

Jason Kint
CEO
Digital Content Next
New York, NY

QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

1. Why is the Google search case and its remedies determination important to the future of AI?

A: The finding that Google held a monopoly in search and engaged in illegal activity to maintain that monopoly is hugely important in setting a standard for how antitrust law applies to the digital age. In particular, the ruling will help hold Google accountable for past actions. However, the remedies portion of the trial could provide the most tangible benefits for consumers. It is well documented that AI is likely to have a significant impact on search as the preferred technology enabling consumers to find new content, voices and communities. It is no coincidence that the largest tech companies are dominating the AI landscape at the moment. The court has already recognized the significant role of clicks, queries and data at scale in maintaining Google's monopoly power in search and how this will provide a significant advantage in real-time training of AI. If we want to ensure that the AI sector is competitive, here in America and abroad, the court should impose forward-looking remedies on Google that apply to its AI products and services. Otherwise, the danger is very real that Google will apply the same playbook of anticompetitive behavior to the AI sector and deny consumers the significant promise and benefits from AI technologies.

2. What national security concerns could arise if a single source is the main provider of information to Americans?

A: A free, independent and plural press is a hallmark of healthy democracies. Without the diversity of information and opinions, we become less educated about the important issues of the day and there is less transparency on the misconduct of powerful companies and individuals. With this in mind, the danger with Google dominating search is that they exert significant influence, if not control, over Americans' access to information. As the evidence showed in the search and ad tech cases brought by the Department of Justice, Google has shown they are willing to tip the scales in favor of their business interests while harming premium publishers and consumers' ability to access trusted news.

3. Are lower prices always in the best interest of consumers, or in the digital advertising space, are values like greater privacy and more informed consent options important to end-users? How do insights about consumer preferences inform your views on competition policy nationally, considering Google's dominance in digital advertising?

A: The vast majority of original content on the web is funded by digital advertising, which means that, in most cases, there is no immediate financial cost for consumers accessing original content. However, consumers do pay for this content with their time (by watching advertisements) and with their personal data. Consumers expect their data to be collected by

companies with which they are interacting. However, studies have shown that consumers do not expect their data to be collected by companies with which they are not interacting and especially for use outside of the context where that data was initially collected. Google's dominance in digital advertising is underpinned by their ability to collect massive amounts of data about consumers behind the scenes without consumer knowledge, much less their consent. The lack of meaningful choices for consumers over the ubiquitous data collection entrenches Google's dominant position while at the same eroding consumer trust.

Moreover, as the FTC presents evidence in Meta's antitrust trial, it is becoming increasingly clear that 'quality-adjusted price' can rise in harmful ways - such as when a dominant platform degrades user experience, increases ad load, or weakens privacy protections - without meaningful risk of user attrition due to the absence of viable competitive alternatives.