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May 21, 2026

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Millions Gain New Control Over Their Data in Google Privacy Settlement

New RTB Control requires users to take action by turning off Google's partner ads setting

[OAKLAND, Calif.] — A federal judge approved a class action settlement with Google in March 2026 that now gives hundreds of millions of U.S. Google account holders a new way to limit how much information is shared about them in real-time bidding ad auctions. This release is being issued by Stranch, Jennings & Garvey, PLLC, a member of the Plaintiffs' Executive Committee.

The case, *In re: Google RTB Consumer Privacy Litigation*, addressed Google's practice of sharing user data with hundreds of third parties through real-time bidding (RTB) auctions, a process the plaintiffs said was not disclosed in Google's public-facing account documents and occurred billions of times each day.

As part of the settlement, Google introduced a new RTB Control on April 24, 2026, enabling users to limit the information shared about them in RTB auctions and reduce tracking within those auctions.

Google account holders can go directly to <http://adssettings.google.com/partnerads> to implement the RTB Control. Under "Help advertisers select ads for you," users can turn off the blue check mark. When the setting is off, a gray X appears.

The RTB Control is also available to users at the browser level, including for certain signed-out browser use, as described in the settlement materials.

Users can learn more about the new RTB Control and how to use it to protect the sharing of their personal information at www.clickdoneprotected.org.

"This case represents a significant step forward in giving consumers meaningful control over their personal information," said Lesley Weaver of Stranch, Jennings & Garvey, PLLC, a member of the Plaintiffs' Executive Committee. "Until now, Google users had no practical way to limit how key information about them was shared in real-time bidding auctions. The new RTB Control gives consumers a clear way to act and make informed choices about their privacy."

The settlement also reflects a broader effort to promote more transparency and more practical privacy choices for consumers in the digital advertising marketplace.

“By giving users a control that allows them to limit tracking and the sharing of their personal information in RTB auctions, the settlement sets up safeguards that provide protection and accountability in the digital advertising ecosystem,” said Elizabeth Pritzker, a partner at Pritzker Levine LLP, who served as lead class counsel in the case. “It has also sparked broader conversations about privacy in the digital economy and the need for user-centric controls that can be easily enabled to protect users’ personal information.”

Why is this important?

Google’s RTB auctions distribute user data to numerous advertisers and intermediaries in milliseconds, often without consumers’ knowledge. Under the settlement, users can now use the RTB Control to limit the sharing of their personal information in the RTB auctions.

The settlement also requires Google to provide enhanced disclosures about RTB auctions and user privacy choices. Those measures, also published on April 24, 2026, are intended to improve transparency and accountability in Google’s handling of consumer data in the RTB ad auctions.

“Turning off Google’s partner ads setting is a simple step consumers can take to limit the amount of detailed browser and device information shared with advertising partners in ad auctions,” said Nanci Nishimura of Cotchett Pitre & McCarthy LLP. “This is one of those rare moments when protecting your privacy is actually simple.”

In re: Google RTB Consumer Privacy Litigation (Case No. 4:21-cv-02155-YGR-VKD) was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. Attorneys from Bottini & Bottini; Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy, LLP; DiCello Levitt; Pritzker Levine LLP; Simmons Hanly Conroy; and Stranch, Jennings & Garvey, PLLC prosecuted the case on behalf of the plaintiffs and the class.

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