

Synthesia / synthesia.io

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Identity & Overview

Synthesia Limited is a British multinational artificial intelligence company headquartered in London, United Kingdom, founded in 2017. The founding team consists of four co-founders: Victor Riparbelli (CEO), Steffen Tjerrild (COO), Prof. Matthias Niessner, and Prof. Lourdes Agapito. Agapito is a professor of 3D computer vision at University College London, while Niessner is a prominent AI academic whose research underpinned the company's core technology. Synthesia was founded when Riparbelli moved to London and discovered a research paper by Niessner demonstrating the first AI-generated video.

For the first three years, Synthesia built an AI dubbing tool using computer vision to make mouth movements more lifelike across languages - technology rooted in the academic research of its academic co-founders. The company then pivoted to a broader enterprise video creation platform. Synthesia helps businesses create professional videos without needing specialized equipment or expertise, saving time and reducing costs while providing a scalable way to communicate and engage with audiences. The core business model is SaaS-based subscription tiers, with an enterprise focus generating the majority of revenue.

MARKET POSITION

Company | What They Do | Category | Pricing | Review Score |

HeyGen | AI avatar video platform focused on marketing, sales, and personalized content | AI Avatar Video | Freemium | 2.4/5 (Trustpilot) |

Colossyan | AI video creation platform purpose-built for workplace learning and development | L&D / eLearning Video | Paid - from \$19/mo | 4.7/5 (Capterra) |

D-ID | AI video generation platform enabling talking-head videos from photos and text | Synthetic Avatar Video | Freemium | Not publicly available |

Elai.io | AI video generator acquired by Panopto in 2024, supporting 75+ languages and 80 avatars | AI Video / eLearning | Not publicly listed | Not publicly available |

Synthesia operates in the AI-generated video / synthetic media category, squarely positioned as the enterprise-grade leader. Synthesia claims to be the only AI video software that handles the entire video workflow: create, localize, manage, publish, and engage with videos in one centralized tool. The positioning that emerges from reviews is: HeyGen for creative marketing flexibility, Synthesia for corporate training and compliance - a differentiation explicitly noted by G2's editorial team. According to Dealroom, Synthesia is the largest generative AI media company in the UK by valuation, and the second largest in the overall AI category.

Traction & Scale

Synthesia derives 70% of its revenue from enterprise deals, with over 65,000 customers globally including 90% of Fortune 100 companies and 95% of the DAX 40. Synthesia has approximately 700 employees as of early 2026, expanded from around 400 in 2024 to 660+ by end of 2025.

The company is scaling its teams across go-to-market and customer success functions, with plans to increase global headcount by more than 70% in 2026. The company has a global footprint with offices in seven countries, generating just over half of its revenue from the United States. In Europe, Paris and Berlin offices serve its top two EU markets, while the expanded Zurich hub supports the DACH business - its third-largest market by ARR globally, counting 95% of DAX 40 companies.

Key milestones include achieving unicorn status in June 2023, crossing \$100M ARR in April 2025, launching Synthesia 3.0 in October 2025 with hyper-realistic digital avatars and AI-powered dubbing, and opening new offices in Austin, Berlin, Paris, and Zurich in 2026.

FINANCIAL PICTURE

Synthesia has raised \$536.6M in total funding across 7 rounds, most recently a \$200M Series E led by GV (Google Ventures) at a \$4B valuation in 2026. The company raised \$180M in Series D in early 2025 at a \$2.1B valuation, after a \$90M Series C in 2023 at \$1B. Earlier rounds include \$3.1M seed (2019), \$12.5M Series A (April 2021), and \$50M Series B (December 2021) led by Kleiner Perkins and GV.

The Series E was led by Google Ventures with participation from Evantic, Hedosophia, NVentures (NVIDIA's VC arm), Accel, Kleiner Perkins, NEA, PSP Growth, Air Street Capital, FirstMark, and MMC Ventures. Adobe made a strategic investment in Synthesia in April 2025. Adobe also reportedly made an acquisition approach of approximately \$3B in October 2025, which was rejected.

