4 Burning Questions as Google Urges Trump DOJ to Drop Breakup Push

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Google has been pushing back on its ruling as a search monopoly, making its case directly to the Trump administration, arguing that a forced sale of Chrome—one of the Justice Department's most disruptive proposed remedies—poses national security risks, Bloomberg first reported.

A Google spokesperson told ADWEKK, "We routinely meet with regulators, including with the DOJ, to discuss this case. As we've publicly said, we're concerned the current proposals would harm the American economy and national security."

Google's argument on the search antitrust case, although not new, raises key questions about the tech giant's strategy, the White House's role in antitrust enforcement, and what this case signals for big tech under the new administration.

Here are four key questions at the heart of this development.

How common is Google's approach of engaging with the

administration?

While direct engagement with policymakers on antitrust matters is not unusual, the level of scrutiny surrounding Google's approach raises questions about the White House's influence, said one antitrust lawyer, who wasn't authorized to speak to media. They noted that while such outreach is expected, the crucial issue is how much subtle pressure the administration is exerting on enforcement agencies.

"It's unorthodox to be publicly calling for this if you're a defendant, but Google is using every avenue available to them. The White House is going to keep a close eye on antitrust and won't hesitate to pick up the phone and call enforcers."

In December, Trump announced in a post on Truth Social his nomination of advisor Gail Slater as Assistant Attorney General for the Antitrust Division at the DOJ, but a vote has not yet been scheduled on her confirmation.

What does this say about the DOJ's independence?

The shift from the Biden administration's tough stance on Google—requiring the sale of Chrome—to one under Trump's DOJ raises questions about the agency's independence.

"The whole notion referring to 'Trump's DOJ' seems to raise the question of how independent the DOJ is in this current administration," said Gartner's vice president distinguished analyst, Andrew Frank.

There have been reports of Trump's intervention in previous cases. In 2019, Trump reportedly tried to block the Time Warner-AT&T merger, the lawyer noted, (AT&T and Time Warner merged in 2018, but AT&T later spun off the WarnerMedia business unit),

Is Google’s engagement with the White House different?

Google is entering the second stage of the remedy phase—where the court could impose landmark changes on Google’s business.

Beyond legal maneuvering, this case underscores the delicate balancing act Google faces.

“It’s a balancing act between doing what’s right for Google’s stakeholders—handling the situation in a way that’s as beneficial to the company—versus protecting its reputation as a neutral party in any partisan conflicts,” Frank said.

Google’s recent backpedaling on its DEI initiatives is an example of how the company is adapting to these changing political dynamics, although Google is far from alone in this example.

How likely is this to tilt in Google’s favor?

While initial remedies called for the company’s breakup, the final resolution tends to be much weaker—as seen in Microsoft’s early 2000s antitrust case. Google may be positioning itself for a similar outcome, negotiating a more favorable settlement.

The lawyer suggested that the DOJ’s final proposal, expected on Friday, could be a scaled-back version of its initial demands. While a full Chrome divestiture remains a possibility, the key question is how much the DOJ will soften its remedy.

“Historically, antitrust settlements tend to weaken over time, and Google’s direct engagement with the administration signals an effort to soften the outcome,” the lawyer said.

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