

# Google eradicates pornography its own way

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Image: Internet search giant Google's logo. Google says it processes more than 200 million searches a day and leads the world for search engine usage with 57 percent of the current market, followed by Yahoo at 21 percent and MSN at just 9 percent.

Google is showing signs of more resistance in complying with regulators even as rival providers are complying more with the federal government's guidelines.

At a House hearing this week, members of the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations called upon Internet providers to help eradicate pornography from their sites and keep records of their clients' high-speed Internet connection for law-enforcement purposes.

But while Yahoo! searches for "pre-teen" and "sex" and "video" only

showed up news articles from television networks, the same search on Google resulted in pre-teen sex videos, pictures and a teen sex sponsored link, much to the chagrin of lawmakers.

"There is an appearance that Google isn't as cooperative or vigilant on these issues," said Rep. Chip Pickering, R-Miss.

In addition, Pickering referred to the Mountain View, Calif.-based company's refusal earlier this year to provide the Department of Justice's with information on search queries and Web sites included on its site. Other search engines including Yahoo! and MSN, on the other hand, complied with the requests. Again Pickering asserted Google's disregard for complying with efforts to eradicate exploitation of minors.

"There seems to be a desire by Google to be a corporate culture free of consent," Pickering said.

Google Associate General Counsel Nicole Wong, however, stressed the company's commitment to protect children from becoming victims of child pornography. She also asserted the difficulty of keeping child pornography off their search engine, which is triple the size of its competition and dominates the market.

"We do the best we can," Wong said. "We want no part in child pornography."

In a statement on Google's blog released following the hearing, Wong said the company monitors its content by complying with law enforcement's requests for information regarding child pornography, eradicating child pornography as soon as it is found and by providing parents with the appropriate filters to protect their children.

"We believe that much can be done to combat child exploitation online

... and are committed to doing our part to protect the Internet as a safe place for all," she stated.

As for Yahoo!, it basked in its praise from the subcommittee. Elizabeth Banker, vice president and associate general counsel for Yahoo!, said the accolades reflected the company's commitment to put restrictions on access to child pornography and to help law enforcement contain the problem.

The big search engines will not be alone in working with government regulations on child pornography, however. On Sept. 1 cable provider Comcast will start saving its records for law-enforcement purposes, largely as the company failed to provide law-enforcement information for an online video of a child being raped.

"Last year, we had significant difficulties in meeting many law enforcement requests," said Gerard Lewis, vice president for Comcast. "We took it very seriously ... that phase is behind us and we are committed to best practices in this area."

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