

BUSINESS & FINANCE

# Publishers Get a Win on Google AI Tool

U.K. regulators let content producers opt out of search giant's aggregation

By ADRIÀ CALATAYUD AND EDITH HANCOCK

U.K. antitrust regulators said they would allow publishers to opt out of feeding their content to power artificial-intelligence features in Google's online searches.

The Competition and Markets Authority said Wednesday

that the move aims to give publishers control over how their content is used by AI and put them in a stronger position to negotiate with Alphabet-owned Google.

The tech giant has developed its own AI platform, Gemini, and rolled out AI features in its traditional search engine.

Regulators have grown increasingly concerned with how Google powers its AI tools, which essentially aggregate information on the internet to answer users' queries in addition to Google Search's links to

other websites. The European Commission started in December an antitrust investigation into whether Google imposes unfair terms on publishers or is hurting competition online by giving itself privileged access to third-party content for its AI features.

It is also the next step in the U.K. watchdog's bid to enforce the Digital Markets, Competition, and Consumer bill, which seeks to level the playing field for businesses online. Under the law, tech companies like Google are labeled as having strategic sta-

tus due to their control over dominant platforms like search engines. Once they are designated, the CMA can impose so-called conduct requirements for them to follow.

Mrinalini Loew, general manager of Google's Search Ecosystem, said in a blog post Wednesday that the company is listening to publishers and engaging with the CMA. It said it is starting to test a new tool that lets website owners manage how their content appears in AI search features, saying that sites that do choose to opt out of appearing

in AI search results won't receive traffic from them, and how sites use the tool won't factor into how their content is ranked in reach outside of its AI services.

"We are beginning to roll these features out to a subset of website owners in the U.K., allowing for thorough testing before rolling them out to website owners globally," Loew said.

The CMA said it is monitoring the changes Google implemented and their implications for businesses. The CMA deems Google's search service

to have strategic market status, which allows the regulator to introduce targeted requirements on how it operates.

"With features like AI Overviews rapidly reshaping online search, it is crucial that content publishers, including news organizations, have appropriate bargaining power over how their content is used," CMA Chief Executive Sarah Cardell said.

News Corp, owner of The Wall Street Journal, has an agreement to supply content on Google platforms.

# Anthropic Bulks Up Its Enterprise Partner Program

By BELLE LIN

Anthropic is formalizing its Claude Partner Network—a program for third-party sellers of its AI products—in a move that executives say will help it demonstrate business-readiness as it inches closer to an initial public offering.

The AI company behind the popular Claude models on Monday said it had filed confidentially for an IPO. The filing could put Anthropic, recently valued at nearly \$1 trillion, on a path to go public this fall.

Since starting the Claude Partner Network in March, Anthropic said it has fielded over 40,000 requests from firms seeking to join. The program is currently launching with about 100 members, ranging from large professional-services firms like Accenture and Cognizant, to smaller consultancies and IT services companies.

On Wednesday, Anthropic announced a new "services track" for the partner network, describing it as a "tiered structure" that delineates how much effort a partner has put toward its Anthropic business. A "select" partner, for instance, employs at least 10 Anthropic-certified individuals, whereas a

"global premier" partner has at least 1,000.

The company also released a portal called the Claude Partner Hub that helps partners track their standing and connects customers with partner firms.

The Claude Partner Network represents Anthropic's effort to build a "channel business"—essentially a network of third-party resellers that help a company's own sales team move product. It is a proven strategy that tech giants from Microsoft to Cisco have deployed to dramatically expand the reach of their own sales teams.

With the formalization of the program, Anthropic's partners get "a great deal of credibility" when they go out to sell Claude to businesses, said Karl Kadon, Anthropic's global head of partner experience.

"It would be our responsibility as a public company to show up to shareholders, and to the world, with an ecosystem that we can stand behind that is high-integrity," Kadon said. "It's not necessarily something where just anybody can call themselves a partner with Anthropic."

To gain entry to the program, firms must meet a slate of requirements, among them



The move comes ahead of an anticipated blockbuster IPO. An Anthropic event in San Francisco last month.

certifying a minimum number of people in a proctored exam and meeting Anthropic's bar for "deploying Claude responsibly," Kadon added.

Also in March, Anthropic announced a \$100 million investment to help with training, technical support and shared marketing for its partners. The company plans to grow membership in the network to mul-

tiply thousands of firms around the world, said Steve Corfield, its head of global business development and partnerships.

Both Anthropic and OpenAI have struck deals with consulting and professional-services firms to help sell their AI products to businesses. As enterprises have warmed to AI and AI agents, they have needed help using the technology to

the fullest extent. That has also led to the rise of "forward deployed engineers" at AI companies, professionals who are embedded within client firms to help them make best use of AI.

For Anthropic, bulking up its enterprise sales strategy comes at a time when investors are looking for signs of business maturity.

The move helps "demon-

strate to the market that we're thinking about scale, and that should give confidence," Anthropic's Corfield said. "We want durability of customer success, which should drive durability of revenue for the company," he added.

Belle Lin writes for WSJ Leadership Institute's CIO Journal.

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