# OnlyFans' Creator Revenue Model

## Idea In Short

OnlyFans built one of the fastest-growing subscription platforms of the past decade by taking a 20% cut of every payment between fans and content creators, then passing the remaining 80% straight through to the people producing the material. Fenix International Limited, the platform's parent company, reported gross revenue of $7.22 billion for fiscal 2024 and paid creators $5.8 billion of that total. The model depends on unusually direct mechanics: recurring subscriptions, pay-per-view unlocks and tipping, all processed through card networks and banks that have periodically threatened to withdraw service over the platform's content mix. Ownership has also shifted since majority owner Leonid Radvinsky died in March 2026, passing control of Fenix to his widow. This article examines the revenue architecture, payment infrastructure and corporate structure behind OnlyFans, mapped against a Business Model Canvas.

## A Subscription Tool for Direct Fan Payments

Tim Stokely launched OnlyFans in 2016 with backing from his father, Guy Stokely, positioning it as a subscription tool that let any creator charge fans directly for exclusive photos and videos. The pitch was simple: creators set their own price, typically between $4.99 and $49.99 a month and kept a direct relationship with their audience instead of routing it through an advertising-funded social network. Early adopters spanned musicians, fitness coaches and comedians, but the platform's growth accelerated once it became closely associated with adult content creators. That association deepened sharply after a change in ownership two years later.

## Ownership Shift That Redefined the Platform

In 2018, Ukrainian-American entrepreneur Leonid Radvinsky bought a 75% stake in Fenix International Limited, OnlyFans' parent company, from Stokely and took full ownership within a month of the deal closing. Radvinsky had already built a fortune operating adult webcam and content sites and under his direction OnlyFans leaned further into sexually explicit material, which became the dominant category of paid content on the platform. Stokely departed shortly after and Fenix has operated under Radvinsky family control ever since.1 The shift proved commercially decisive: registered users grew from roughly 7.5 million in early 2020 to more than 85 million within a year, helped by pandemic lockdowns that pushed both creators and audiences online.

## How the Commission Model Works

OnlyFans does not bill fans directly for anything beyond what a creator chooses to charge them. The company sits between the two sides of the market and takes a flat 20% commission on every subscription payment, pay-per-view unlock and tip, paying creators the remaining 80%. That flat rate compares favorably with the tiered commission structures used by competitors such as Patreon and creators consistently cite it as a reason for choosing OnlyFans over rivals such as Fansly or LoyalFans. Because the same commission applies across subscriptions, pay-per-view content and tips, creators can mix how they charge fans without changing their effective payout rate. A single flat rate, rather than volume-based tiers, keeps the payout arithmetic simple for creators to plan around.

## Payment Rails and Card Network Pressure

Because virtually all of OnlyFans' revenue moves through card payments, its relationship with banks and card networks effectively sets the boundaries of what content the platform can carry. That leverage became public in August 2021, when OnlyFans announced a ban on sexually explicit content beginning that October, with its founder pointing to unfair pressure from banking partners. Creators who depended on the platform for income reacted immediately and OnlyFans reversed the decision within a week.2

> Due to banking partners' assurances that OnlyFans can support all genres of creators, the proposed October 1 changes are no longer required

The episode showed how much control payment intermediaries hold over a platform whose business model depends entirely on processing transactions that many banks treat as high risk.

## Compliance Pressure Has Not Gone Away

Payment risk did not end with the 2021 reversal. A whistleblower complaint filed with the U.S. Treasury's financial crimes unit alleged that Visa and Mastercard knew their payment networks were being used for illegal transactions on OnlyFans and failed to act despite warnings from federal agents in 2021 and 2022.3 The allegations put renewed pressure on OnlyFans to show that its moderation and age-verification systems can keep pace with a platform processing millions of transactions a month. The company has invested in automated content screening and identity checks, costs that sit outside the standard expense of running a two-sided marketplace. Any serious card-network response, up to and including a processing restriction, would hit a business with no comparable alternative payment rail at its current scale.

## Financial Scale in Fiscal 2024

OnlyFans has grown large enough to draw comparison with established subscription businesses. Fenix International reported gross revenue of $7.22 billion for the fiscal year ended November 30, 2024, up 9%, with net revenue of $1.41 billion and pre-tax profit of $684 million.4 The company paid creators $5.8 billion of that gross total, consistent with the 80% split, across a base of 4.63 million creator accounts and 377.5 million cumulative fan accounts. Growth has slowed from the explosive pandemic-era pace, but the underlying unit economics, a fixed commission on a large and recurring transaction volume, continue to produce margins that most content platforms cannot match.

## Leadership Passes to a New Owner

Radvinsky died of cancer in March 2026 at age 43, ending an eight-year run as OnlyFans' controlling owner.5 He had placed his Fenix shares into a trust in 2024, a structure that let control transfer smoothly to his widow, Yekaterina Chudnovsky, who now holds at least 75% of shares and voting rights in Fenix International.6 Before his death, Radvinsky had been in exclusive talks to sell a 60% stake in the business to Architect Capital at a valuation near $5.5 billion, a deal whose status became uncertain once ownership passed to his widow. Whatever happens with that transaction, the underlying business, a commission-driven marketplace connecting creators and paying fans, keeps generating the cash flow that made OnlyFans worth acquiring in the first place.

