



November 30, 2007

The Honorable Joe Barton
Ranking Member
United States House of Representatives
Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Barton:

Thank you for your letter of November 20, and for taking time out of your schedule to meet with me during my recent visit to Washington, DC. I found our conversation very informative and productive, and I applaud you for taking such a keen interest in protecting Americans' privacy.

We would certainly be happy to work with your staff to provide additional information about the online advertising business, its benefits to the American economy, and privacy issues surrounding online advertising. We have already engaged both with your staff, with whom we met in August, as well as with the Federal Trade Commission over the past few months – most recently at the FTC's November 1 and 2 Town Hall on privacy and behavioral advertising.

Over the course of two days, the Town Hall examined the topics raised in your letter: the mechanics of the online advertising business and how consumer privacy may be implicated by various industry practices. Google, many other companies engaged in online advertising, privacy groups, regulators, and other stakeholders participated, and it is our belief that the Town Hall was a significant step in developing industry-wide solutions to consumer privacy issues in online advertising.

As the online advertising business continues to bring benefits to consumers, small businesses, and others, privacy should be – and at Google is – a major priority. Our goal is to provide the benefits of online advertising in a way that protects our users' privacy. To achieve this, we constantly work to enhance our privacy practices and engage with stakeholders to understand their views on privacy.

I have asked Alan Davidson, the head of our public policy team in Washington, DC, to contact your staff directly and arrange for a briefing in the near future. Given travel schedules and other obligations of both Google employees and your busy staff, we would be happy to host your staff in our Washington offices where they can meet with Google employees in person as well as by video conference.

I very much appreciate your interest in protecting individual privacy, wish you a happy holiday season, and look forward to seeing you again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Eric Schmidt".

Eric Schmidt
Chairman of the Board and CEO
Google Inc.