Synthesia's filed 2024 accounts show \$58.3M in recognized revenue for the full year ended December 31, 2024, alongside a \$59.2M pre-tax loss. Sacra estimates the company hit \$146M in ARR by September 2025, crossing \$100M ARR in April 2025 and disclosing ~\$140M in ARR by February 2026. The company is on track to generate \$200M in revenue in 2026.

PUBLIC SENTIMENT

Synthesia scores 4.7/5 on G2 with 1,600+ reviews. On Trustpilot, the platform holds a 4-star rating based on approximately 1,762 reviews. The split between platforms is revealing.

The platform scores well on enterprise-heavy review sites, while Trustpilot captures more trial-user friction - specifically from training teams who value owning production without needing a video department. The most consistent praise across G2 and Capterra is avatar quality; users switching from competing tools frequently note Synthesia's avatars look more natural and professional, particularly in close-up lip-sync accuracy.

On the negative side, content moderation emerges as the single loudest pain point. One Trustpilot reviewer described being charged for three months after a test video was flagged: "Very poor. A completely innocuous test video was deemed unacceptable content and they kept charging for 3 months. Cancelled now - £240+ for nothing." A Capterra reviewer noted: "I had videos approved, only to have nearly identical versions later flagged without explanation." Synthesia's top negative G2 tags are "Avatar Limitations" (443 mentions) and "Limited Avatars" (384 mentions).

Media & Press

Synthesia has attracted substantial press, including from both the business and ethics angles. VentureBeat characterized it as a London-based startup that lets users "create professional AI videos in 15 minutes." A significant reputational moment came when Synthesia's avatars were linked to a state-sponsored disinformation campaign. Avatars built on Synthesia's platform were reportedly used to create fake news anchors for a pro-China propaganda campaign, dubbed "Wolf News." Synthesia did not respond to press requests at the time, and its website stated it reviews all content before trusted customers publish it.

A Wall Street Journal tech columnist was able to create a Synthesia deepfake of herself that fooled her bank and tricked her family - a demonstration that sparked industry-wide debate. In response, Synthesia became SOC 2 Type II and GDPR-compliant and became a launch partner of the Partnership on AI Responsible Practices for Synthetic Media, as well as a member of the Content Authenticity Initiative including Adobe, Nvidia, and Microsoft. The Series E announcement in January 2026 drew endorsements from UK Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves and UK Science Secretary Peter Kyle, elevating its national profile.

CURRENT STATUS

Synthesia is in an aggressive growth phase as of late 2026. The company is investing more than \$25 million in new offices and local expansion across the United States and Europe in 2026. It has tripled contracts over \$100,000 in the last 12 months and maintains a Net Revenue Retention rate of more than 140%.

Strong capital access, rapid ARR expansion, and deep enterprise penetration point to a company with meaningful scale advantages and growth momentum. At the same time, ongoing losses, intense competition, and synthetic-media trust risks suggest execution and governance will materially influence how durable that growth proves to be. Synthesia 3.0 launched in October 2025, introducing interactive capabilities and two-way video features geared toward enterprise readiness.

Valuation has grown approximately 4x in 2.5 years (\$1B in June 2023 -> \$2.1B in January 2025 -> \$4B in January 2026). The company remains unprofitable on a pre-tax basis but is scaling revenue at a rate that suggests a viable path to profitability, dependent on whether GPU inference costs are contained.

SUMMARY VERDICT

One-line assessment: Synthesia is the dominant enterprise AI video platform globally - well-capitalized, deeply embedded in Fortune 100 and DAX 40 workflows, and growing at a pace that is outrunning most competitors, but still burning cash and facing legitimate moderation and pricing friction from smaller-tier users.

Business fundamentals: Founded in 2017 by a technically credentialed four-person team spanning entrepreneurship and academic AI research, Synthesia solved a real enterprise pain - scalable, multilingual, camera-free video production - before the generative AI wave validated the category. It is now the category-defining company with ~\$150M ARR, 65,000+ customers, and \$536M+ in cumulative funding at a \$4B valuation.

