

Press release

Breakthrough: Corint Media reaches agreement with Ecosia, Europe's largest search engine, on first search engine licence for press content

Corint Media and the largest European search engine Ecosia conclude permanent licence agreement on press publishers' rights.

In terms of press publishers' rights, the green search engine Ecosia, based in Berlin, and Corint Media agree on the required remuneration calculation.

Ecosia emphasises the will to conform to the law and its own ethical core values as the basis of the search engine's strategic orientation, including the use of content from publishers and individual authors.

Berlin, 27 July 2022 After months of negotiations, Europe's largest search engine Ecosia and Corint Media have agreed on a model licensing agreement for the use of press content and thus also on the payment of an appropriate and permanent remuneration for the content of press publishers and their authors. The contracting parties have agreed to avoid an accompanying legal dispute to clarify any contentious issues surrounding the press publishers' rights introduced with effect from 7 June 2021.

The agreement and the conclusion of the licence agreement are permanent. Ecosia accepts Corint Media's licence calculations for the "reasonable remuneration of search engine operators". The calculation approach now contractually taken as a basis for determining the reasonable remuneration is customary and enforced in collective copyright law. In detail, it assumes that the pecuniary advantages from the use of the press publishers' rights can only be recorded via percentages on the advertising turnover of the search engine as rights user, as certified by auditors. The reason for this is that only the search engine is aware of the uses of the rights of the publishers by way of the constantly occurring, invisible, mass reproductions of the press products and the making available to the public.

Specifically, with this model licence agreement, Ecosia will pay an appropriate remuneration based on Corint Media's current rights portfolio of approximately 30 percent of national press products. Depending on the scope of the press publishers' rights represented, Ecosia will pay up to 11 per cent of its revenues to Corint Media as reasonable remuneration for the use of the rights.

The climate-positive search engine company Ecosia, based in Berlin, is held through charitable foundation shareholders, among others. The company is committed to investing all corporate profits in sustainable environmental projects, including tree planting projects, solar projects or the promotion of regenerative agriculture.. Ecosia has planted more than 150 million trees in biodiversity hotspots planted around the world.

By concluding this contract, Ecosia recognises the work of opinion-forming press publishers as an important contribution to the democratic ecosystem. Ecosia considers the agreed remuneration to be in line with applicable law and its own public interest-oriented corporate values.

COO Ecosia, Dr Wolfgang Oels: *"In the fight against the climate and biodiversity crisis, our society needs a diversity of opinion-forming and qualitative content. The work of press publishers is important, if not essential, for a democracy. As a search engine, we are a relevant interface between people and information. We want to live up to this responsibility and at the same time not take the work of press publishers for granted. Therefore, we have agreed to pay a fairly agreed and appropriate remuneration to Corint Media for their content in accordance with the law on the protection of press rights. We were able to reach this agreement without going to court. After all, legal disputes can be conducted when there is legal uncertainty, but not in order to evade the law. We are happy to be the first search engine to take this step, but hope not to be the last."*

For **Corint Media's managing directors Markus Runde and Christoph Schwennicke**, the conclusion of the first model licence agreement with a search engine provider is not only a clear success for the financial viability of a free press and the work of journalists, but also a signal: *"With this agreement, we have created an applicable enforcement for the appropriate remuneration for the use of press products by all search engine operators. This enforcement applies to all users, including market dominators such as Google and Facebook, since our legal system presupposes equality in the enforcement of the law, including the law on the protection of press services, vis-à-vis everyone and every company, Art 3 GG. Now, with the help of the amended antitrust law and within the framework of the proceedings already initiated by the Federal Cartel Office against Google and Facebook, it must be ensured that these market dominators pay their bills. They must not continue to evade the national and European legal framework because of their market power. If we in our Western democracies do not manage to enforce applicable law even against global market leaders, we will have no future."*

Ecosia is the largest public good search engine in the world. The tech company dedicates 100% of its profits to climate protection and has planted more than 150 million trees in cooperation with local communities in over 35 countries. In 2014, Ecosia became the first German company to be certified as a B-Corp and has been regularly GWÖ accounted for since 2019. Since 2017, Ecosia has been building solar plants in Germany to ensure that the global server power for search queries can be balanced with renewable energy. The solar plants now produce 200% of its own energy consumption. In 2018, Ecosia's founder and CEO Christian Kroll gave away his shares to the Purpose Foundation to transfer the company into so-called responsible ownership. This made it irrevocably legally binding that the company remains inalienable and that profits must be used for the common good. Ecosia was founded in 2009 by Christian Kroll in Berlin. Visit <https://info.ecosia.org/> to learn more.

Corint Media is a European company in the private media industry. It represents the copyrights and neighbouring rights of almost all German and several international private television and radio stations as well as of numerous press publishers.

The media companies represented by Corint Media include TV stations such as Sat.1, ProSieben, RTL, WELT, SPORT1, CNBC, Eurosport, VOX and CNN, radio stations such as ANTENNE BAYERN, radio ffn, Klassik Radio, Radio Hamburg, Hit Radio-FFH, RADIO PSR, R.SH, RPR1 and RTL RADIO, as well as press publishers such as Axel Springer, Verlagsgesellschaft Madsack, Mediengruppe Pressedruck, Aschendorff Mediengruppe, Rheinische Post Mediengruppe, sh:z Schleswig-Holsteinischer Zeitungsverlag and Badischer Verlag.

Corint Media is one of 13 collecting societies authorised in Germany and is under the supervision of the German Patent and Trade Mark Office (DPMA).

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