

Google giving details of requests to remove content

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The move was one of several changes made to the [Google](#) Transparency Report, an [online tool](#) that also shows where the [Internet search](#) giant's services and products are being blocked around the world.

"We've changed the format so you can now see data on a country-by-country basis," Matt Braithwaite of Google's "Transparency

Engineering" unit said in a blog post.

"We're also clearly disclosing the reasons why we've been asked to remove content -- such as an allegation of defamation or hate speech," Braithwaite said.

Google said it was also revealing the percentage of requests it has complied with, either in whole or in part.

"This gives you a better idea of how we've dealt with the requests we receive from government agencies -- like local and federal police -- for data about users of our services and products," Braithwaite said.

The updated Transparency Report at google.com/transparencyreport concerns requests made to remove content between July 2010 and December 2010.

In Italy, for example, Google said it had received a request from the Italian police to remove a [YouTube video](#) that criticized Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and simulated his assassination with a gun.



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Google said it pulled the video for violating YouTube guidelines.

The highest number of requests to remove content were from Britain with 93,518. Google said it removed 93,360 items in response to a request from Britain's Office of Fair Trading as part of a crackdown on fraudulent ads.

South Korea was next with more than 32,000 requests, mainly from the Korean Information Security Agency requesting the removal of search results that contain RRNs, a government-assigned personal identification number, Google said.

The Transparency Report also details the number of requests for user data received by Google.

The highest number of requests for user data during the July-December 2010 period were from the United States -- a total of 4,601 -- of which 94 percent were fully or partially complied with, Google said.

Brazil was next with 1,804 requests for user data, 76 percent of which were fully or partially complied with.

India was next with 1,699 requests (79 percent compliance) followed by Britain with 1,162 requests (72 percent) and France with 1,021 (56 percent).

"Our goal is to provide our users access to information, and also to protect the privacy of our users," Braithwaite said.

"Whenever we receive a request, we first check to make sure it meets both the letter and spirit of the law before complying.

"When possible, we notify affected users about requests for user data

that may affect them," he said. And if we believe a request is overly broad, we will seek to narrow it."

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