

Today, the European Union [announced](#) the "preliminary conclusions" of its antitrust investigation into Google, forbearing from filing an "official" complaint and giving the company an opportunity to offer remedies to address the Commission's "four concerns where Google business practices may be considered as abuses of dominance." The following statement can be attributed to [Geoffrey Manne](#), Executive Director of the International Center for Law & Economics and Lecturer in Law at Lewis & Clark Law School; [Josh Wright](#), Professor of Law and Economics at George Mason University School of Law, and ICLE Director of Research; and [Berin Szoka](#), President of TechFreedom:

While the Commission is right that these "fast-moving markets would particularly benefit from a quick resolution of the competition issues," it's not clear what to do about them—which might explain why the EC asked Google to suggest remedies, rather than simply suing. A "concern" without a workable remedy that actually benefits consumers is properly no concern at all.

The best remedy for digital competition issues may be time itself—and the technological change and unanticipated sources of competition that come with it. Time and again innovation has mooted concerns like those raised by the EC, not perfectly, but better than any government-mediated remedy could have.

Each of the Commission's four stated concerns is substantively problematic, as we have discussed at great length elsewhere. But most of all, the Commission clearly conceives of search as ten blue links onto which other, supposedly separate services, may be added. In fact, search is rapidly evolving to integrate rich results like images, maps, photos, reviews and prices, and their incorporation into search is a natural and beneficial product evolution. This may harm certain competitors that offer stand-alone services, but it's hard to see how it hurts consumers or competition generally, or what the remedy would be. Google already provides extensive links to competing sites next to its results, but how could it ever integrate them in the same way it integrates its own new features? It's difficult to conceive of any remedy mandating such integration that wouldn't do more harm than good.

Manne, Szoka and Wright are available for comment at icle@laweconcenter.org. Find/share this release on [Facebook](#)

and Twitter.

Manne, Szoka and Wright have written extensively on Google and online search antitrust issues generally, including:

- [An extensive series of blog posts](#) by Josh Wright, with contributions from Geoffrey Manne and other authors at Truth on the Market
- [Skepticism Needed on Senate Call for FTC Probe of Google](#) (Manne & Szoka on Forbes.com)
- [Top 10 Antitrust Fallacies to Watch for at the Google Antitrust Hearing](#) (Manne & Szoka on Forbes.com)
- [First Microsoft, Now Google: Does the Government Have It In for Consumers?](#) (Manne, Szoka and Wright on C-Net)
- [Google Isn't Leveraging Its Dominance, It's Fighting to Avoid Obsolescence](#) (Manne on Forbes.com)
- [Correcting Herb Kohl and Kayak and Bing Travel on Google](#) (Manne on Forbes.com)

Joshua Wright and Geoffrey Manne are the authors of two articles on the antitrust law & economics of Google and search engines more broadly, “[Google and the Limits of Antitrust: The Case Against the Case Against Google](#),” and “[If Search Neutrality Is the Answer, What's the Question?](#)”

Manne is also the author of “[The Problem of Search Engines as Essential Facilities: An Economic & Legal Assessment](#),” an essay debunking arguments for regulation of search engines to preserve so-called “search neutrality” in TechFreedom’s 2011 book, [The Next Digital Decade: Essays on the Future of the Internet](#)