

Google: Belgian papers to appear in searches again

July 18 2011, By DON MELVIN , Associated Press

(AP) -- Google began allowing the Web sites of French-language Belgian newspapers to appear in its search results again on Monday, saying it had obtained the papers' legal consent to do so without repercussions.

The Internet giant had blocked several Francophone Belgian newspapers from its search results starting Friday in what the papers called [retaliation](#) over a [copyright infringement lawsuit](#) that Google lost. User searches on Google for Belgium's Le Soir, La Capitale and La Libre, did not turn up the papers' Web sites.

Google said the court order in the copyright case required it refrain from listing the newspapers in its search results. On Monday, Google said Copiepresse, an organization representing the papers, had signed a legal waiver and the publications could return to the search listings.

The case began in 2006, when Copiepresse sued Google for posting links to articles and photographs on Google News without payment or consent. Copiepresse won the suit, and a higher court upheld that judgment in May.

On their Web sites, the papers asserted that Google was retaliating by excluding them from search results. But Google said it was acting on the advice of its lawyers.

"We are delighted that Copiepresse has given us assurances that we can re-include their sites in our [Google search](#) index without court-ordered

penalties," [Google](#) spokesman William Echikson said in an e-mailed statement. "We will do this as quickly as possible. We never wanted to take their sites out of our index, but we needed to respect an appeal court order until Copiepresse acted. We remain open to working in collaboration with Copiepresse members in the future."

The sites began appearing in searches again Monday evening.

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