

12 June 2007

By: Marius Oiaga, Technology News Editor



[Microsoft Has Serious Lapses but Still Tops Google](#)

When it comes to privacy

Microsoft features serious lapses in its privacy practices, but still managed to top Google in a ranking put together by Privacy International. The report's conclusions come after a total of six-month investigation into the practices associated with privacy of the following Internet based companies: Amazon, AOL, Apple, BBC, Bebo, eBay, Facebook, Friendster, Google, Hi5, Last.fm, LinkedIn, LiveJournal, Microsoft, Myspace, Orkut, Reunion.com, Skype, Wikipedia, Windows Live Space, Xanga, Yahoo! and YouTube. Out of all these companies Google was found to perform comprehensive consumer surveillance and entrenched hostility to privacy. "We are aware that the decision to place Google at the bottom of the ranking is likely to be controversial, but throughout our research we have found numerous deficiencies and hostilities in Google's approach to privacy that go well beyond those of other organizations. While a number of companies share some of these negative elements, none comes close to achieving status as an endemic threat to privacy. This is in part due to the diversity and specificity of Google's product range and the ability of the company to share extracted data between these tools, and in part it is due to Google's market dominance and the sheer size of its user base. Google's status in the ranking is also due to its aggressive use of invasive or potentially invasive technologies and techniques," Privacy International revealed. In this context, Privacy International found that Microsoft performed better than Google when it comes down to privacy. And as a result the Redmond Company only received an orange status, synonymous with serious lapses in privacy practices. "The true difference between Google Inc and Microsoft Corp can be defined not so much by the data practices and privacy policies that exist between the two organizations, but by the corporate ethos and leadership exhibited by each. Five years ago Microsoft could reasonably be described as a fundamental danger to privacy. In more recent times the organization appears to have adopted a less antagonistic attitude to privacy, and has at least structurally adjusted to the challenge of creating a privacy-friendly environment," Privacy International added.