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# MISSISSIPPI SUES GOOGLE FOR VIOLATING ANTITRUST LAWS

***Mississippi, USDOJ, and ten other states seek to restore competition in search and search advertising markets***

By Attorney General Communications

Attorney General Lynn Fitch announced today that Mississippi, along with the Department of Justice and ten other state Attorneys General, filed a civil antitrust lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to prevent Google from unlawfully maintaining monopolies through anticompetitive and exclusionary practices in the search and search advertising markets.

"When companies engage in fierce marketplace innovation, consumers benefit," **said Attorney General Lynn Fitch.** "But, Google crossed the line and engaged in the kind of monopolistic behaviors that do harm not only to individual consumers, but also to the market itself. We bring this suit to promote competition by making room for others to grow."

Google is the monopoly gatekeeper to the internet for billions of users and countless advertisers worldwide. For years, Google has accounted for almost 90

percent of all search queries in the United States and has used anticompetitive tactics to maintain and extend its monopolies in search and search advertising.

As alleged in [the complaint](#), Google has entered into a series of exclusionary agreements to lock up the primary avenues through which users access search engines, and thus the internet, by requiring that Google be set as the default or exclusive search engine on billions of mobile devices and computers worldwide. In particular, the complaint alleges that Google has unlawfully maintained monopolies in search and search advertising by:

- Entering into exclusivity agreements that forbid preinstallation of any competing search service.
- Entering into tying and other arrangements that force preinstallation of its search applications in prime locations on mobile devices and make them undeletable, regardless of consumer preference.
- Entering into long-term agreements with Apple that require Google to be the default – and *de facto* exclusive – general search engine on Apple’s popular Safari browser and other Apple search tools.
- Generally using monopoly profits to buy preferential treatment for its search engine on devices, web browsers, and other search access points, creating a continuous and self-reinforcing cycle of monopolization.

These and other anticompetitive practices harm competition and consumers, reducing the ability of innovative new companies to develop, compete, and discipline Google’s behavior.

The antitrust laws protect our free market economy and forbid monopolists from engaging in anticompetitive practices. They also empower the Mississippi Attorney General as *parens patriae* on behalf of Mississippi citizens to bring cases like this one to remedy violations and restore competition.

Decades ago, cases brought against Microsoft by the DOJ and a state AG coalition recognized that the antitrust laws forbid anticompetitive agreements

by high-technology monopolists to require preinstalled default status, to shut off distribution channels to rivals, and to make software undeletable. The complaint alleges that Google is using similar agreements itself to maintain and extend its own dominance.

The complaint alleges that Google's anticompetitive practices have had harmful effects on competition and consumers. Google has foreclosed any meaningful search competitor from gaining vital distribution and scale, eliminating competition for a majority of search queries in the United States. By restricting competition in search, Google's conduct has harmed consumers by reducing the quality of search (including on dimensions such as privacy, data protection, and use of consumer data), lessening choice in search, and impeding innovation. By suppressing competition in advertising, Google has the power to charge advertisers more than it could in a competitive market and to reduce the quality of the services it provides them. Through filing the lawsuit, Mississippi seeks to stop Google's anticompetitive conduct and restore competition for American consumers, advertisers, and all companies now reliant on the internet economy.

In addition to Mississippi, the Attorneys General of Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Indiana, Louisiana, Missouri, Montana, South Carolina, and Texas joined the Department of Justice in the lawsuit.

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