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Little Tech Association and Travel Lemming File Amicus Brief Urging D.C. Circuit to Strengthen Google Search Remedies

Brief argues Google's monopoly playbook of leveraging dominance into local search, GenAI, and other adjacent markets requires a more pronounced remedy, including a ban on default payments, mandatory choice screens, and divestiture of Chrome

WASHINGTON, D.C., August 4, 2026 The [Little Tech Association](#) (LTA), the trade association representing independent technology companies, founders, and startup investors, today filed a joint amicus brief with online travel publisher Travel Lemming in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals in [United States v. Google LLC](#), the consolidated appeal of the landmark search monopolization case. The brief affirms the district court's finding that Google illegally monopolized the general search engine market and, consequently, urges the court to and to strengthen the remedy on cross-appeal, arguing the relief initially ordered does not go far enough to restore competition.

The brief, filed by Simonsen Sussman LLP, describes what it calls Google's "monopolize, leverage, reinforce" playbook, in which Google uses its search monopoly to gain unfair advantages in adjacent markets such as local search and generative AI, then uses those advantages to further entrench its dominance in search. LTA and Travel Lemming argue this cycle harms independent companies, content creators, and consumers alike, and that an effective remedy must reach beyond the narrow conduct the district court found unlawful.

Harry Godfrey, Executive Director of LTA, issued the following statement:

"Google used its monopoly in search to muscle into local search, travel, and now generative AI, then turned around and used those advantages to tighten its grip on search all over again. Our members have experienced this playbook firsthand. A remedy that only addresses yesterday's conduct while ignoring how Google is running the same play in AI today isn't a remedy at all, it's a loophole. The court has a chance to fix that, and we're urging it to take the stronger path: end the default payments, give consumers a real choice screen, open up the data, and divest Chrome. Without that, Google will be free to further entrench its dominance."

Highlights from the brief:

- **Ban default payments.** The brief argues the district court erred by declining to prohibit Google from paying partners such as Apple and browser makers to secure default search placement, calling this "core conduct" that cemented Google's monopoly.
- **Require choice screens, for search and GenAI.** LTA and Travel Lemming argue properly designed choice screens, without a default option, are necessary to unwind years of consumer conditioning toward Google, and should extend to generative AI products as well as search.
- **Extend data sharing and syndication to GenAI rivals.** The brief contends Google's scale advantage in search, built on unlawfully acquired data, is now being used to advantage its GenAI products, and that syndication and data-sharing remedies must extend to GenAI competitors to prevent the same monopoly playbook from repeating.

- **Divest Chrome.** The brief argues Chrome is a central instrument in Google's scheme to make its Gemini GenAI product the default for hundreds of millions of users, and that divestiture is the surest way to open the market to competing search engines.
- **Zero-click searches are accelerating.** Citing recent research, the brief states that in the first four months of 2026, 68.01 percent of U.S. Google searches ended without a click to an external website, up from 60.45 percent in 2024, and that AI Overviews reduce click-through rates by nearly 60 percent when they appear.

The brief draws on the firsthand experience of LTA founding member **Yelp**, which has competed with Google in local search for two decades, and amicus **Travel Lemming**, an online travel publisher whose human-written guides Google surfaces in search results and AI Overviews without compensation. Both describe a pattern in which Google scrapes or relies on their content, then uses AI-generated summaries to keep users on Google's own properties rather than sending traffic back to the source.

The case is *United States v. Google LLC*, No. 26-5023 (consolidated with Nos. 26-5047 and 26-5049), pending before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit on appeal from the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, Nos. 20-cv-3010 and 20-cv-3715.

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About the Little Tech Association

The Little Tech Association is a 501(c)(6) trade association made up of founders, innovative companies, digital entrepreneurs, and startup investors working to keep the digital economy open and competitive. LTA's more than 200 members include Y Combinator, Replit, Proton, and Yelp, and span the full spectrum of the digital economy, applying technology and AI across sectors from life sciences, robotics, and finance to real estate, agriculture, and law. These companies range from pre-seed startups to fast-growing, multibillion-dollar organizations. LTA is the policy voice of independent technology companies competing to build a more open, competitive digital economy. Learn more at littletech.org.

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