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Google loses sight of founding principles with China deal

By Alec Calvillo

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(Christina Acedo/Daily Titan)

Google is basically the gatekeeper of the internet. Its algorithms control which websites come up first when people use its search engine and it has become so influential in American culture that it has become a verb — no other search engine has that kind of reputation.

Unfortunately, Google is losing sight of its roots and forgetting the principles the company was founded on. This year, the company removed its original slogan from 2000, “Don’t be evil,” obviously not wanting to sound like hypocrites.

Google ought to be feared because of its power — not trusted. It's obvious the company's motive is to make money and that they don't care about taking away human rights.

If there's one thing that indicates the change in culture at Google, it's the company's upcoming deal with the Chinese government.

The internet in China is already heavily censored. Known as the Great Firewall of China, the Chinese government controls the web through censoring and surveillance. Chinese citizens try to circumvent the firewall using virtual private networks, which would allow them to access any website freely.

Google's calling the project Dragonfly and is helping China by creating a search engine that will comply with an authoritarian Chinese government. Users wouldn't be able to access Facebook or Wikipedia, and the Chinese government would have access to people's search history.

The reason Google cherishes China is because the deal has huge market potential, according to NPR.

Google employees are taking a stand against the project, alongside Amnesty International, a human rights organization, in hopes that the company will change direction as it did with its controversial deal with the Pentagon.

It's worth noting that Google has been here before. Back in January 2006, Google had agreed to censor some search results in order to operate in China, until they pulled out in 2010 after a cyber attack originating in China resulted in stolen intellectual property from Google.

Mass surveillance isn't unique to China as it's already happening in the United States. In 2013, Edward Snowden leaked classified information that the National Security Agency was guilty of spying on its own citizens too.

Google also spies on its users already. It sells search data to companies who target people with relevant ads. Run a Google search for something, and soon ads for it begin popping up on other websites. In 2017, Google generated \$110.9 billion of which \$95.4 billion came from ad revenue, according to [Statista.com](https://www.statista.com).

Facebook, another big corporation, was caught misusing data and allowed Russians to interfere in the 2016 election, and paid for it dearly.

However, unlike Facebook, Google has total control over the market, because there isn't much competition. Bing, Yahoo and DuckDuckGo are some of the more notable names in internet search engines, but they're not used as much and don't work as well.

Perhaps this amount of data makes it just too tempting for companies to avoid abusing the trust of their users. That's why there needs to be laws that could prevent tech giants like Google from participating in any practices against human rights.

Google's morals are low enough to make a lot of money in exchange for creating a search engine that will spy and censor Chinese citizens. As one of the most powerful tech companies, they need to be held accountable for their irresponsible, greedy and malicious actions.