Google Open to Sharing Real-Time Bids With Rivals, But Rejects Breakup

At the landmark adtech remedy hearing today, Google said it's willing to play nicer with rivals.

The tech giant is open to behavioral fixes, like giving competitors access to real-time bidding data from AdX, its lawyer Karen Dunn said in court. However, Dunn argued the Department of Justice has no legal basis to force a breakup of its advertising business.

She added that the move could hurt internet users and likely wouldn't attract interested buyers, according to Reuters.

The DOJ wants Google to sell off its ad exchange and publisher ad server—a process that could take years, DOJ attorney Julia Tarver Wood told the court.

The remedies trial is scheduled to begin Sept. 22, but its timeline remains unclear.

"Today the DOJ conceded Google's proposed adtech remedy fully addresses the Court's decision on liability. The DOJ's additional proposals to force a divestiture of our adtech tools go well beyond the Court's findings, have no basis in law, and would harm publishers and advertisers," Lee-Anne Mulholland, vp of regulatory affairs at Google, said in a statement.

The court also found that Google's acquisitions of DoubleClick

and AdMeld did not harm competition.

As such, a remedy to unwind them does not add up, according to a Google spokesperson, who noted that the DOJ is likely to face an uphill battle for this remedy.

Today’s hearing comes on the heels of a decision in April where a federal judge ruled that Google illegally kept its grip on publisher ad servers (platforms used by publishers to manage their digital ad inventory) and ad exchanges (the technology that lets publishers sell ads).

The court also found that Google has illegally tie its ad server—previously DoubleClick for Publishers—with its ad exchange, AdX, locking publishers into its ecosystem. The judge stopped short of finding Google held a monopoly on its advertiser-facing tools.

Both sides are expected to submit detailed proposals on Monday.

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