

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS: Jon Leibowitz, Chairman  
William E. Kovacic  
J. Thomas Rosb  
Edith Ramirez  
Brill Brill Julie Brill Brill )

US SEARCH, INC., )  
a corporation, and ) DOCKET NO. C-4317  
)  
US SEARCH, LLC, )  
a limited liability company. )  
\_\_\_\_\_ )

COMPLAINT

The Federal Trade Commission, having reason to believe that US Search, Inc., a corporation, and US Search, LLC, a limited liability company have violated the provisions of the Federal Trade Commission Act, and it appearing to the Commission that this proceeding is in the public interest, alleges:

1. Respondent US Search, Inc. is a Delaware corporation with its principal office or place of business at 600 Corporate Pointe, Culver City, California 90230.
2. Respondent US Search, LLC is a Delaware limited liability company with its principal office or place of business at 600 Corporate Pointe, Culver City, California 90230. US Search, LLC is a wholly owned subsidiary of US Search, Inc.
3. The acts and practices of respondents alleged in this complaint have been in or affecting commerce, as "commerce" is defined in Section 4 of the Federal Trade Commission Act.
4. Respondents sell online search services to the public through an online database website, [www.ussearch.com](http://www.ussearch.com). For a fee, anyone can go on the website and search publicly available information on individuals by entering certain information about them, such as a name, phone number or address. Respondents generate information about them, such as, for example, such as a consumer's name, age, address, phone number, aliases, maiden name, death record, address history, relatives, neighbors, marriage and divorce, associates/roommates, property,

bankruptcies, tax liens, civil judgments, lawsuits, state criminal records, small claims and civil judgments, home value, email address, and publicly available online profiles. Respondents' "Reverse Lookup" service can return the name of an individual associated with a particular phone number or property address.

5. Since June 2009, respondents have offered a "PrivacyLock" service to a y" and address of respondents<sup>e</sup>

processes each request and provides verifiable results that can be backed by our 1 year promise.”

B. “Why do I have to pay?”

“In addition to removing your information from the US Search website, your information will be suppressed from our affiliate and advertisers websites as well. Once again, this process is backed by our 1 year promise to remove any listings that may reappear at your request.”

10. Through the means described in Paragraphs 8 and 9, respondents represented, directly or indirectly, expressly or by implication, that the purchase or use of respondents’ “PrivacyLock” would prevent a consumer’s name from appearing on respondents’ website, in respondents’ advertisements, and in respondents’ search results.

11. In truth and in fact, in many instances respondents’ “PrivacyLock” does not prevent the names of consumers from appearing on respondents’ website, in respondents’ advertisements, and in respondents’ search results. The “PrivacyLock” does not block a consumer’s information from appearing in the results of a “reverse search” on the consumer’s phone number or address, or in a search of the consumer’s address in real estate records. Further, the “PrivacyLock” does not block a consumer’s name from showing up as an associate of someone else in a search for another person’s name. When consumers change addresses, new records may be generated that are not subject to the “PrivacyLock.” When consumers have multiple records in existence (e.g., John T. Smith and John Thomas Smith), the “PrivacyLock” may apply to only one record. Therefore, the representation set forth in Paragraph 10 was, and is, false or misleading.

12. The acts and practices of respondents as alleged in this complaint constitute deceptive acts or practices in or affecting commerce in violation of Section 5(a) of the Federal Trade Commission Act.

THEREFORE, the Federal Trade Commission, this fourteenth day of March, 2011, has issued this complaint against respondents.

By the Commission.

Donald S. Clark  
Secretary

SEAL: