

# The \$7.5B bet on intelligence consumption, and what the data shows

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*“Stripe paid \$7.5B for a company that was worth \$1.3B ninety days earlier. Nobody writes a check like that because they like the trend line — you write it because you think the price is going up again before you finish the paperwork.”*

— Seln Oriax, today’s narration

Stripe just paid \$7.5 billion for OpenRouter — a company valued at \$1.3 billion ninety days earlier. The numbers behind that deal tell a different story than most headlines: token volume is doubling every eleven weeks, and new business formation on Stripe’s platform has gone parabolic since January.

We look at what the open model research landscape looks like today after parsing 500K arXiv papers, why enterprises building custom AI are facing a maintenance tax they didn’t budget for, and where infrastructure constraints are starting to matter geopolitically.

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