Google reportedly made it difficult for smartphone users to find privacy settings

Unredacted documents in Arizona's lawsuit against Google show that company executives and engineers were aware that the search giant had made it hard for smartphone users to keep location information private, *Insider* reported.

The documents suggest that Google collected location data even after users had turned off location sharing, and made privacy settings difficult for users to find. *Insider* also reports that the documents show Google pressured phone manufacturers into keeping privacy settings hidden, because the settings were popular with users.

Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich filed a lawsuit against Google last May, alleging the company illegally tracked Android users' location without their consent, even if users had disabled location tracking features. The lawsuit suggested Google kept location tracking running in the background for some features, and only stopped the practice when users disabled system-level tracking.

The unredacted documents show one Google employee asked if there was "no way to give a third party app your location and not Google?" adding that it didn't sound like something the company would want revealed to the media, according to *Insider.*

Google spokesperson José Castañeda said in an email to *The*

Verge that Brnovich “and our competitors driving this lawsuit have gone out of their way to mischaracterize our services. We have always built privacy features into our products and provided robust controls for location data. We look forward to setting the record straight.”

***Update May 29th, 8:11PM ET**: Added statement from Google spokesperson*

https://www.theverge.com/2021/5/29/22460070/google-difficult-android-privacy-settings-arizona