critics warn that while the $42.5m fund is significant, it may prove insufficient given the scale of content consumed, especially for smaller outlets. Transparency in distribution and inclusivity across diverse media remain key hurdles for long-term trust.

For consumers, Comet Plus promises faster, more accurate AI-assisted browsing while indirectly funding journalism. For the industry, Perplexity’s model offers a potential blueprint: a system where AI progress and content sustainability are not in conflict but mutually reinforcing.

Whether the scheme sets a new standard—or proves a short-lived experiment—will depend on how fairly it shares value across the media ecosystem.

Created by [Amplify](https://www.hbmadvisory.com/amplify): AI-augmented, human-curated content.

## Bibliography

1. <https://nerdschalk.com/perplexity-ai-shares-its-plan-to-share-revenue-with-publishers/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.axios.com/2025/08/26/perplexity-comet-plus-subscription> - Perplexity has introduced Comet Plus, a subscription service offering publishers an 80% share of subscription revenue. To encourage early adoption, the company has allocated a $42.5 million fund for initial publishing partners. This initiative aims to strengthen relationships with publishers and addresses growing legal pressures, including multiple copyright lawsuits. The move also signifies a shift from traditional search-era content strategies, which often prioritised algorithm rankings over quality. Additionally, Perplexity recently made a significant $34.5 billion bid to acquire Google's Chrome browser, highlighting its ambition in the digital information and search space.
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/79a88d1a-d914-4188-8792-0a20973b39a1> - Two of Japan's largest media organisations, Nikkei and the Asahi Shimbun, have filed a joint lawsuit in Tokyo against AI search engine Perplexity, alleging copyright infringement. The suit claims Perplexity copied, stored, and used their article content without permission, bypassing technical measures designed to prevent such actions. The media groups argue this has led to the dissemination of incorrect information attributed to their reporting, damaging their credibility. Each is seeking ¥2.2 billion (approximately $15 million) in compensation and the deletion of their content from Perplexity's servers.
4. <https://time.com/7012698/aravind-srinivas/> - Aravind Srinivas, CEO of Perplexity, oversees an AI 'answer engine' that has been met with both interest and controversy. Perplexity uses AI to answer users' questions by summarising online content, which has led to accusations of plagiarism from major publishers like Forbes and Condé Nast. Despite issuing a non-apology and facing a cease and desist letter, Perplexity has adjusted its approach to highlight sources more clearly. Srinivas views Google as the main competitor, arguing that Google's ad-based model hampers its integration of AI into search. With around 230 million monthly queries, Perplexity has introduced a revenue-sharing program with publishers to mitigate potential advertising losses. This initiative aims to offer publishers a new revenue stream, though its viability remains uncertain.
5. <https://www.theverge.com/2024/7/30/24208979/perplexity-publishers-program-ad-revenue-sharing-ai-time-fortune-der-spiegel> - Perplexity is launching a program to share ad revenue with publishing partners following weeks of plagiarism accusations. Perplexity's 'Publishers' Program' has recruited its first batch of partners, including prominent names like Time, Der Spiegel, Fortune, Entrepreneur, The Texas Tribune, and Automattic (with WordPress.com participating but not Tumblr). Under this program, when Perplexity features content from these publishers in response to user queries, the publishers will receive a share of the ad revenue. Publishing partners will also get a free one-year subscription to Perplexity's Enterprise Pro tier and access to Perplexity's developer tools, plus insights through Scalepost.ai, a new AI startup that helps secure partnerships between AI companies and publishers and provides data such as how frequently a publisher's articles appear in search queries.
6. <https://www.perplexity.ai/cnr/hub/blog/introducing-comet-plus> - Comet Plus is the first business model to reflect what users demand from the internet today, as AI empowers them to discover, learn, and do more. Subscribers of Comet Plus gain direct access to the sites and content of participating publishers, empower their AI assistants to complete tasks on those sites, and benefit from direct answers informed by the highest-quality content on the web. Publishers become more useful to their readers and their readers' assistants, offering custom experiences for both human and user agent traffic while ensuring their important journalism and content contributes to a better internet for the users who demand it. In exchange, we're distributing all of that revenue to participating publishers, minus a small portion for Perplexity's compute costs.
7. <https://apnews.com/article/f307cb607f0db871b05f843a3f744340> - The AI startup Perplexity AI, backed by investors like Jeff Bezos, aims to compete with Google in the search engine market. Despite its ambitions, the company faces criticism from news organisations such as Forbes, which accused Perplexity of publishing summarised news without proper citation. Perplexity's CEO Aravind Srinivas insists the firm aggregates information with appropriate attribution and has adjusted practices following feedback. Additionally, Perplexity has been reported to inaccurately attribute fabricated quotes to real people in its writing feature. The startup, which has over 85 million web visits, seeks to develop positive relationships with news publishers, offering revenue-sharing partnerships. Critics argue that while Perplexity has made some corrections, the company must better respect proprietary reporting and journalism standards.