

Google destroys billions of users' private browsing data

Google has agreed to destroy billions of data records to settle a lawsuit that the company secretly tracked the Internet activities of anonymous web browser users.



Terms of the agreement were filed on April 1 in Oakland, California, federal court and require approval from Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers.

The plaintiff's lawyers valued the deal at more than \$5 billion, sometimes even up to \$7.8 billion. Google will not pay damages, but users can sue the company privately for their damages.

The class action lawsuit, which began in 2020, includes millions of Google users who have used the anonymous browsing feature since June 1, 2016.

Users alleged that Google's analytics, cookies, and application services allowed the company to track people who set Google's Chrome browser to "Incognito" mode and other browsers to "browsing mode" private".

According to the plaintiffs, this turned Google into an "uncontrolled information warehouse" by allowing the company to learn about friends, favorite foods, hobbies, shopping habits as well as "secret secrets". most confidential and potentially embarrassing" of the user.

Under the settlement, Google will publish updates on the information it collects during users' "private" web browsing. Google will also allow Anonymous users to block third-party cookies for five years.

Plaintiffs' attorney David Boies said Google will collect less data from users' private browsing sessions, and will also make less money from that data. He called the settlement "a historic step in demanding honesty and accountability from the technology companies that dominate the market."

Google spokesman Jose Castaneda said the company was pleased to settle the lawsuit, which it had always considered 'meritless'.

The two sides reached a preliminary agreement in December 2023, averting the trial scheduled for February 5, 2024. Terms were not disclosed at the time. The plaintiffs' lawyers plan to ask Google to pay unspecified legal fees at a later date.

Previously, Google decided to invest \$1 billion in building a data center just outside the British capital of London. This is the technology giant's latest investment in the UK to meet the growing demand for Internet services in the region.

The company owned by Alphabet corporation said that this data center is located on a 33-acre (13 ha) plot of land purchased by Google in 2020, in the town of Waltham Cross, about 15 miles from central London. North.

The UK government, which is pushing businesses to invest to fund new infrastructure, especially in growth industries such as technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI), described the investment as Google is a 'major vote of confidence' in the UK.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said: 'Google's \$1 billion investment is proof that the UK is a center of excellence in technology and has huge growth potential.'

The investment follows Google's \$1 billion acquisition of a central London office building in 2022, where Google is building a new office and will also house the AI ??company's headquarters. DeepMind.

Alphabet's Chief Financial Officer, Ruth Porat, said: 'This new data center will help meet growing demand for cloud and AI services, while bringing memory and computing power to businesses. businesses across the UK. Besides, the center also creates more jobs in construction and engineering.

Google, which has more than 7,000 employees in the UK, also said waste heat generated from data centers would be an energy conservation opportunity that could benefit local communities.

Currently, Google is trying to promote the development of AI technologies when ChatGPT's dominant position in the generative AI market is indisputable. Google launched Bard quite popularly as a response to OpenAI's ChatGPT. However, users quickly realized that Bard's feedback was limited, inaccurate and error-prone. This has led to much criticism on social media about Bard's inferior abilities compared to his competitors.

With Gemini, Google has high hopes of being able to address these shortcomings of Bard, while ending ChatGPT's market dominance. The company has made some pretty bold claims about Gemini's capabilities. Google even thinks that Gemini will eclipse GPT-4 - ChatGPT's large language model in every aspect.

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