



SEPTEMBER 2023

A GNLU CENTRE FOR LAW AND TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE

Monthly Newsletter - TechTalk



Gujarat National Law University



Welcome to the GNLU Centre for Law and Technology Newsletter! Serving as the conduit to the dynamic intersection of science, technology, and the law, our mission is to provide updates on the latest developments, promote academic excellence, and empower legal professionals to navigate this ever-evolving landscape. Join us in bridging the gap between these crucial fields and shaping the future of legal practice in our interconnected world.

↓ Enclosed in this newsletter are the following highlights:

Updates on law and technology, showcasing the latest developments in this ever-evolving field. Our curated content might just spark your next research topic idea. Stay informed and stay inspired and keep reading!

EDITORIAL BOARD (2023-24)

ADVISORS

HEAD OF THE CENTRE

PROF. (DR.) THOMAS MATHEW
PROFESSOR OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

CENTRE MEMBERS

PROF. (DR.) ANJANI SINGH TOMAR
HEAD OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS & PROFESSOR OF LAW

MS. HEENA GOSWAMI
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

MS. ANSHU GUPTA
TEACHING AND RESEARCH ASSOCIATE (LAW)

STUDENT MEMBERS

Yashweer Singh
(Second Year)

Charisse Susanna CH (First Year)

Ipshita Bhadoo (First Year)

Parv Gangopadhyay (First Year)

HEADLINES

GOOGLE REACHES TENTATIVE SETTLEMENT IN U.S. PLAY STORE ANTITRUST LAWSUIT OVERCHARGING ALLEGATIONS

04

NORWAY COURT UPHOLDS DAILY FINES AGAINST META PLATFORMS IN LANDMARK PRIVACY CASE

05

WHATSAPP TESTS CROSS-PLATFORM MESSAGING FEATURE TO COMPLY WITH EU DIGITAL MARKETS ACT

06

LANDMARK ONLINE SAFETY BILL PASSES IN BRITAIN WITH FAR-REACHING CONTENT REGULATION

07

**OF
THE
MONTH**

01

GOOGLE REACHES TENTATIVE SETTLEMENT IN U.S. PLAY STORE ANTITRUST LAWSUIT OVERCHARGING ALLEGATIONS

Alphabet's Google has reached a tentative settlement in a class-action lawsuit, where more than 30 U.S. states and 21 million consumers accused the tech giant of violating federal antitrust rules through overcharging on its U.S. Play Store. The plaintiffs argued that Google's alleged monopoly restricted consumer options, potentially leading to higher app expenses. The settlement details remain undisclosed.

The proposed resolution, subject to court approval, aims to cancel a scheduled trial on November 6. Google, which has consistently denied wrongdoing, offered no comment on the tentative settlement. The lawsuit contended that Google, by mandating certain apps to use its payment tools and extracting up to 30% of digital goods sales, had unfairly profited from its Play Store. Similar lawsuits against Google allege the company's significant profit margins in the Play Store result from illegal tactics to maintain monopolies in Android app sales and in-app transactions. Epic Games, not part of the proposed settlement, expressed willingness to settle if Google eliminates its payment monopoly without imposing a "Google Tax" on third-party transactions. However, if the settlement retains the tax, Epic Games pledges to continue the legal battle. Match Group, another claimant in the case, declined to comment on the settlement. The ongoing litigation, titled "In re Google Play Store Antitrust Litigation," is in the U.S. District Court, Northern District of California, No. 21-md-02981.

[READ MORE](#)

NORWAY COURT UPHOLDS DAILY FINES AGAINST META PLATFORMS IN LANDMARK PRIVACY CASE

In a landmark decision, a Norwegian court ruled against Meta Platforms, the owner of Facebook and Instagram, in a privacy case, allowing the country's data regulator to continue imposing daily fines. Since August 14, Meta has been fined one million crowns (\$93,200) per day for harvesting user data and utilizing it for targeted advertising. The ruling prevents Meta's attempt to halt the fine imposed by Norway's data regulator, Datatilsynet. The regulator initiated the fine, alleging that Meta breached user privacy by engaging in the practice of harvesting user data for the purpose of targeted advertising, a common business model among Big Tech companies known as behavioural advertising.

Meta, seeking a temporary injunction against the regulator's order, aimed to suspend the daily fines for three months. However, the court's decision upholds the fine, signifying a significant legal setback for Meta in its efforts to contest allegations of privacy violations. The case highlights the growing scrutiny and legal challenges faced by major technology companies regarding user privacy practices. The verdict underscores the commitment of regulatory bodies to hold tech giants accountable for data protection breaches, setting a precedent for future privacy-related cases in Norway and potentially influencing global discussions on digital privacy regulations.

