

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20580

Office of the Secretary

October 13, 2011

David Thompson
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Re: In the Matter of Google Inc., File No. 1023136, Docket No. C-4336

Dear Mr. Thompson:

Thank you for your comment on the Federal Trade Commission's consent agreement in the above-captioned proceeding. The Commission has placed your comment on the public record pursuant to rule 4.9(b)(6)(ii) of the Commission's Rules of Practice, 16 C.F.R. § 4.9(b)(6)(ii), and has given it serious consideration.

Your comment expresses concern about the privacy of your personal information. The Commission is committed to protecting consumer privacy and believes the order will have substantial benefits for Google Inc.'s ("Google") users. The proposed order requires Google to use reasonable and appropriate procedures to protect the privacy and confidentiality of users' "covered information" going forward. Among other provisions, the proposed consent order mandates that Google establish and maintain a comprehensive privacy program that addresses privacy risks related to new and existing products and services, and protects the privacy and confidentiality of covered information. Under the order, the company also must give Google users notice and obtain express affirmative consent prior to sharing their identified information with any third party in connection with a change to any product or service, where such sharing is contrary to stated sharing practices in effect at the time of collection. Finally, the order requires Google to obtain an assessment and report from a qualified, independent third-party professional, certifying that it has in place a privacy program that provides protections that meet or exceed the protections required by the order, every other year for twenty years. The Commission believes that the proposed consent order contains strong relief that will protect the privacy of consumers that use Google's products and services.

¹ "Covered Information" is defined in the order as "information respondent [Google] collects from or about an individual, including but not limited to, an individual's: (a) first and last name; (b) home or other physical address, including street name and city or town; (c) email address or other online contact information, such as a user identifier or screen name; (d) persistent identifiers such as IP address; (e) telephone number, including home telephone number and mobile telephone number; (f) list of contacts; (g) physical location; or any other information from or about an individual consumer that is combined with (a) through (g) above"

In the future if you have specific information suggesting that Google is not maintaining reasonable privacy or security of user information, you may contact the Consumer Response Center at (877) 282-4357, or file a complaint online at www.ftccomplaintassistant.org.

In light of these considerations, the Commission has determined that the public interest would best be served by issuing the Decision and Order in final form without any modifications. The final Decision and Order and other relevant materials are available from the Commission's website at <http://www.ftc.gov>. It helps the Commission's analysis to hear from a variety of sources in its work, and it thanks you again for your comment.

By direction of the Commission.

Donald S. Clark
Secretary