



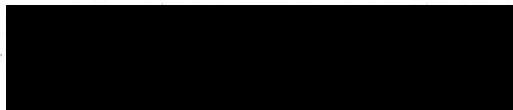
European Parliament
60 Rue Wiertz
B-1047 Bruxelles
Belgium

For the attention of the CEO



Subject: Your company's use of digital advertising technology

Brussels, October 18 2021



Among civil society there is growing consensus that the current digital advertising ecosystem is posing a burgeoning threat to privacy, societal cohesion and democracy around the world. With this letter, we want to call upon you as corporate leader to stop contributing to the highly opaque and toxic ecosystem of tracking advertising. We call on you to switch to less harmful and still, even more effective, alternatives which are already available.

Tracking advertising technology is developed to accumulate enormous amounts of personal data, often without the knowledge or clear consent of the data subjects concerned, breaching their rights to data protection and privacy. This data is thereupon used to identify opportunities to influence individuals with personal data-targeted advertising, a system which is non-transparent and therefore often misused for political, commercial and even criminal interests.

Apart from privacy breaches and misuse, the advertising system poses great risks for our society at large by stimulating polarizing content-ranking algorithms and echo-chambering, by consuming enormous amounts of energy and by taking away revenue from SME's and press publishers, who are hit by a lack of necessary income. In Europe alone, corporations spent €69.4 billion on digital advertising in 2020, of which Google and Facebook earned an estimated 50-70%.

It is our responsibility as policymakers to protect fundamental values and to develop regulations that recalibrate the digital advertising economy. Nevertheless, we believe it is also the responsibility of large corporations like yours to reconsider the way they make use of a system which is so blatantly harming our society. By continuing to use tracking advertising platforms, you are not only financing the growth of a harmful system, but you are a victim as well of fraud and price skimming.

Organizations and businesses such as the New York Times, the Dutch public broadcaster Ster and search engine DuckDuckGo have already created alternative advertising systems that are just as, or even more, effective as the personal data driven model and have fewer negative externalities for society.

We would love to hear what your reasoning is to use this personal data-driven advertising system and if you are considering changing this system? We're trying to collect different responses from other advertisers like you as well to find a way to continue the discussion and to achieve a fair and safe advertising system.

We are looking forward to hearing from you on the above mentioned questions.

Yours sincerely,

on behalf of the following Members of the European Parliament,

Rasmus Andresen

Patrick Breyer

Clare Daly

Cornelia Ernst

Ismail Ertug

Lina Gálvez Muñoz

Eva Kaili

Marcel Kolaja

Miapetra
Kumpula-Natri

Maria Manuel Leitão Marques

Karen Melchior

Evelyn Regner

Alex Agius Saliba

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