

# Google Search ad claims.

Companies that bought Google search ads aimed at US users since August 2016 have an antitrust overcharge claim. Two routes: pursue it at no upfront cost, or sell it for cash. The effort to pursue the claims is minimal - a few minutes of account access to get detailed spend records.

A realistic recovery range is

## 10-15%

of that spend, before our fees and after a two-three year wait.

## What happened

In August 2024 a federal court found that Google illegally maintained monopolies in general search and search text advertising and used that power to overcharge advertisers. A second court found in April 2025 that Google also monopolized key parts of the ad tech market. Google calls the claims unfounded and is appealing both.

## Why each advertiser has a claim

Google adjusted its auction in ways that raised what a winning ad paid with no change in bids, ad quality or competition. Its head of ads products testified that some changes raised costs about 5% for the typical advertiser and up to 10% on some queries, and that Google tends not to tell advertisers about pricing changes.

## How claims proceed

Google's terms require each advertiser to arbitrate individually, so there is no class action to join for the overcharge itself. Thousands of individual demands have already been filed and no retaliation against claimants has been reported. In July 2026, as demands mounted, Google rewrote its arbitration terms to shift fees onto claimants and strip procedural rights the earlier terms gave them. The change was unilateral and purports to reach existing claims, and we are preparing a court challenge to it. Either way the claim proceeds. That fight is about cost and procedure, not whether the claim exists.

## What a claim is worth

Antitrust law triples proven damages, so a 5 to 10% overcharge becomes a gross claim of 15 to 30% of eligible search spend (expected to settle at a lower value). That is a ceiling, not a payout: an arbitrator or a settlement sets the amount, our fee and the costs we advance come out of it, and payment is likely two to three years away, with Google's appeals pending.

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} \mathbf{5-10\%} & \times & \mathbf{3} & = & \mathbf{15-30\%} \\ \text{Overcharge} & & \text{Trebling} & & \text{Gross claim} \end{array}$$

## Two routes

### File on contingency.

No upfront cost. The firm advances the arbitration costs and is paid only out of a recovery. The advertiser carries the wait and the uncertainty.

### Sell the claim.

A buyer pays cash at closing, takes over the claim, funds the case and carries the risk and the years. The price is a fraction of the claim's face value, by design, because the buyer is providing certainty and liquidity in place of risk.

# The people. The practicalities.

## What counts, and what it takes

Any account with more than \$10k of cumulative search spend since August 2016 is worth a look. Google Ads search spend targeting US users since August 2016, including the search portion of Performance Max campaigns. Which Google entity billed the account doesn't matter. The claim belongs to whoever paid Google. For a company running its own account that's simple, and where an agency ran the ads the claim is still the client's. The spend history lives in the Google Ads account and we pull and parse it, so the advertiser's side is a few minutes of read-only access or a billing export per account, and we do the pulling. Display spend carries a related claim under the ad tech ruling. Its value is less settled, and it can be included.

## DIY research

If you want to check this independently, paste this into ChatGPT or Claude:

"What did Judge Mehta find in August 2024 about Google's pricing of search text ads, and what did Google's head of ads products testify about auction changes? Cite sources."

## Who we are

Mark Beckett leads our litigation team. He was head of international arbitration at Cooley and before that at Latham & Watkins. Our firm is called Silver Arbitration Law, based in New York, which we established to focus 100% on this matter. My own background is corporate law in New York and at Apple, then as the CFO of a venture-backed startup.

## If you would rather not wait.

Some advertisers prefer to sell all or part of their claim for cash now. **AdsCreditor** buys Google Ads claims. It is a separate company, not a law firm, and it shares investors with the firm's technology and capital provider; its team built FTX Creditor and Athlete Creditor. Silver Arbitration Law does not represent you in any sale and does not advise on whether to sell. Consider independent advice before you do.

## For anyone who wants to read more

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 01 <a href="#"><u>New York Times</u></a><br>On the August 2024 ruling                                               | 06 <a href="#"><u>Jerry Dischler's trial testimony</u></a><br>Redacted transcript                                         |
| 02 <a href="#"><u>Search Engine Land</u></a><br>Walkthrough of the DOJ's case on search ad pricing                  | 07 <a href="#"><u>Bloomberg / The Spokesman-Review</u></a><br>Advertiser arbitration wave; free copy                      |
| 03 <a href="#"><u>Department of Justice</u></a><br>Closing deck on search advertising, the slides behind that piece | 08 <a href="#"><u>Boies Schiller Flexner</u></a><br>Google's 2026 changes to advertiser arbitration terms as claims mount |
| 04 <a href="#"><u>August 2024 liability opinion</u></a><br>Court opinion hosted by the Texas AG, a co-plaintiff     | 09 <a href="#"><u>BBC</u></a><br>On Google's appeal                                                                       |
| 05 <a href="#"><u>Department of Justice</u></a><br>Case page, with the filings and opinions                         | 10 <a href="#"><u>Our team in Search Engine Journal</u></a><br>What advertisers should check next                         |