

Google commences reactionary process over information sweep

Top executives at Google say they have only begun their denial stage in dealing with possible criminal mining of people's information. The announcement comes as lawyers exited the courtroom where the online behemoth faced new allegations that it has consumed passwords, medical documents and other personal information from millions of unsuspecting consumers.

"We ask that you respect our privacy during this difficult period of denial," Mark Whittendensen told a crowd outside the U.S. Courthouse in Seattle this week. "As I'm sure you can imagine, this is a difficult time for Google executives, and there are many tactics that we have to follow before paying blah, blah, blah. We expect to have more to say as we begin bargaining our level of complicity."

Google claims hackers, not staff, responsible for gaffes

Without specifying any group by name, Google executives are saying hackers — and not paid employees — were responsible for the international data mining that occurred through its mapping sources this week.

The announcement comes as lawyers exited the courtroom where the online behemoth faced new allegations that it has consumed passwords, medical documents and other personal information from millions of unsuspecting consumers.

"Google pledges to do all that it can to track down these terrible, terrible people responsible for infringing on the Google brand and taking advantage of our following," said attorney Mark Whittendensen, who added that a companywide probe confirmed it was an outside job. "We assure our customers that this is something Google takes very seriously and yadda, yadda — whatever."

Google downplays scope of data mining on schedule

Google executives say the scope of the data mining scandal that led to criminal charges against 22 employees in the U.S. and Europe was isolated.

The announcement comes as lawyers exited the courtroom where the online behemoth faced new allegations that it has consumed passwords, medical documents and other personal information from millions of unsuspecting consumers.

Google attorney Mark Whittendensen said the company's latest \$7 million settlement payment should more than cover the degree of purported damages from the sweep of personal and often lurid information.

"We're confident," he tweeted today, "that our good faith cooperation on this issue proves our begakitty gak."



SOLD! Until they pissed it away

The Heidelmoss family of Greensboro, Ind., (above) were ready to close on their dream home last week when they learned they would have to submit to urine and blood analysis in order to receive their mortgage.

The policy is a new law that requires families prove their sobriety when they receive tax dollars to help them into housing. It includes random testing of all residents in the household for the length of the loan and could result in forfeiture of property if recreational substances are found.

At issue was the mortgage interest tax deduction, the nation's leading housing subsidy program with an estimated annual drag on the nation's budget

of between \$70 billion and \$100 billion in giveaways. It is one of many tax deductions and benefits granted to homeowners like the Heidelmosses, along with property tax deductions and a deduction on the capital gains on the sale of real property, even if it was only used for two years.

"We thought drug testing was only for welfare recipients," said Nigel Heidelmoss, the family's patriarch who refused testing and lost the house. "I don't understand why they're coming after us. My wife's drinking habits shouldn't have anything to do with getting into a home. It's not like she does it on the street."

VA T-shirt program expected to boost morale

STAFF REPORTS

Program takes priority to help ease the challenges veterans face

Department Veterans Affairs officials announced yesterday that it is commemorating the 10-year anniversary of the Iraq War with a new T-shirt.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki told reporters via teleconference that the VA will begin issuing commemorative T-shirts to all combat veterans.

"Our vets have been having some problems once they come home," Shinseki said, citing high rates of unemployment, divorce, suicide and substance abuse among veterans. "I realized we just needed to give pause to their challenges and let them know we're thinking of them. Maybe then they'll pick themselves back up."

Shinseki said all veterans who deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan will be eligible for the program, which he described as a three-month "pause" of reflection. The VA has dubbed it Operation T-shirt. More than 2.2 military service members have deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan since 2001.

Allison Hickey, VA Under Secretary for Benefits, said that this new program will take priority over all other veterans' benefits, including the nearly 900,000

disability claims awaiting VA approval.

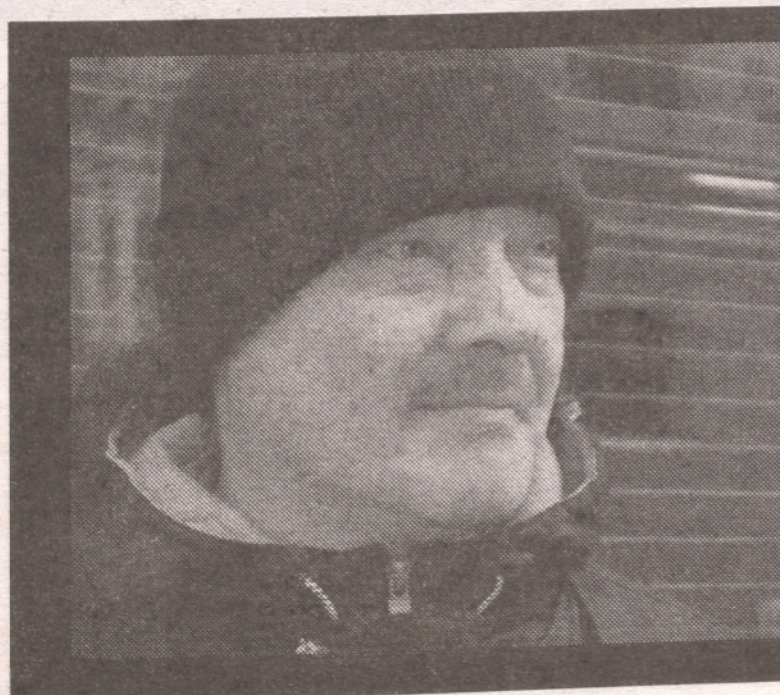
"Over 70 percent of those disability claims are going to take more than four months to process anyway, so we figure those veterans will be happy to have something they can wear to remind them of their service," Hickey said.

The shirts will be available in desert tan, mountain grey or olive green.

The process of acquiring the shirts will be relatively simple, Hickey said.

Veterans will only need to submit notarized original copies of their discharge papers along with government form SF-3351C, filled out in triplicate. Appointments must then be made with a regional VA office to obtain a referral to a local VA medical center for approval, at which point eligible veterans will receive a copy of VA form 21-686F. This form must then be faxed back to the VA regional office, which will issue the veterans procurement forms by mail in about six to eight months.

Veterans will then be able to take their completed application packets to VA representatives at local WalMart stores, where the shirts will be distributed.



*This man works.
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"I know this is painful for the ladies to hear, but if you get married, you have accepted the headship of a man, your husband. ... That's the way it is, period."

— Pat Robertson

