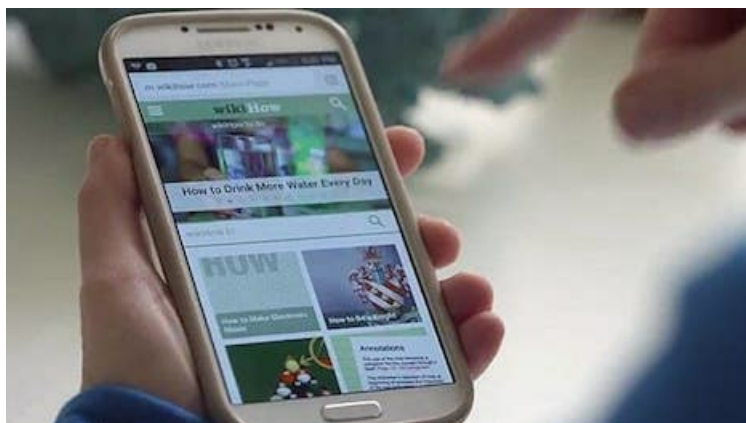


SOFTWARE AND TECHNOLOGY

## Google hit with \$1.7B EU fine for unfair advertising competition

March 20, 2019



*Google's fine is related to its AdSense program. Image credit: Google*

By STAFF REPORTS

Technology giant Google has been fined by the European Union over its advertising policies, which were deemed to break antitrust laws.

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The European Commission's investigation surrounded Google's use of exclusivity clauses in its contracts with third-party Web sites, which prevented rivals from also running search ads on these sites. This is Google's third fine from the governing body, as the E.U. cracks down on big technology.

### Antitrust allegations

This fine surrounds Google's AdSense operations, which enable Web sites to monetize the results pages on their on-site search engines.

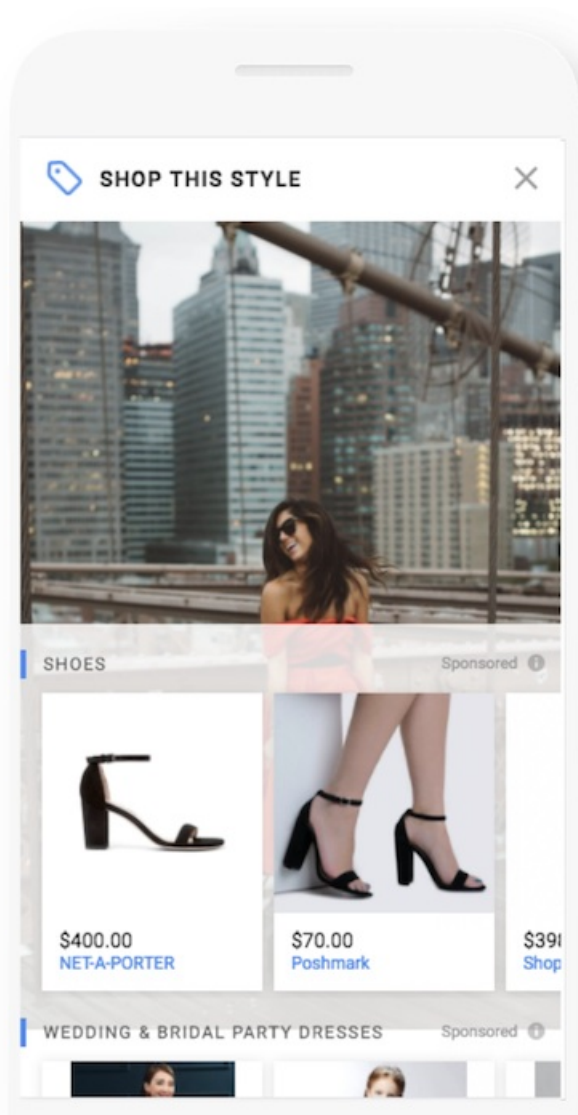
The European Commission notes that along with preventing competitors from growing their own businesses, Google's tactic left Web sites with fewer options for monetizing their online presence.

According to a report from *CNN*, the Commission voiced its objection to Google's practice in a document sent to the tech company in 2016. After that, Google stopped the practice.

Google has been ordered to pay a fine of 1.49 billion euros, or about \$1.69 billion at current exchange.

Previously, the Commission fined Google 4.3 billion euros, or about \$4.9 billion, for forcing Android phone makers to preload its Google search and Chrome apps onto phones to be able to offer users the Google Play store ([see story](#)).

Google was also fined 2.4 billion euros, or \$2.7 billion, for promoting its own shopping pages through search.



*Google's shoppable ads. Image credit: Google*

"For nearly a decade, we've been in discussions with the European Commission about the way some of our products work," said Google in a statement. "Throughout this process, we've always agreed on one thing that healthy, thriving markets are in everyone's interest.

"A key characteristic of open and competitive markets and of Google's products is constant change," the company said. "Every year, we make thousands of changes to our products, spurred by feedback from our partners and our users. Over the last few years, we've also made changes to Google Shopping; to our mobile apps licenses and to AdSense for Search in direct response to formal concerns raised by the European Commission.

"Since then, we've been listening carefully to the feedback we're getting, both from the European Commission, and from others. As a result, over the next few months, we'll be making further updates to our products in Europe."