



50 States' Attorneys General Initiate Sweeping Anti-Trust Probe Against Google

A bipartisan group of 50 state and territory attorneys general, led by Texas's Ken Paxton, initiated a sweeping anti-trust investigation against Google parent Alphabet Inc that, theoretically, could break up the tech giant. The investigation will focus on Google's influence in searches and in the digital advertising market and to see if the Silicon Valley giant is stifling start-ups, delivering inferior service, and improperly using consumer data. -GEG

Update: During the post-conference Q&A, Paxton revealed that, though their investigation is still in its early days, the AGs have already issued subpoenas related to Google's digital advertising business.

"If advertising costs are higher...who ends up paying that?" Paxton said.

Asked about coordination with the federal government, Paxton and AG Sean Reyes of Utah, intimated that they had reached out to the FTC but that their response was unsatisfactory.

Washington DC's AG Karl Racine insisted that their probe

wasn't intended to send a message to Congress, but that the AG's investigation is an independent action. Later, Paxton said the investigation would be a "very open process" with the states, with each state and the federal government allowed to offer input.

"We're open to using talent from every office in this country."

And with that, the AGs ended what was a rather brief Q&A that lasted roughly ten minutes.

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In the latest legal push that could ultimately result in the break-up of one of the world's largest tech firms, a bipartisan group of more than 40 state attorneys general, led by Texas's Ken Paxton, will unveil a sweeping anti-trust investigation against Google parent Alphabet Inc.

The anti-trust investigation, which [was previewed late last week in a leak to the Wall Street Journal](#), aims to hold Alphabet accountable for the extreme concentration in the US technology industry. Specifically, the AG's case will focus on Google's influence in search and the digital advertising market, and whether the Silicon Valley giant's overweening influence harms rivals and consumers.

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Google CEO: 'Full Extent' of Russian Meddling in 2016 Elections Was \$4,700 Spent on Ads

Google CEO Sundar Pichai revealed that the “full extent” of so-called Russian meddling that took place on Google in 2016 was \$4,700 spent on some digital advertisements. Meanwhile, Google employees and executives contributed \$1.6 million to 2016 Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. Google rigged their search algorithms in favor of Democrats.

A protester dressed as Rich Uncle Pennybags ('Monopoly Man') attended the Congressional hearing and said, “Google spent \$18-million lobbying politicians in 2017 – more than any other company. In return, Congress abandoned its oversight role and allowed Google to wield monopoly power over every person who uses the internet.” The activist, Ian Madrigal, was formerly named Amanda Weaver and is a strategy director for Revolution Messaging, a firm run by Keegan Goudiss, who was Bernie Sanders' director of digital advertising during the 2016 election. -GEG

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJUq3F3zKQg>