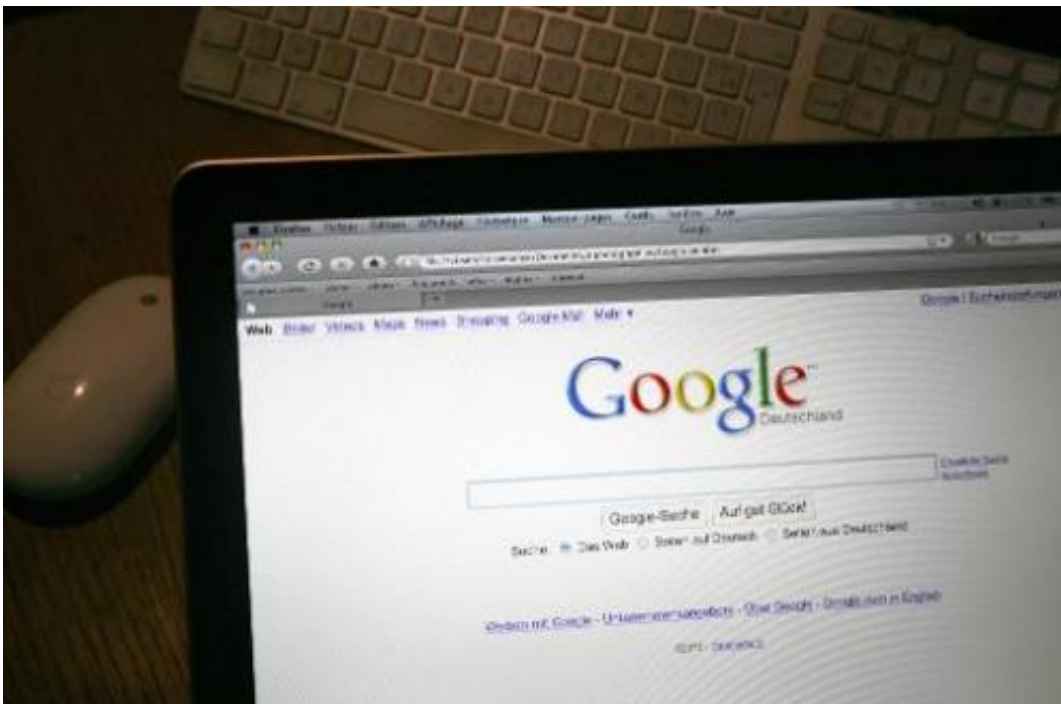


Google removes news snippets in Germany legal fight

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This picture taken on January 27, 2010 in Paris shows the internet homepage of the german version of the website Google, the most dominant search engine in the country

Internet giant Google said Wednesday it would remove news snippets and thumbnails of articles from several German news sites from its search results amid a legal battle with publishers.

From October 9 Google, which controls over 90 percent of the German

search market, will only show links and headlines of stories from major sites including Axel Springer's bild.de, the online version of Germany's top-selling daily.

Major media [publishers](#) also including Burda have formed the group VG Media which in June sued Google, demanding compensation for republished parts of their online articles and associated ad revenues.

Google Germany managing director Philipp Justus wrote in a blog post Wednesday that "we very much regret this legal approach because every publisher has always been able to decide whether and how its content is displayed in our services".

"Against the background of this lawsuit, we will no longer display snippets and thumbnails of some famous websites such as bild.de, bunte.de or hoerzu.de, those publishers who are organised in VG Media.

"For these pages we will show only the link to the article and its headline," he wrote in the German-language post.

VG Media accused Google of "extortion" and "discriminating" against its members, saying that a German law passed last year guarantees [news](#) providers a "reasonable compensation for the use of their content".

Justus pointed out that other German providers had completely removed content of VG Media members—a reference to T-Online, web.de and GMX, which no longer list content from the online versions of Bild, Welt and Berliner Zeitung dailies.

Justus argued that Google helps publishers rather than harm them.

"Google strongly supports press publishers to build an online community of readers—and to make money," he wrote.

"Every month we pass over half a billion clicks to German news sites.

"In addition, we have distributed in the past three years one billion euros to German advertising partners," he added, saying that some 5,000 German news sites make their [content](#) available to Google Search and Google News.

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