| **Feature** | **Tavily** | **SerpAPI** | **Google Custom Search API** | **Perplexity AI** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Free Tier** | ✅ 1,000 credits/month | ✅ 100 searches/month | ✅ 100 queries/day | ❌ (No free tier, paid usage only) |
| **Starting Price (Paid Tier)** | $30/month for 4,000 credits | $75/month for 5,000 searches | $5 per 1,000 queries | Varies by model (starting ~$5–$6 per 1,000 reqs) |
| **Pay-as-you-go** | $0.008/credit | $7.50 per 1,000 searches (on-demand) | $5 per 1,000 queries | Yes, priced per token/request |
| **Monthly Plans** | Yes (scales up to $500/mo) | Yes (up to $275 for 30k searches) | No monthly plan; pay as you go | No fixed monthly plans, usage-based pricing |
| **Enterprise Plan** | Custom pricing, SSO, SLAs, volume discounts | $3,750 base + usage cost | Not available | $3,750+ for deep research tier, tailored access |
| **Search Cost (Standard)** | 1–2 credits/query | $0.0075/search (reserved) | $0.005/search | $5–$15 per 1,000 requests depending on model |
| **Advanced Features** | Extract APIs, advanced search, auto-upgrade tiers | Legal shield, Ludicrous Speed, CAPTCHA avoidance | Stackdriver monitoring, custom dashboards | Reasoning, Deep Research, Citation, Offline model |
| **Monitoring** | Basic via dashboard | Basic + invoices | GCP Dashboard + Stackdriver | Per-key spend tracking in dashboard |
| **Rate Limits** | Varies by plan | RPM varies, very high in Enterprise | Up to 10,000 queries/day | Tiered RPM based on spend ($50–$5,000+) |
| **Support** | Email, Slack (Enterprise) | Email, Priority (Enterprise) | GCP Console | Priority (Tiered), Dashboard |
| **Query Types** | Basic/Advanced search & extract | Full SERP HTML/JSON, maps, etc. | Custom search engine based on site/domain | Sonar (lightweight), Reasoning, Deep Research |
| **Billing Method** | Credits/month or per-use | Subscription or usage-based | Usage-based via GCP | Token + request-based |
| **Unused Quota Rollover** | ❌ No rollover | ❌ No rollover (reserved) | ❌ No rollover | ❌ No rollover |

Here's a consolidated comparison of the **4 Web Search APIs** — **Tavily**, **SerpAPI**, **Google Custom Search**, and **Perplexity** — structured for easy decision-making by your client.

## **🌐 Web Search API Comparison Document**

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## 

### **🔹 Tavily**

* Best for: Fast prototyping, content extraction, and GenAI integrations
* Offers “Extract” feature for summarization from URLs
* Simple pricing with multiple tiers

### **🔹 SerpAPI**

* Best for: Full SERP replication, real-time SEO/Google scraping
* “Ludicrous Speed” for ultra-low-latency results
* Legal shield & Enterprise options available

### **🔹 Google Custom Search API**

* Best for: Google-backed, budget-conscious use-cases
* Lacks customization outside GCS domain
* Monitoring and billing via GCP

### **🔹 Perplexity AI**

* Best for: Research-oriented, multi-step, reasoning-based search
* Token-based usage offers granular billing control
* Sonar models for various complexity levels