

Government Watchdog Slams YouTube Over Lawsuit

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The government's consumer watchdog, frustrated over a Google lawsuit, complained Monday that Google and its YouTube site are more concerned with free access to information than with protecting users from harmful content.

"It stands out that the representatives of Google Russia (M. Zhunich) and YouTube LLC hold a stance, it would seem, based entirely on the threat to freedom of users' access to information on Internet resources," the Federal Consumer Protection Service said in an official [statement](#).

Citing an increase in teen suicides and Russia's third-largest teen suicide rate, the watchdog went on to note that the majority of banned websites were banned because they contained information on how to commit suicide. So far, of the 1,309 websites examined, 1,164 have been blocked.

The watchdog's statement comes after the Moscow Arbitration Court on Friday began pretrial hearings on YouTube's complaint against the government watchdog in connection with a video that the agency ordered the popular video-hosting site to remove.

YouTube initially removed the video as the watchdog requested, but then filed a complaint with the court to have the watchdog's decision overturned and the video removed from the government's list of banned content.

The government's list of banned sites, introduced on Nov. 1, includes websites deemed to contain child pornography or promote suicide and illegal drug use. The Interior Ministry, the Federal Anti-Drug Committee and the Federal Mass Media Inspection Service can also add sites to the list.

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