Competitive moat: Its compliance stack (SOC 2, GDPR, ISO 27001, ISO 42001) and ethical AI positioning are genuine differentiators in risk-averse enterprise procurement. With 90% Fortune 100 and 95% DAX 40 penetration, switching

costs are rising. NRR above 140% confirms customers are expanding spend, not churning.

Key risks: The company posted a \$59.2M pre-tax loss on \$58.3M in 2024 revenue - it is burning dollar-for-dollar as it grows. Content moderation is a structural liability: overzealous automated flagging frustrates legitimate users and generates Trustpilot complaints disproportionate to its G2 scores. HeyGen is a credible creative-use challenger; Colossyan is tightening its grip on pure L&D workflows.

Strategic outlook: The rejected \$3B Adobe acquisition approach suggests the company's leadership is betting on independence and an eventual IPO. The 70% headcount expansion in 2026 and \$25M+ office investment signal a push toward institutional scale. Investors holding a 27x ARR multiple need continued high-NRR enterprise expansion - and proof that Synthesia 3.0's interactive/agentive features can open new revenue verticals beyond avatar video. Execution risk is real at this velocity, but the underlying demand signal remains strong.

FOLLOW-UP

Q: For a general audience: what are the most compelling story moments in Synthesia's journey? Then explain in plain terms what Synthesia means for small businesses and individual creators today (what they can actually make with it and at what price), and how upcoming rules on AI-generated video, such as deepfake labelling, could shape its future.

Synthesia's Most Compelling Story Moments

The origin is genuinely cinematic. Victor Riparbelli moves to London, stumbles across an academic research paper showing the world's first AI-generated video, tracks down the professor who wrote it (Matthias Niessner), and convinces him to co-found a company around it. That paper became a \$4 billion business.

The pivot that saved the company. For three years, Synthesia built an AI dubbing tool - essentially helping companies dub videos into other languages with realistic mouth movements. It was technically impressive but narrow. The decision to pivot toward a full enterprise video creation platform, letting anyone build a professional video without cameras, actors, or studios, was the moment the business found its real market. That pivot happened before the generative AI boom made the idea obvious to everyone else, which is why Synthesia is now the category leader rather than a follower.

The deepfake scandal that forced it to grow up. A Wall Street Journal columnist created a Synthesia deepfake of herself that fooled her bank and tricked her own family. Separately, Synthesia's avatar technology was linked to fake AI news anchors used in a pro-China propaganda campaign called "Wolf News." These weren't minor controversies - they were front-page demonstrations of exactly what critics feared about synthetic media. Rather than collapse under the scrutiny, Synthesia responded by becoming one of the founding partners of the Partnership on AI Responsible Practices for Synthetic Media, joining the Content Authenticity Initiative alongside Adobe, Nvidia, and Microsoft, and achieving SOC 2 Type II and GDPR compliance. That response is now one of its strongest enterprise sales arguments: risk-averse procurement teams at banks and multinationals actively prefer a platform that has been stress-tested publicly.

Turning down \$3 billion. Adobe reportedly approached Synthesia with an acquisition offer of approximately \$3 billion in October 2025. The company said no. Given that Synthesia was valued at \$2.1 billion just months earlier, that rejection signals the founders believe the business is worth considerably more on its own - and that they are positioning for an IPO rather than an exit. That is a high-conviction bet that will either look visionary or reckless depending on what the next two years bring.

The unicorn moment and the numbers behind it. Synthesia crossed \$100 million in annual recurring revenue in April 2025 - roughly eight years after founding, but only about four years after launching its enterprise product. It then crossed \$140 million ARR by early 2026. Ninety percent of Fortune 100 companies and 95% of Germany's top 40 companies are customers. Those are not vanity metrics; they represent deeply embedded workflows where switching

is genuinely painful.

What Synthesia Actually Means for Small Businesses and Individual Creators

The core promise is this: you can make a professional-looking video with a realistic AI presenter speaking your script, in multiple languages, without hiring a presenter, booking a studio, or owning any camera equipment. You type or paste your script, choose an avatar (either from Synthesia's library or a custom avatar you commission of yourself), and the platform renders a video where the avatar delivers your words with synced lip movement and natural expression.

