

Does google violate the antitrust law

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Does Google Violate The Anti-Trust Law? The antitrust law is setup in the US to preserve the rights of businesses of having a chance to compete equally in market. The antitrust law is violated if an activity exists that brings one company ahead of its competitors in a way that monopolies pitch in. Google was charged with antitrust and anti-competition statutes as they were thought to arrange their search results in a way that brings their own products and links above others. Since more than 70% of search on internet is carried out on Google and many businesses depend on online advertising, several giant companies feared they will not show up in search results because Google tends to advertise its own products and hence is giving an unequal opportunity for competition. After about nineteen months of the case hearing, Google was given a victory in January 2013 by the Federal Trade Commission (Miller & Nick B1). The judges unanimously agreed that Google did not violate the antitrust law by using their own designed search algorithm (Wyatt A1). They gave a verdict that the search results are incidental and not plotted. The FTC hired third party experts to review Google's search algorithms and stated them to be fair (Wyatt B1). However, they did think that there are some other areas where Google was not doing beneficial things for a healthy competition. Google held on to their statement that their products benefitted the masses, and so, it was reasonable to display them first, and that their search results are modified to enhance user experience. They also suggested other competitors to display what they think help their users more. David Drummon, Google's legal officer justified his point of view by stating that Google's products are good enough as they are widely preferred and hence good enough for competition (Efrati & Brent

A1). However, Google does still face charges in Europe and by some attorney generals in US but it does not halt their online advertising. So overall it is a huge win for Google. People who believe they work for Fair Search, regardless of what the consumers prefer, decide to take this case again to the justice department for further review (Miller III). They also claimed Google to have updated its search algorithms often and they monitor it by checking their business ranking in search results. The FTC holds a very different view from those that filed charges against Google. FTC ordered Google to make its patents available to rivals where they thought they were being misused. FTC thinks that by doing so they are paving way for innovation. Furthermore they believe antitrust law cannot probe that a single algorithm as the only source of evidence to bring reviews of competitors down. Other parameters are required to make a fair judgment. FTC has not disclosed what measures they took to decide if the competition was fair enough or not FTC also thinks the case against Google has been weak since the beginning and should not have been pursued as it was a mere waste of time and resources. It is also an indication for people who fail to compete in market that they cannot use the antitrust law in their favor to stop innovation. Antitrust laws are made to protect a healthy competition and not to protect competitors. Google rivals do not seem satisfied by the proceedings of the case by FTC. Firstly it avoids Google a costly and lengthy war that Microsoft had to face during the 90's as it was this case that weakened Microsoft. Microsoft claims that FTC has ignored its usual procedure for handling Google and that it will encourage Google to further misuse its monopoly. Consumer review site businesses claimed that Google

used reviews from their sites to optimize search results. Google threatened to stop using that. This in turn made the business worry who had their reviews on such sites. It has also led Silicon Valley businessmen to think that FTC's decision means there is no antitrust law for competition on internet. This misconception is not approved by the FTC. Competitors also now have to advertise more just to compete with Google now and bring new ideas and techniques that will enhance user experience and provide accurate results. Google on their part agreed to make necessary changes in their search practices related to advertising and will allow other businesses to remove content from specific Google specialized sites to promote a healthy competition. So Google is not proved at all to have violated the antitrust law.

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