

US looks into Google edge on Android: report

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The US Federal Trade Commission has met with companies about concerns that Alphabet-owned Google is abusing the dominant position of Android software for powering smartphones

The US is looking into whether free Android mobile software is giving an unfair advantage to other Google offerings such as its search engine, the Wall Street Journal reported.

Federal Trade Commission (FTC) staffers have met with companies in

recent months about concerns that Alphabet-owned Google is abusing the dominant position of Android software for powering smartphones or tablets, according to the Journal.

Concerns at issue are similar to some targeted by European Union regulators, and the FTC is even interested in learning about evidence being used to back a case there, it reported.

Citing people familiar with the matter, the newspaper said the FTC's move extends a probe that began last year.

Google and the FTC declined to comment on the report.

The Android operating system accounts for about 80 percent of the world market for mobile phones, far ahead of Google's closest rival, Apple.

EU Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager says the Silicon Valley giant has used practices such as making manufacturers pre-install its market-leading search engine as the default in phones to "abuse its [dominant position](#)."

Brussels believes such practices breach EU competition law.

The EU has accused Google of obstructing innovation by giving unfair prominence to its own apps, especially its [search engine](#), in deals with mobile manufacturers such as Samsung and Huawei.

Google must now respond within three months to avoid sanctions which could amount to fines of up to 10 percent of the group's annual global sales or \$7.4 billion based on their 2015 results.

Google has sought to downplay it's anti-trust battle with the European

Commission and stressed in a recent blog post that people who buy Android-powered devices can change applications such as "search" that are pre-loaded on devices.

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