



Mr. Larry Page
Chief Executive Officer
Google
1600 Amphitheatre Parkway
Mountain View, CA 94043

Nov. 05, 2013

Re: Google European Commission Settlement Proposal

Dear Mr. Page,

I am writing on behalf of Consumer Watchdog to challenge you to hold your company to the same standards of behavior you unilaterally impose on everyone else. We call on you to publicly release Google's proposal to settle the European Commission's antitrust investigation by 5 p.m., Wednesday. If you don't, Consumer Watchdog will.

Google claims its "mission is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful." You do an amazing job of this -- including making public much of what people would prefer be kept private -- except when the information is about Google. Then you stonewall and use every tactic possible to keep your data secret.

The most recent example of this hypocritical approach to privacy is Google's proposed settlement to end the European Commission's antitrust investigation of your business. Last April, a settlement proposal was offered, published publicly and market tested. It was found deficient. Since then Google has made a new offer that supposedly remedies the failures in the first. However, the public cannot judge whether that is the case because neither the Commission nor Google has released the latest document to the public.

Consumer Watchdog commented on the original proposal and therefore received a copy of the latest offer, on which the Commission has asked for our opinion. We will provide detailed comments soon. For now, it's clear the settlement offer does nothing to fix the underlying problem of how Google manipulates search results to unfairly advantage its own services, like Google Shopping or Google Maps, over competitors. You've tinkered with graphic presentation, but have not addressed the fundamental problem.

We have been asked not to share the documents outside our organization. However, Consumer Watchdog is convinced that for the public interest to be served, the proposal must be open for full scrutiny by all.

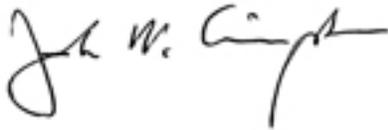
It is not just competitors that are impacted by your unfair monopolistic business practices; consumers are directly affected as well when they are forced to pay higher prices as a result of manipulated search results. Google's broad impact on all Internet users is precisely what prompted us to speak out about the inadequate settlement that was originally proposed.

Reaching an antitrust settlement largely under the cloak of confidentiality undercuts the public's trust in the entire process. That serves neither the interests of Google nor the Commission. If justice is to be done, it must be seen to be done.

Google's proposed settlement must be scrutinized, compared with the previous proposal and discussed by those impacted, both competitors and consumers.

Just this once, Mr. Page, treat your company's data the same way you treat everyone else's: Organize the information and "make it universally accessible and useful." In other words, release your latest European antitrust settlement offer by 5 p.m. today, or Consumer Watchdog will.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Simpson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John M. Simpson
Privacy Project Director