

# Spain: Google News vanishes amid 'Google Tax' spat

December 16 2014, by Alan Clendenning

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Google on Tuesday followed through with a pledge to shut down Google News in Spain in reaction to a Spanish law requiring news publishers to receive payment for content even if they are willing to give it away.

The company's Spanish Google News page, normally full of aggregated news content, vanished and was replaced by a message saying Google was "incredibly sad" to announce the closure plus a lockout of Spanish publishers from its more than 70 other Google News sites around the world.

Spain's law takes effect Jan. 1 and Google said it wasn't worth it to consider paying the publishers for linking their content because its popular news aggregator makes no money.

The law, nicknamed the "Google Tax," was pushed through by Spain's AEDE association representing large news organizations.

People who use Google's standard search in Spain and anywhere else around the world will still be able to find articles on their own from Spanish publications, because the law applies only to aggregators and not to individuals who do their own searches outside of Google News.

But the lost access to Google News will likely make it more difficult for people to keep abreast on what is happening in Spain because they will have to know what to look for instead of having the top stories sorted for them.

A search of the Google News page in the United States late Tuesday morning for news from Spain's leading newspaper El Pais showed only a direct link to El Pais and content produced no later than Monday. But the same search for Spain's No. 2 newspaper El Mundo turned up results for stories produced by that newspaper on Tuesday.

A Google spokesman declined comment on how long the effort to block Spanish news content from all Google News sites would take.

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