## Reports: US regulators move closer to suing Google

The Associated Press

Federal regulators are moving closer to suing Google over allegations that the company has abused its dominance of Internet search to stifle competition and drive up online advertising prices, news reports said Friday.

Several news outlets reported that staff members at the Federal Trade Commission are preparing to recommend that the agency file an antitrust lawsuit against the search giant. A majority of the five FTC commissioners would have to approve a suit before legal action could proceed.

The reports from The New York Times, Bloomberg News and Reuters cited unnamed people briefed on the FTC's investigation.

FTC spokesman Peter Kaplan declined to comment.

The agency has been investigating Google's business practices. The probe was triggered by complaints that Google Inc. has been highlighting its peripheral services in its influential search results and relegating offerings from its rivals to the back pages.

The FTC also has been looking into whether Google has rigged its results in a way that has prodded websites to pay more to promote their services through Google's advertising network.

In a statement Friday, Google said, "We are happy to answer any questions that regulators have about our business."

Google is based in Mountain View, Calif.

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