

Justice probing tech company recruiting

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The newspaper said the department was looking into whether Google, [Yahoo!](#), Apple, [Genentech](#) and other firms violated antitrust laws by negotiating the recruiting and hiring of one another's employees.

The Post, citing sources with knowledge of the probe, said the review was in its preliminary stages and was "industry-wide."

It quoted antitrust experts as saying that by agreeing not to hire away top

talent, the companies could be stifling competition and trying to maintain their market power unfairly.

"This could be collusive restraint on trade, which could have a serious impact on competition," Albert Foer, president of the American Antitrust Institute, told the Post.

The newspaper noted that the review is the latest move by the administration of President Barack Obama to step up scrutiny over possible anti-competitive actions in the high-tech sector.

Google acknowledged earlier this year that it has been contacted by the US Federal Trade Commission regarding potential legal conflicts caused by chief executive [Eric Schmidt](#) and director Arthur Levinson being on the Apple board.

[Google](#) executives downplayed the issue, however, saying that [Apple](#), renowned for iPhones, iPods, and Macintosh computers, was not an Internet rival.

US regulators last year approved Google's purchase of online advertising tracking firm DoubleClick but stymied a planned advertising alliance with Yahoo!

Google's settlement with US authors and publishers over its book scanning project is also under scrutiny from the Justice Department.

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