

EU tells online platforms to better explain search rankings

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The measures come a week before the EU is set to release a sweeping overhaul of digital regulations aimed at curbing the power of big internet companies.

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Internet companies such as Google and Amazon should be more transparent in explaining how the search rankings work on their platforms, the European Commission said in guidelines released Monday.

The EU guidelines are aimed at helping businesses selling online by making competition fairer for all-important product search rankings. Internet companies will have to share with businesses the information they need to improve the online profile of their goods and services sold via the platforms.

"These guidelines set the standard for algorithmic ranking transparency and will increase fairness in the online platform economy, which drives innovation and welfare for millions of Europeans," said Margrethe Vestager, the EU's executive vice president in charge of digital affairs.

Internet companies should outline the main factors that algorithms use for their ranking, including the effect that payment has on the [search results](#), the [guidelines say](#).

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