

## ANNEX I QUESTIONNAIRE

Cases No COMP/C-3/39.740, 39.775, 39.768 and 39.845

DEADLINE FOR REPLY: Friday, 11 February 2011

When you reply to this questionnaire, please provide TWO versions of your reply: (i) a CONFIDENTIAL version; and (ii) a NON CONFIDENTIAL version which excludes business secrets or other confidential information.

### A. Business secrets

Reminder: Does your reply contain any parts that you regard as business secrets?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If yes, have you provided a non-confidential version of your reply? (see [Annex III](#) for details and instructions)

YES ☐ NO ☐

### B. Questions

Please be aware that your reply should cover all information concerning your entire undertaking, including all connected undertakings, such as your ultimate mother company and its subsidiaries.<sup>1</sup>

1. Please provide a short description of your undertaking, including the online activities of your business and the European Economic Area ("EEA")<sup>2</sup> countries in which you offer online services.<sup>3</sup>
2. Does your company operate horizontal (non sector or domain specific) online search services?
3. Does your company operate vertical (sector or domain specific) online search services<sup>4</sup>?

<sup>1</sup> See the definition on the term of connected undertakings in point 12.2 of the Commission Notice on agreements of minor importance which do not appreciably restrict competition under Article 81(1) of the Treaty establishing the European Community (de minimis), OJ C 368, 22.12.2001, p. 13–15.

<sup>2</sup> The EEA comprises the 27 Member States of the European Union plus Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway.

<sup>3</sup> All questions in this questionnaire are to be understood as including all your affiliates or subsidiaries.

<sup>4</sup> Vertical online search services include for instance services such as product comparison, local search, and search related to videos, images, maps, blogs, finance, travel or health.

The following questions only apply if you replied "yes" to question 3.

4. What is the geographic scope of the vertical online search services your company provides? Does your company operate locally, at national level or in different countries?
5. Does your company offer vertical online search services in one or more than one language? Please describe the reasons why your company chose to offer services in one or more than one language.
6. How are the vertical online search services operated by your company monetised (i.e. through online search ads, online contextual ads, paid listings etc)? Please provide the yearly revenues generated by each of these vertical online search services for the period 2005-2010. Please provide the share of these revenues which was generated in the EEA in the same period. For year 2009, please provide a split of the revenues generated by your vertical online search services between the different types of revenue streams (i.e. through online search ads, online contextual ads, paid listings etc).
7. Please provide the yearly number of user visits to your company's vertical online search services for the period 2005-2010. Please indicate how many of these users accessed these services from the EEA.
8. Does your company have means to identify how users access its vertical online search services?
  - 8.1. If so, please indicate the yearly number of visitors who accessed your company's vertical online search services via queries to horizontal search engines, such as Bing, Google or Yahoo, and via other means such as bookmarks or users typing the address in the URL bar (please specify them and provide separate figures for each alternative mean) for the period 2005-2010.
  - 8.2. If the information is available, please break down this number of visitors between visitors coming from the respective sites of Bing, Google, Yahoo, and other horizontal search engines.
9. Please provide a list of the main competing services to your company's vertical online search services (such as, for instance, other vertical search engines, horizontal search engines, directories, offline services, to the extent that you consider that such services are competing with yours).
10. Which of the above competing services are your closest competitors? Please also mention the name of the competitor.
11. Does Google run vertical online search services which are competing with your company's vertical online search services?
  - 11.1. If yes, please list them.
  - 11.2. What are the features that differentiate your vertical online search services from Google's competing ones? Please elaborate and identify the key features.



- 11.3. Do you perceive that Google's competing vertical online search services provide better value (more information, more user friendly, etc...) to users?
- 11.4. If you have run quality tests to compare your vertical online search services with Google's competing ones, please provide all supporting documents relevant to this topic.
- 11.5. If Google introduced its competing vertical online search services after you introduced yours, please explain what was the impact on your business, if any.
- 11.6. Did you perceive any specific changes in the way Google operates its competing vertical online search services, including in particular the way Google displays the results of these services, which had a particular impact on your business? If so, explain how, and provide supportive evidence.
12. Do you consider that higher traffic allows vertical online search services to generate more relevant results? If yes, please elaborate on the process of generating greater relevance through higher traffic for your company. Please also provide your best estimate of what is the minimum traffic (or scale) after which the improvement in relevance is likely to be minimal.
13. Do you consider horizontal search engines such as Bing, Google or Yahoo to be competing with your company's vertical search services?
14. Do you think that your vertical online search services have gained queries and consequently traffic at the expense of horizontal search engines? If yes, please provide supportive evidence.
15. Please elaborate on the key tasks and investments that you had to undertake when you initially developed your vertical online search services. Please also provide the business plan presented to your investors at the time of launching the service.
16. Have you ever considered/planned upgrading your vertical online search services in order to introduce a horizontal search service? Are you aware of past examples/attempts in the industry?
17. What would be the incremental costs that you would bear if you decided to upgrade your vertical online search services into a horizontal search service?
18. Do you consider that certain non-online services are competing with your company's vertical online search services? If so, which ones?
19. Are there specific pages in its vertical search web site which your company expects to be indexed by horizontal search engines such as Bing, Google or Yahoo?
20. Does your company trace the ranking of these pages or other pages of its web site in these search engines?
  - 20.1. If so, do you currently see (or have seen) significant differences of your ranking across different search engines? Please provide evidence.

