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Google Kicks Tibet News off Search

In China

Compromise is all this life is about for most people. Meeting your better half mid-way in every crisis that might result in tension between you two is the way to resolve everything, and the same goes for any negotiations being held between two companies, when one doesn't have the upper hand. There's only one area where compromise should never be an option, and that is the freedom of speech. China has yet to learn that lesson, and apparently so does Google, as the Mountain View-based company has just produced one of the greatest surprises of Internet life. Despite having most of the headlines in pretty much all of the Google News pages, English, French versions included, the Chinese version has no mentions about Tibet and the riots there. Neighboring countries' versions of Google's service for Hong Kong, Taiwan and even the Chinese news.google.com are presenting it up top. However, as I mentioned, news.google.cn only has the official version of the events. There's a good story behind the compromise, starting in 2004 when Google decided (or was forced) to omit certain news from the page else the service would have been blocked entirely. Back in 2006, the Mountain View-based company, when faced with the facts, argued that the path they chose was the best one for reaching their goal of making information universally accessible. "How can we provide the greatest access to information to the greatest number of people?", they asked and came to the conclusion that "Filtering our search results clearly compromises our mission. Failing to offer Google search at all to a fifth of the world's population, however, does so far more severely," as Philipp Lenssen of Blogoscoped reports. On Wednesday, news broke about YouTube being censored in China for the same reason, hosting material about the Tibetan riots, and that would have happened to Google News as well, should they have held a moral upright position.