US engineer defends Google in defamation trial

September 29 2009

A visitor walks past the Google logo at a trade fair. An American engineer sought to clear Google of defamation charges at a trial over the broadcast in Italy of video showing the bullying of a teenager with Down's Syndrome, a lawyer for the Internet search provider said Tuesday.

An American engineer sought to clear Google of defamation charges at a trial over the broadcast in Italy of video showing the bullying of a teenager with Down's Syndrome, a lawyer for the Internet search provider said Tuesday.

Jeremy Doig explained in a closed door session how Google Video works, demonstrating that it is controlled in the United States and that once the video in question was brought to Google's attention it was withdrawn for its inappropriate content, Google's lawyer Giuliano Pisapia told AFP.

The engineer's testimony under oath showed that "Google had not

committed any crime," Pisapia said.

Four executives from the online search engine are on trial in Milan because, according to the prosecution, they had a "legal obligation to prevent" the video -- which showed a teenager with Down's syndrome being bullied by classmates -- from airing.

The Google executives standing trial are David Carl Drummond, head of Google Italy's managing board; George De Los Reyes, a board member; Peter Fleitcher, in charge of privacy protection in Europe; and Arvind Desikan, head of videos for Europe.

They each face up to three years in jail if convicted.

In the video, which was uploaded using a Google video site where it remained for nearly two months in late 2006, the teenager was bullied by four students in front of more than a dozen others who did not intervene.

The four students were expelled for the remainder of the academic year from their school in Turin, northern Italy.

The victim withdrew a complaint, but the nearby city of Milan lodged a civil suit along with a Down's syndrome advocacy group, Vividown.

Google's lawyer also said Tuesday in addition to withdrawing the video the company provided information on who had posted the video and brought an end to the bullying which had been going on for two years.

A verdict in the trial is not expected until December 23.

(c) 2009 AFP

Citation: US engineer defends Google in defamation trial (2009, September 29) retrieved 25 April 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2009-09-defends-google-defamation-trial.html

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.