- 20.2. Has your company ever noticed a sudden significant change in that ranking which cannot be explained by a change in your web site?
- 20.3. If so, please provide all relevant information on this change, in particular a detailed description of the changes in the ranking of your web site, its extent, its timing, the way it was detected, its impact on your company's business, and the mitigation actions put in place by your company, if any.
- 20.4. Did your company raise the matter with the relevant horizontal search engine? If so, please provide supportive documents and explain the outcome of your discussions.
21. Are there specific pages in your company's vertical search web site for which your company disallows indexing by horizontal search engines such as Bing, Google or Yahoo? If so, why?
22. Has your company ever noticed a sudden decrease in the number of users reaching your vertical online search services via queries to Google's horizontal search engine, which cannot be explained by a change in your web site?
- 22.1. If so, please provide all relevant information on this decrease, in particular its extent, its timing, the way it was detected, its impact on your company's business, and the mitigation actions put in place by your company, if any.
- 22.2. If you also replied yes to question 20.2, did the sudden decrease in the number of users reaching your company's vertical online search services via queries to Google's horizontal search engine coincide with a sudden significant change in the ranking of the pages of your web site in Google's horizontal search engine?
- 22.3. Please indicate if your company raised the matter with Google. If so, please provide supportive documents and explain the outcome of your discussions.
23. Is your company aware of the existence of features in Google's natural search ranking algorithm which in your view might penalise the ranking or display of your vertical search web site pages;
- (i) as compared to competing, non-Google owned, vertical search services;
  - (ii) as compared to competing, Google-owned, vertical search services;
  - (iii) as compared to other web sites which would be responsive to the same type of user queries?
- 23.1. If so, please explain what these features are. How does your company attempt to mitigate their impact?
- 23.2. Has your company discussed these features with Google? If so, please provide supportive documents and explain the outcome of your discussions.
24. Is your company aware of the existence of Google's Webmaster guidelines?<sup>5</sup>
- 24.1. If so, do you consult them regularly?

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=35769>



- 24.2. For what purpose?
- 24.3. Do you consider that the Google's Webmaster guidelines fulfil the purpose for which you consult them?
25. Google's Webmaster guidelines describe web pages which contain little or no original content.<sup>6</sup> In your company's view, do certain of your vertical search web site pages contain little or no original content as per that description?
- 25.1. If so, which ones?
- 25.2. Is it your policy to disallow the indexing of such pages? Please explain why.
- 25.3. Have you ever discussed with Google the amount or nature of original content in your pages? If so, why, and what was the outcome of these discussions? Please provide supportive documents.
26. Is your company aware of the existence of Google's Webmaster forum?<sup>7</sup>
- 26.1. If so, do you consult it regularly?
- 26.2. For what purpose?
- 26.3. Do you consider that Google's Webmaster forum fulfils the purpose for which you consult it?

For the purpose of the following questions, a "Vertical Query" will mean a query to a horizontal search engine for which certain specific pages of your vertical search web site are likely to be responsive. For instance, a query in a horizontal search engine like "Indian restaurants Liverpool" would be a Vertical Query for a local place.

The following questions apply only if Google indexes pages of your vertical search web site which are responsive to Vertical Queries (as opposed to your home page).<sup>8</sup>

27. In your opinion, if users do not find a link to your web site in the first page of Google's natural search results to a vertical specific query, what will be their reaction?
28. In your opinion, what would be the impact on your company's business (please distinguish between traffic volume and revenues) in the following scenarios:
- The rank in which Google displays the pages of your vertical search web site which are responsive to Vertical Queries would be on average lowered by 3 places;<sup>9</sup>
  - The pages of your vertical search web site which are responsive to Vertical Queries would appear one page below the one at which they appear normally;

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=66361>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.google.com/support/forum/p/Webmasters?hl=en>

<sup>8</sup> Google may not index these pages if for instance your company had disallowed their indexation.

<sup>9</sup> For the example of a Vertical Query like "Indian restaurants Liverpool", pages which are responsive could be for instance a page containing a list of Indian restaurants in Liverpool, or pages containing information concerning individual Indian restaurants in Liverpool.

- The pages of your vertical search web site which are responsive to Vertical Queries would totally disappear?

Thank you for your co-operation

Reminder: Does your reply contain business secrets or other confidential information? Have you attached a non-confidential version of your reply? For details and instructions, see Annex III.