

# Dutch watchdog demands privacy changes from Google

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A Dutch privacy watchdog on Monday ordered Google to make changes to the way it handles users' personal data or face fines of up to 15 million euros (\$18.7 million).

The College for the Protection of Personal Data announced it is giving the Internet giant until the end of February to comply with measures aimed at giving consumers in the Netherlands more clarity about how their personal information is used across the suite of Google services.

Jacob Kohnstamm, chairman of the organization, said Google's practice of combining data from different services to tailor ads and personalize services like YouTube "catches us in an invisible web of our [personal information](#), without telling us or asking our permission."

The authority said Google must clearly ask users for permission to combine [personal data](#) from the company's different services and further amend its [privacy policy](#) so that users are "clearly and consistently informed" about what personal data is used by Google services.

Data Protection Agencies (DPAs) in six European countries, including the Netherlands, opened investigations into Google after it amended its privacy policy early in 2012.

"We're disappointed with the Dutch DPA's order, especially as we have already made a number of changes to our privacy policy in response to their concerns," said Al Verney, a spokesman from Google. "However,

we've recently shared some proposals for further changes with the group of European DPAs and we look forward to discussing with them soon."

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