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November 20, 2007

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Eric Schmidt, Ph.D.  
Chairman of the Board and CEO  
Google Inc.  
1600 Amphitheatre Parkway  
Mountain View, CA 94043

Dear Dr. Schmidt:

It was a pleasure meeting you in my office on Tuesday, November 6. I thank you for responding to our interest in Google and its planned merger with DoubleClick with an in-person visit.

I found our conversation regarding the pending merger and the related privacy concerns enlightening. To borrow your words, there are both good and bad when it comes to Internet use. As we discussed, our Committee interest is in how consumer privacy may be implicated by current and emerging commercial practices both in terms of search technology and in behavioral or targeted advertising, and how data retention plays a part in both of those functions. From our conversation, I realize both my staff and I have much to learn about the mechanics of these aspects of the online world.

To that end, you offered your company's assistance in educating us about how the online world currently operates, emerging trends, and potential dangers of which we should be aware. You also mentioned your willingness and desire to work with us on potential legislative solutions to those dangers. I would like to now accept your offer. I am prepared to send at Committee expense two of our staff, Ms. Karen Christian and Ms. Shannon Weinberg, to your facility in California on November 27 and 28 to learn more regarding how the industry operates and what legislative solutions we may undertake to address a few of those concerns we shared earlier this month.

Please contact either Ms. Christian at (202) 226-4572 or Ms. Weinberg at (202) 226-9616 as soon as practicable whether you are still interested in accommodating, and are able to accommodate, our staffers on this educational trip next week.

Sincerely,

  
Joe Barton  
Ranking Member