**A LANDMARK VICTORY FOR SMALL TECH**

**GOOGLE MUST PAY 2017 €2.42BN SHOPPING FINE**

Google lost its final appeal in the Shopping Case and must pay the €2.42bn fine issued by the European Commission back in 2017. This is a victory for small tech and businesses like mine – and for everyone who believes in consumer welfare.

The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) judgement confirmed the original Commission ruling that Google abused its dominant position in general internet search and stifled competition in comparison shopping markets.The judgement, issued on 10 September 2024, came seven long years after the initial Commission decision. Google has exhausted the appeals process and cannot re-appeal.

The CJEU decision reinforces the precedent that “self-preferencing” by dominant digital platforms constitutes a violation of EU competition law.

According to the original [European Commission Decision](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_17_1785) in addition to paying the fine,”**… *In particular, Google has to respect the simple principle of equal treatment in its search results for its own comparison shopping product and rival comparison shopping products. Google has to apply the same processes and methods to position and display rival comparison shopping services in Google's search results pages as it gives to its own comparison shopping service.”***

As one of the lead complainants in this case, we are, of course, relieved that this exhausting case has come to an end. But lengthy antitrust cases are a problem. We have been lobbying for fair digital markets for nearly 15 years. During the appeals process, Google had seven more years to entrench its monopoly still further, to stifle innovation and competition and to deny consumers choice. As reported in [Euractiv,](https://www.euractiv.com/section/platforms/news/top-eu-court-rejects-googles-appeal-of-e2-42-billion-fine-in-shopping-case/) ‘*when the fine was issued in 2017, Google’s parent company, Alphabet,*[***reported***](https://abc.xyz/assets/investor/static/pdf/2017Q4_alphabet_earnings_release.pdf)*revenues of €110 billion. By 2023, this figure*[***had grown***](https://abc.xyz/assets/95/eb/9cef90184e09bac553796896c633/2023q4-alphabet-earnings-release.pdf?src_trk=em6646f6d73282c5.770571841254578321)*to €278 billion. The Commission fine, therefore, amounted to 2.2% of Google’s annual revenues in 2017, yet now amounts to 0.9% of Google’s 2023 annual revenue.’*

We hope that the CJEU decision emboldens the Commission to take a tougher stance on all future antitrust investigations and takes this win into the room when it is implementing the Digital Markets Act (DMA).

In the meantime, we are confident that this decision, in tandem with the new DMA powers, will bring Google to account. It will force the tech giant to provide equal treatment to comparison shopping services, driving down prices of ads to retailers, savings that will ultimately be passed onto consumers. We look forward to seeing Google’s immediate plans for addressing the market abuses in Shopping and to eventually seeing the rewards of a fair, competitive marketplace for the benefit of businesses, innovation, and consumers.