What you can realistically make:

- Training videos and onboarding materials for new employees
- Product explainer videos for your website
- Social media content in multiple languages simultaneously
- Customer support walkthroughs
- Internal communications from leadership
- Marketing videos for ads or landing pages

For a small business owner, the practical value is replacing a process that previously cost thousands of dollars per video (camera hire, talent fees, editing) with a monthly subscription. You can update a training video when a policy changes without reshooting anything - just edit the script and re-render.

What it costs in practice:

Synthesia's pricing starts at around \$29 per month for a personal plan, which covers a limited number of video minutes and access to a library of stock avatars. Business plans sit in the \$89-\$149 per month range and add more monthly minutes, more avatars, and collaboration features. Enterprise pricing is custom and negotiated - this is where the majority of Synthesia's revenue comes from, and where contracts routinely exceed \$100,000 per year.

For individual creators, the honest limitation is that Synthesia's design philosophy is built around corporate professionalism rather than creative flexibility. If you want a highly stylized, personality-driven video - something that feels distinctly like you - competitors like HeyGen give you more creative control. Synthesia's avatars are polished and natural, but they read as corporate. That suits a small business producing compliance training; it suits less well a solo creator building a YouTube audience around personal brand.

The other friction point, well-documented in user reviews, is content moderation. Synthesia's automated flagging system is aggressive, and individual and small-business users are more likely to encounter it without the support resources that enterprise customers have. Multiple verified reviewers describe paying for months after their content was flagged and their account restricted, without clear explanation. That is a real risk for a small business on a tight budget testing the platform.

How Deepfake Labelling Rules Could Shape Synthesia's Future

Several regulatory frameworks are converging on AI-generated video simultaneously.

The **EU AI Act**, which began phasing in during 2024 and 2025, requires that synthetic media - including AI-generated video - be clearly disclosed as such when it could mislead viewers. Providers of systems capable of generating

synthetic media must watermark outputs and make the watermarking machine-detectable. The EU AI Act classifies deepfake generation tools as systems that must carry specific disclosure obligations.

In the **United States**, the situation is more fragmented. Several states have passed deepfake-specific laws, particularly around political advertising and non-consensual intimate imagery. Federal legislation is moving slowly but there is bipartisan pressure for mandatory AI content labelling, especially after high-profile disinformation incidents.

How this plays out for Synthesia specifically:

Mandatory labelling requirements could actually strengthen Synthesia's competitive position in enterprise markets. Large regulated industries - finance, healthcare, government - already need content provenance documentation for compliance purposes. Synthesia is already a member of the Content Authenticity Initiative, which develops technical standards for provenance metadata embedded invisibly in media files. If labelling becomes legally required, Synthesia can credibly claim its infrastructure is already built for compliance, while smaller or less sophisticated competitors scramble to retrofit it.

The risk runs the other direction for creative and marketing use cases. If every Synthesia video must carry a visible disclosure stating it was AI-generated, some of the persuasive value - particularly for marketing content - diminishes. Viewers who distrust AI-generated presenters will now have a clear signal to distrust what they're watching. Research on synthetic media persuasion suggests disclosure reduces credibility ratings, even when the underlying content is accurate and legitimate.

There is also a more structural risk: if regulators conclude that AI avatar platforms are too difficult to police for misuse - given the Wolf News episode and similar incidents - they could impose licensing requirements, mandatory human review before publication, or output caps. Any of those would increase Synthesia's operating costs and slow the speed advantage that makes the product appealing.

The deepest long-term tension is this: Synthesia's business model depends on making synthetic video easier and cheaper to produce at scale. Regulation is moving toward making synthetic video more expensive to produce responsibly - more disclosure, more review, more documentation. Synthesia is better positioned than most to absorb that compliance cost. Whether those costs become prohibitive enough to suppress the casual and small-business use cases, while leaving enterprise intact, is the regulatory risk that matters most to watch.