



Press Release

Will the Antitrust Investigation into Google Benefit Consumers?

ALLISON EDWARDS | SEPTEMBER 18, 2019

50 state attorneys general have announced a sweeping investigation into Google, focusing on its dominance in the advertisement and online search markets. Any investigation into the competitive practices of Google must reckon with the complex nature of innovation online, writes AAF's Director of Technology and Innovation Policy Will Rinehart. He also notes that consumers will likely not be better off after the investigation concludes.

An excerpt:

While this investigation clearly marks a new stage of antagonism between big tech and the government, the government's range of remedies is limited. States could press for the breakup of Google, but that would be a death warrant for the company...

The state AGs might press for a large fine, a tactic preferred by Europeans. In the last two years alone, the European Commission [fined Google \\$2.7 billion](#) for favoring its own shopping comparison service in search results, [\\$5 billion](#) for pre-installing Google apps, and [\\$1.69 billion](#) for imposing anti-competitive contractual restrictions on third-party websites to use their ad network. A fine, however, does little to help consumers.

Last, the investigation might aim to secure behavioral changes, but these often come with a cost.

[Read the analysis.](#)