

Hausfeld Clients Succeed with Competition Complaint against Google's Android practices, leading to € 4,34 BN fine

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This week, the European Commission fined Google a record-breaking €4.34 billion (\$5.05 billion) for anticompetitive practices related to its Android mobile operating system. The fine follows a four-year-long investigation, in which Hausfeld represented one of the five complainants, as well as two interested third parties.

The EU competition authority launched the investigation in 2014, following a complaint from FairSearch, a Brussels-based industry association. In addition to imposing the highest fine ever in a competition case, the Commission ordered that Google stop (i) forcing bundles of Google apps onto mobile equipment manufacturers, (ii) preventing open source versions of Android, and (iii) paying phone manufacturers for exclusivity of Google Search on Android devices, all within 90 days.

The Hausfeld antitrust team represents the German press publishers' associations BDZV and VDZ, which acted against Google as interested third parties since March 2016, as well as The Open Internet Project (OIP), a pan-European industry association that filed a formal complaint in March 2017.

This latest fine, marks the second success for Hausfeld's clients in the Commission's Google investigations. Hausfeld also represents several complainants in the first investigation against Google's favoring of its own services in search results, which led to a then-record fine of €2.4 billion in June 2017.

"Market abuse in the technology sector is fast becoming the greatest concern for competition authorities across the globe. The European Commission's second antitrust decision involving Google is a further milestone to restore and maintain integrity in the digital economy. We are committed to assuring that competition enforcement is addressed and secured in all aspects public and private so that such misconduct is deterred and its victims compensated for market manipulations. We are still in the early stages of our vigilant oversight of this significant economic sector," said Chairman Michael D. Hausfeld.

The Hausfeld antitrust team advising OIP, BDZV and VDZ is led by Thomas Höppner, with support from Anna Morfey, Lesley Hannah, Philipp Westerhoff, and Christopher Unsel. Following the EU decision, Hausfeld is also preparing follow-on damage claims on behalf of original equipment manufacturers and app developers throughout Europe.