# Google faces £25 billion claim over alleged monopolistic search advertising deals



Google is facing a monumental £25 billion legal claim in the UK, igniting significant scrutiny over the tech giant's practices in the online search advertising market. The claim, spearheaded by Roger Kaye KC, a former deputy High Court judge, alleges that Google has abused its dominant market position by orchestrating agreements with mobile device manufacturers to establish Google Search as the default option. This arrangement purportedly led to inflated advertising costs for a broad spectrum of UK advertisers, affecting between 500,000 and 1.5 million businesses. Kaye argues that such monopolistic behaviours have fostered "excessive and unfair prices" for advertising, calling for compensation for all advertisers who have paid Google for search advertising since January 2011.

“This monopolisation of the advertising space to the point of abuse cannot continue,” Kaye asserted, emphasising the need for accountability in an industry that is increasingly shaped by a few dominant players. The action represents a notable evolution in legal approaches to corporate governance, as noted by Duncan Hedar, head of competition at KP Law, who remarked that this claim seeks to protect a substantial number of businesses from the consequences of Google's alleged market abuses.

This lawsuit is not an isolated incident; it follows a trend of legal challenges against Google regarding its market practices. In September 2022, similar allegations were made in the UK and the Netherlands, which could have resulted in damages up to €25 billion (£19.5 billion). Claims in both jurisdictions focused on compensating publishers harmed by Google's alleged anti-competitive conduct. The UK’s case specifically sought to recover an estimated £7 billion in advertising revenue losses caused by the company's market dominance, with Google consistently denying any wrongdoing and vowing to contest these allegations vigorously.

Recent rulings have further underscored the growing legal pressure on Google. In June 2024, the UK’s Competition Appeal Tribunal ruled that Google must face a £13.6 billion lawsuit, declaring that the tech giant's control over the online advertising market constituted anti-competitive behaviour. This move marked a milestone in the increasing examination of Google’s business practices, as it struggled to dismiss growing legal action against it.

Compounding the challenges faced in the UK, Google encountered significant setbacks in the U.S. In August 2024, a federal judge determined that Google had violated antitrust laws by establishing an illegal monopoly via exclusive agreements that made its search engine the default on various platforms. This ruling, which positioned federal authorities in a strong position to challenge Big Tech’s dominance, left the company contemplating an appeal against what it termed "meritless" claims.

The ongoing legal battles represent wider concerns about the unchecked power of large technology firms and their impact on market competition. In a recent ruling in 2025, a U.S. District Judge found that Google had wilfully monopolised segments of the digital advertising market, directing attention to its integration of advertising technology that limited competition and harmed publishers relying on its services. This ruling could result in significant changes to Google's business model, including potential divestitures of various components of its advertising operations.

The unfolding legal landscape speaks to the broader urgency for regulatory measures to address the power dynamics in digital markets. The cumulative impact of these lawsuits could create pressure not just for Google, but for the tech industry as a whole, as stakeholders search for a balance between innovation and fair competition. As technology increasingly shapes the economy, the outcome of these cases may set vital precedents for how market dominance is managed and enforced.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.scottishlegal.com/articles/google-faces-ps25bn-legal-claim-over-market-abuse-allegations), [[2]](https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-62891769)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.scottishlegal.com/articles/google-faces-ps25bn-legal-claim-over-market-abuse-allegations), [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2022/sep/13/google-lawsuit-uk-eu-digital-advertising)
* Paragraph 3 – [[4]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cqlle3k92zqo)
* Paragraph 4 – [[5]](https://www.reuters.com/legal/us-judge-rules-google-broke-antitrust-law-search-case-2024-08-05/), [[6]](https://www.ft.com/content/34560a41-bd6c-4264-a4b5-da4bf4b8290b)
* Paragraph 5 – [[7]](https://apnews.com/article/a1e4446c4870903ed05c03a2a03b581e)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.scottishlegal.com/articles/google-faces-ps25bn-legal-claim-over-market-abuse-allegations> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-62891769> - In September 2022, Google faced two legal cases in the UK and the Netherlands, potentially resulting in damages up to €25 billion (£19.5 billion) over alleged anti-competitive conduct in the digital advertising market. The UK case, filed at the Competition Appeal Tribunal, sought compensation for publishers affected by Google's practices, with an estimated £7 billion in losses. The Dutch case aimed to compensate European publishers harmed by Google's actions. Both lawsuits were funded by litigation firms, with Google denying the allegations and planning to fight the claims vigorously.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2022/sep/13/google-lawsuit-uk-eu-digital-advertising> - In September 2022, Google was confronted with a €25 billion (£21.6 billion) lawsuit in the UK and EU, accusing the company of anti-competitive conduct in the digital advertising market. The lawsuits, filed in the UK and the Netherlands, aimed to compensate publishers for losses due to Google's alleged abuse of power in the ad tech market. The UK claim sought to recover advertising revenue lost over several years, affecting news websites and small business owners. Google responded by stating the lawsuits were speculative and opportunistic, and it would fight them vigorously.
4. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cqlle3k92zqo> - In June 2024, the UK Competition Appeal Tribunal ruled that Google must face a £13.6 billion lawsuit alleging it held excessive power over the online advertising market. The case, brought by Ad Tech Collective Action LLP, accused Google of anti-competitive behaviour that caused financial losses for online publishers in the UK. Despite Google's attempts to have the case dismissed, the tribunal's decision allowed the lawsuit to proceed to trial, marking a significant development in the ongoing scrutiny of Google's market practices.
5. <https://www.reuters.com/legal/us-judge-rules-google-broke-antitrust-law-search-case-2024-08-05/> - In August 2024, a U.S. judge ruled that Google violated antitrust laws by creating an illegal monopoly through exclusive agreements to become the default search engine on various platforms. This decision marked a significant victory for federal authorities challenging Big Tech's dominance. The ruling could lead to remedies, including the potential breakup of Alphabet, Google's parent company. Google, which controls 90% of the online search market and 95% on smartphones, plans to appeal the decision, asserting that the claims are meritless.
6. <https://www.ft.com/content/34560a41-bd6c-4264-a4b5-da4bf4b8290b> - In April 2025, a U.S. federal judge ruled that Google wilfully monopolised parts of the digital advertising market, marking a significant antitrust setback for the tech giant. Judge Leonie Brinkema found that Google unlawfully maintained dominance in the technology used by online publishers to sell ad space and in the largest ad exchange. The ruling follows a previous antitrust loss in which Google was found to have maintained a monopoly in search through multi-billion-dollar deals. Remedies under consideration may include divestitures, including the sale of Chrome or ending default search agreements.
7. <https://apnews.com/article/a1e4446c4870903ed05c03a2a03b581e> - In April 2025, a U.S. District Judge ruled that Google holds an illegal monopoly in the digital advertising market, marking the second major antitrust decision against the company in less than a year. The ruling, issued by Judge Leonie Brinkema in Virginia, found that Google exploited its advertising technology, particularly by integrating its publisher ad server and ad exchange systems to dominate online advertising and suppress competition, harming publishers reliant on its services. The Justice Department is now pushing to dismantle parts of Google's ad tech business, potentially forcing the divestiture of its Ad Manager product.