## Key Partners

OnlyFans depends on a small set of partners it cannot easily replace. Payment processors, led by Stripe, handle the mechanics of moving money between fans and creators, while card networks including Visa, Mastercard and Discover determine what transactions the platform is allowed to process. Cloud infrastructure providers keep the site and app running at scale and identity-verification vendors help the company meet age-verification and compliance obligations tied to its content mix.

## Key Activities

The company's core activities center on running a reliable transaction engine rather than producing content itself. Platform engineering and content moderation absorb a large share of operational effort, since every upload has to be screened against legal and card-network requirements. Processing payments and issuing creator payouts on schedule is a constant activity, given the volume of subscriptions, pay-per-view unlocks and tips flowing through the system daily. Marketing and creator recruitment round out the list, since the platform's value rises with every creator who brings an existing audience.

## Key Resources

OnlyFans' most valuable resource is its creator base, a pool of millions of accounts that collectively hold the fan relationships the platform monetizes. The proprietary platform technology, covering payments, messaging and content delivery, is the second resource, built to handle high-volume micropayments and paywalled media. Established banking and processor relationships form a third resource that is harder for new entrants to replicate, since most banks are reluctant to service adult content platforms at all.

## Value Propositions

For creators, OnlyFans offers a direct route to monetizing an existing following without needing a separate e-commerce or membership system. The platform bundles subscriptions, pay-per-view unlocks and tipping into one toolkit, letting creators combine recurring and one-off income from the same audience while retaining ownership and copyright over what they post. For fans, the platform offers direct messaging access to creators they follow, a level of interaction not available on typical social media. The 80% payout share is itself a value proposition, since it is more generous than many comparable platforms offer.

## Customer Relationships

Most fan interaction on OnlyFans is self-service: users browse profiles, subscribe and pay without any staff intervention. Direct messaging between creators and fans is the platform's primary relationship-building tool, letting creators personalize interaction in ways broader social platforms do not support. OnlyFans also provides creators with support resources and account-management guidance to help them retain subscribers over time.

## Channels

The company reaches both creators and fans mainly through its website and mobile application, where most subscriptions and payments occur. Social media platforms such as Instagram, X and TikTok serve as discovery channels, even though those platforms restrict direct links to adult content. Creators themselves function as an informal distribution channel, promoting their OnlyFans profiles to audiences they built elsewhere.

## Customer Segments

OnlyFans serves two core segments that depend on each other: content creators looking to monetize an audience and paying fans seeking access to that content. Within the creator segment, the platform draws everyone from independent performers to celebrities and established influencers using it as an additional income stream. A smaller segment includes talent agencies and management firms that operate multiple creator accounts on behalf of clients. Fans span a wide range of spending levels, from single small tips to recurring subscriptions across several creators.

## Cost Structure

Creator payouts are by far the largest cost, consuming 80% of gross transaction volume under the platform's revenue-sharing model. The remainder covers platform infrastructure, payment-processing fees charged by card networks and the compliance and content-moderation systems needed to keep those card networks willing to do business with the platform. Marketing, customer support and administrative overhead make up a smaller share of total spending.

## Revenue Streams

OnlyFans' primary revenue stream is the 20% commission it keeps from subscription payments and pay-per-view content unlocks. Tips paid by fans directly to creators generate a second stream of commission revenue under the same 20% rate. A minor, largely secondary revenue line comes from branded merchandise sold through the company's e-commerce store, though this contributes a small share of total revenue compared with commission income.


- 1OnlyFans owner Leonid Radvinsky dies of cancer at 43
- 2OnlyFans reverses porn ban after backlash from users
- 3Whistleblower says Mastercard, Visa failed to stop payments for child sex abuse material on OnlyFans
- 4OnlyFans 2024 financials: gross revenue $7.2 billion, up 9%
- 5OnlyFans owner Leonid Radvinsky dies of cancer at 43
- 6OnlyFans billionaire's widow takes control of company after Leonid Radvinsky's death


## Summary

OnlyFans turned a flat commission on subscriptions, pay-per-view content and tips into one of the more profitable businesses in the creator economy, paying out billions of dollars to millions of creators while keeping a fifth of every transaction for itself. That arithmetic works because the platform sits between both sides of a market it barely needs to advertise into, drawing fans and creators toward each other through direct payment tools rather than an algorithmic feed. The business stays exposed at its weakest point: dependence on banks and card networks willing to process payments tied to adult content, a relationship that has already produced one near-shutdown and continues to draw regulatory scrutiny. Ownership passed to a new generation following Leonid Radvinsky's death, but the underlying commission engine and the risks built into it, remain unchanged.