

Google Fined \$1.23M by Spain's Privacy Regulator

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"Google unlawfully collects and processes personal information"

America is ruled by thieving mega-corporations that literally get away with MASS murder. Google is known to have partnered with the CIA and allows access for the NSA - two organisations that serve the ruling corporate plutocracy. Spain has indeed upheld democratic principles by reacting to illegal surveillance BUT the fine is merely a slap on the wrist for a multi-billion dollar company like Google, which will no doubt pay the negligible fine with contempt for the freedom-loving Spaniards. The only way to prevent global surveillance is to impose multi-billion dollar fines on the offenders, simple!

From PC Magazine:

Google has been slapped with a fine for breaking Spanish data protection laws with its privacy policy.

The Spanish Data Protection Agency (AEPD) said that Google does not provide enough details about its data collection, and imposed a €900,000 (\$1.23M) punishment.

That's \$400,000 each for three separate violations of the Organic Act on Data Protection (LOPD) — collecting information, sharing data, and not properly informing users. The AEPD called Google's privacy rules "indeterminate and unclear."

A new Google privacy policy went into effect on March 1, 2012. It consolidated about 70 cross-site guidelines into one, but also switched to one profile for users across all services, rather separate logins for applications like YouTube, Search, and Blogger. It's that account consolidation bit that has privacy advocates up in arms.

The AEPD's action means that the California-based tech company must comply with Spanish data protection law and correct its practices ASAP.

A Google spokeswoman told PCMag that the company will be examining the Spanish watchdog's report to determine next steps.

"We've engaged fully with the Spanish DPA throughout this process to explain our privacy policy and how it allows us to create simpler, more effective services, and we'll continue to do so," she said in a statement.

Dutch and French officials have also spoken out against Google's practices. Late last month, the Dutch Data Protection Authority (DPA) accused the search giant of not adequately informing users about which personal data it collects and combines, and for what purpose.

Other data protection agencies in Europe, including Germany, Italy, and the U.K., have also been examining Google's privacy policy.

From The Economic Times:

MADRID: Spain's data protection watchdog ordered US Internet giant Google on Thursday to pay a 900,000-euro fine for "serious violations" of users' privacy.

The Spanish Data Protection Agency accused the popular search provider of "illegal processing of personal data" obtained from users of various services such as Google email accounts.

"Google unlawfully collects and processes personal information" of users, the agency said in a statement.

"The agency considers that Google seriously violates the right to the protection of personal data."

It ordered Google to pay 300,000 euros (\$410,000) for each of three counts of breaching Spain's data protection law and ordered it to bring its privacy policy in line with legal norms.

It said Google's privacy policy did not clearly inform users of how it uses data collected, for example information from emails that is gathered to generate targeted advertising.

It also accused Google of keeping the data for longer than is legally justified and of making it difficult for users to query the use of their data.

Google has repeatedly stated that its privacy policy respects European law, despite investigations in several countries.

The Spanish authority launched proceedings against Google in June. In September, France too said it would take action against the company, accusing it of breaching privacy norms.

Authorities in Germany, Italy, The Netherlands and Britain have also opened parallel procedures against Google.

Like other technology giants, Google has come under scrutiny following revelations by US whistleblower Edward Snowden of online eavesdropping by US and other intelligence agencies.

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