# Federal court to consider remedies in landmark antitrust case against Google advertising dominance



A federal court in Alexandria, Virginia, is set to hold a hearing on May 2 to determine potential remedies in a significant antitrust case against Google. This case focuses on allegations that Google has unlawfully maintained monopoly power in two key online advertising technology markets: publisher ad servers and ad exchanges.

The forthcoming hearing follows a ruling issued on April 17 by US District Judge Leonie Brinkema, who found Google guilty of “willfully acquiring and maintaining monopoly power” within these markets. The session will initially consider broad remedial approaches before moving to more specific measures aimed at addressing the antitrust violations. Among the possible outcomes is the requirement for Google to divest portions of its advertising technology business in an effort to restore competitive balance.

The case marks a pivotal moment in American antitrust enforcement relating to digital market dominance. Judge Brinkema’s ruling represents a notable shift, coming after years in which European regulators led efforts to curb Google’s market power. The European Commission had already imposed substantial fines on Google, including a €2.42 billion penalty in 2017 for favouring its own comparison shopping service, followed by a €1.49 billion fine in 2019 for violations related to its AdSense platform.

Historically, United States regulators have approached antitrust enforcement with more caution, guided by principles from the Chicago School that favour less intervention. This contrasted with Europe’s broader interpretation of anti-competitive conduct and willingness to take earlier action against internet giants. However, recent judicial decisions such as this one, along with an earlier ruling by Judge Mehta concerning Google’s search business, suggest that US authorities are increasingly aligning with a more assertive stance towards regulating dominant tech firms.

Analysts have drawn parallels between the current Google proceedings and the landmark antitrust case against Microsoft in the 1990s. Both cases involve allegations that a dominant platform leveraged its market position to extend control into adjacent sectors. Microsoft's antitrust litigation over the bundling of Internet Explorer ultimately fostered competition by preventing the company from using its Windows monopoly to hinder new internet businesses—a scenario that had indirectly enabled Google’s rise in the online market. Judge Brinkema’s use of wording akin to that case indicates a continuity in applying antitrust principles despite the distinct characteristics of digital markets.

The implications of the remedies to be discussed on May 2 could be profound. Potential court orders demanding Google to divest parts of its ad tech business would constitute the most significant restructuring of the digital advertising market to date. Google’s current integration of publisher ad servers with its own ad exchange was specifically criticised by the court as anti-competitive and forms the basis for possible structural separation.

Such changes are expected to impact multiple stakeholders. Market experts foresee that increased competition following a divestiture could lower costs and benefit both advertisers and publishers. At the same time, they caution that the disruption of existing revenue models, which many publishers depend upon, might generate uncertainty. Because Google controls vital infrastructure in the ad tech ecosystem—serving both buyers and sellers—any enforced breakup would require careful handling to avoid widespread market disruption.

Moreover, smaller businesses and startups could see openings for innovation and growth if barriers erected by Google’s dominant position are reduced. Currently, Google holds approximately 89.2% of the search market share and wields extensive control through its integrated ad technology stack, limiting the scope for competition.

The Tech in Asia report highlights these developments, situating them within a broader context of evolving antitrust enforcement and the ongoing challenge of regulating digital platforms that play central roles in the global economy. The May 2 hearing in Virginia will be a critical step towards defining the future competitive landscape of digital advertising.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

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