

Google looking to help news outlets win subscribers

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Google is seeking ways to help publishers win paying subscribers for news stories, a person close to the matter told AFP.

To this end, the US internet giant is collaborating with NewsCorp, the

Financial Times, and the New York Times, according to the source.

Google was said to be ramping up its support for subscription services in recognition of the fact that such revenue is vital for publishers who can't rely on advertising alone for financial survival.

Google declined to comment on word of this latest effort.

"We work closely with news publishers across the world to build products that help support their business and add value to users," Google spokesperson Maggie Shiels said in response to an AFP inquiry.

"At the moment we don't have anything to announce."

Google already uses its technology to let readers of online news subscribe to publishers with a single click, in an internet age spin on tossing a free copy of a newspaper on a doorstep in the hope people sign-up for daily deliveries.

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Artificial intelligence could be combined with troves of data at Google to try to better win over potential news subscribers.

Publishers have complained at times that Google is making money off their work by surfacing stories in search results.

Google has countered that it shares revenue with publishers, drives traffic to their websites where stories are hosted, and that they can opt not to show up in [search results](#).

The need to support reliable news organizations has been highlighted by controversy over bogus stories crafted to influence politics, promote social division, or simply rake in online ad revenue.

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