

## **Is Google Too Powerful?**

Since founding Google in 1996, Sergey Brin and Larry Page have worn their “Don’t be evil” motto with pride. In just over a decade, they have driven their company out of the garage and into a globally recognized enterprise. It is only natural then that as Google expanded, the public began to form strong opinions about them. The main issue at hand however is not whether or not Google is powerful – that it obviously is – but rather how Google honors the responsibilities that come with this power.

When looking at all the negative press surrounding Google, it is easy to forget just how much the company has done for so many. Google has lived up to its mission of “organizing the world’s data” which has provided countless numbers of people access to around a trillion unique web pages. And this is just the tip of the metaphorical World Wide Web iceberg – billions of new individual web pages are published daily. However, several individuals and organizations point to some of the information collected by Google as being intrusive and not something that they believe should be publicly available on the net. But one has to understand that Google is simply a facilitator in the organization of data, it is not their liability or in their scope of feasibility to monitor which data is actually indexed.

Another commonly cited argument for Google’s over-dominance is that they act as a barrier to online startups because there is no viable way for these small companies to compete with Google’s ever-growing portfolio. One has to realize however just how much Google has helped small business owners in recent years. Not only has Google bought up several of these relatively smaller startups – namely KeyHole (which was eventually developed into Google Earth) and Blogger – and transformed them into immensely popular applications and services, they have also given chances to otherwise unprofitable and undiscovered small businesses to post targeted advertisements on Google’s search results pages. This sort of exposure has proven to be very beneficial to small business owners who are definitely not complaining.

It is undeniable that Google’s presence on the web is unmatched in many segments. The advertising unit for example has propelled Google’s revenues exponentially and many analysts have blamed Google for having an unfair, almost monopolistic advantage over well-established competing advertising firms. Although this holds true, it is also important to realize that in a free-market economy, what Google has achieved is in fact, fair.

Google has definitely lived up to its mission of “organizing the world's information and making it universally accessible and useful.” Nevertheless, some find the nature in which Google achieves this great feat to be unethical and that it hurts end users more than it helps them. However, a substantially greater number swear by Google and the wonders it has done for them and their businesses. And for those who don't really know what to believe, just know that Google is positioned to be even more powerful in the future. In the “don't be evil” way of course.

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