

Why Does The EU Hate Google?

By **Alexander Baron** - Apr 16, 2015



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Wanna hear a joke? Google is a threat to the survival of independent artists. Seriously? According to Danny Hakim writing in the *New York Times*, April 15, that claim was made at a recent forum held at a luxury hotel in London recently. Has this anonymous attendee ever heard of YouTube, which is owned by Google? Before the Internet, before social media and specifically before YouTube, how many artists, musical or otherwise, got worldwide exposure without backing from a major record label, lots of money, effort, time, hard work and often more than a bit of luck?

And how many since have shot to both fame and fortune solely or **almost solely** on account of YouTube?

At this time, Google is coming under a sustained attack from the European Union; **according to** the EU's grandly titled Antitrust Commissioner Margrethe Vestager, Google is illegally abusing its dominant position in the search market. Seriously?



Margrethe Vestager (Credits: Johannes Jansson)

Apparently this is because it has been favouring its own shopping comparison products in its general search results pages. Margrethe Vestager is a time-serving politician who is said to hold a degree in economics. If so then she should understand something about monopolies; while there is such a thing as a dominant market position, there are only two ways to maintain this, by legislation or by continually delivering the goods. Google does lobby governments, but no more so than other companies, and we all have the right to lobby governments, ordinary citizens do it all the time including by on-line petitions.

In the absence of legislation granting Google a monopoly, the only way it can stay one step ahead of the competition is by satisfying its customers, most of whom don't pay a cent to use it. If Margrethe Vestager wants to tackle a real monopoly, she should start with the banks, and if she had any real savvy she would take the power to create credit away from the banks and give it to **companies like Google**.

Next time you hear a politician, whether it is Margrethe Vestager, **Margaret Hodge** or anyone else sounding off about “evil” Google, bear in mind how she got the word out. She sat down at her computer, typing away, working on her polemic with her collaborators using Google Docs, sent out the draft using GMail, translated it using Google Translate, and broadcast it to the world through YouTube and Google News.

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