[READ MORE](#)

WHATSAPP TESTS CROSS-PLATFORM MESSAGING FEATURE TO COMPLY WITH EU DIGITAL MARKETS ACT

In response to the European Union's Digital Markets Act (DMA), Meta, the parent company of WhatsApp, is testing a third-party chat option to enable cross-platform messaging. The move aims to ensure compliance with the DMA's regulations, with Meta initiating the feature to allow WhatsApp users to interact with other messaging platforms such as Telegram and Signal. The testing is evident in the WhatsApp beta for Android version 2.23.19.8, though the feature remains inaccessible, indicating ongoing development. WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger, the two prominent messaging platforms in Europe, are known for their user-friendly interfaces and enhanced security through end-to-end encryption. However, the introduction of interoperability to comply with the DMA may potentially compromise encryption, raising concerns about data security.

The EU's DMA, effective until April 2024, categorizes major tech companies, including Meta, as "Gatekeepers" and mandates compliance with new regulations. One such requirement is the facilitation of interoperability with third-party messaging platforms. Meta is also working towards enabling cross-platform messaging on Facebook Messenger in line with regulatory demands. While Apple has not yet embraced cross-platform messaging for its iMessage, citing its lesser popularity in Europe compared to other messaging services, the EU anticipates potential changes in the future. The DMA encourages increased competition by pushing companies like Meta and Microsoft to introduce their app stores, breaking the duopoly of Google and Apple, another facet of compliance with the EU regulations.

[READ MORE](#)

04

LANDMARK ONLINE SAFETY BILL PASSES IN BRITAIN WITH FAR-REACHING CONTENT REGULATION

Britain has enacted a comprehensive Online Safety Bill, marking a significant move to regulate online content. The legislation, applicable to various online platforms, introduces age-verification requirements for pornography sites and addresses issues such as hate speech, harassment, terrorist propaganda, online fraud, and child safety. This represents one of the most extensive efforts by a Western democracy to regulate online speech. Unlike approaches in other jurisdictions, the British law compels companies to proactively screen for objectionable material and determine its legality, rather than merely responding to alerts about illicit content. Michelle Donelan, the British Secretary of Technology, described the Online Safety Bill as a "game-changing piece of legislation," positioning the UK as a leader in online safety. The move comes amid growing concerns about the impact of internet and social media use on the mental health of young people.

Under the new law, content targeting children that promotes suicide, self-harm, and eating disorders will face restrictions. Pornography companies, social media platforms, and other services will be mandated to implement age-verification measures, though concerns have been raised about potential impacts on online information availability and privacy. Major platforms like TikTok, YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram are obligated to introduce features allowing users to customize their exposure to harmful content, covering issues such as eating disorders, self-harm, racism, misogyny, and antisemitism. The legislation emphasizes the responsibility of service providers to assess and mitigate foreseeable risks associated with their platforms. Non-compliant companies could face fines up to £18 million (approximately \$22.3 million). The bill reflects the government's commitment to making the UK the safest place in the world for online activities, and it signifies a pioneering approach in addressing the challenges posed by digital content in contemporary society.

[READ MORE](#)

SPOTLIGHTING RESEARCH TOPICS: EMPOWERING RESEARCH PAPER ASPIRATIONS

We understand that embarking on a journey to create impactful research papers can be both exciting and daunting. As you navigate through your academic pursuits, we're here to help illuminate your path and fuel your scholarly ambitions. This section presents a curated selection of broad research paper topics designed to spark your intellectual curiosity and inspire your next paper based on the latest developments of this month. Each topic represents an opportunity for exploration, discovery, and the potential to contribute to the ever-evolving landscape of law and technology. We believe that a well-chosen research topic is the cornerstone of a successful publication, and our aim is to empower you to make informed choices.

- *Antitrust Implications of Google's Play Store Settlement in the U.S.*
- *Privacy and Regulatory Challenges for Social Media Giants: A Case Study of Meta Platforms in Norway*
- *Interoperability and Data Security Concerns in Messaging Platforms: EU Digital Markets Act Compliance*
- *Regulatory Landscape for Tech Giants in the European Union: DMA Compliance and Implications*
- *Impact of Online Safety Bill on Content Regulation in the UK*
- *Cross-Platform Messaging and Data Security*
- *Age-Verification Measures in Online Platforms*

MESSAGE FROM THE NEWSLETTER TEAM

Dear readers, the news articles discussed or included in this newsletter represent the views of the respective news websites. We do not endorse or assume responsibility for the content or opinions expressed in these articles. Our purpose is to bring recent developments to your knowledge, providing a diverse range of information for your consideration. Your input matters to us, and we'd love to hear your thoughts. If you have any suggestions, ideas, or feedback on how we can improve the newsletter or if there's something specific you'd like to see in future editions, please don't hesitate to reach out. Your insights help us grow and ensure we're delivering the content you want. Thank you.

Stay curious, stay informed!



GNLU CENTRE FOR LAW AND TECHNOLOGY
GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY
ATTALIKA AVENUE, KNOWLEDGE CORRIDOR, KOBA,
GANDHINAGAR - 382426 (GUJARAT), INDIA



gclt@gnlu.ac.in | tmathew@gnlu.ac.in

Blog: GNLU Issues in Science, Law and Ethics

Journal: GNLU Journal of Law and Technology

Website: www.gnlu.ac.in/Centre-for-Law-and-Technology/Home