Google hit by new anti-trust complaint in Europe

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A screen displaying the Google logo pictured in Washington, DC in January 2011. The French online shopping website Twenga has filed a complaint against Google at the European Commission, accusing the Internet search giant of abusing its dominant position to eliminate any competition.

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The commission, the European Union's competition watchdog, has been investigating Google since November 2010 following several complaints, with US IT giant Microsoft filing its own grievance last year.

Twenga, which allows users to search and compare prices of a wide-range of products, announced Tuesday that it had filed a complaint against Google the day before.

"The abusive practices of Google strengthened considerably in 2011 with a clear willingness to eliminate all forms of competition in several sectors such as video, hotel and product searches, and airfare searches, despite anti-trust probes in Europe and the United States," said Twenga co-founder Bastien Duclaux.

"In this context, Twenga has asked the European Commission to quickly make the US giant stop its anti-competitive actions, which undermine innovation and jobs in the European Union," he said.

The French company accuses Google of giving an edge to its own services, such as Google Shopping, in search results while systematically putting competing websites lower down.

The European Commission told AFP it would review Twenga's complaint and decide whether to include it to the ongoing investigation. Nine other complaints are already part of the probe.

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