

Big Tech struggles to control narrative as antitrust bills aim to level the playing field for innovation

Article

The news: A house committee took up legislation Wednesday targeting the monopolistic and anticompetitive practices of US tech giants, [per](#) Bloomberg. This first notable [bipartisan push](#) is aimed at reigning in **Amazon, Apple, Facebook,** and **Google's** market dominance. Big Tech lobbyists argue that, if passed into law, the bills would curtail innovation and could upend user privacy, as well as hurt small businesses relying on their services.

- Apple CEO Tim Cook [reportedly](#) called House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in early June to warn her that the antitrust bills would harm innovation and consumers. Apple also said that opening its devices to third-party app stores would result in [scams](#) and hurt user privacy.
- Amazon's top lobbyist Brian Huseman [warned](#) the legislation "would have significant negative effects" on hundreds of thousands of SMBs that sell through the platform, along with "tens of millions of consumers."
- Google's VP of government affairs and public policy, Mark Isakowitz, [said](#) that while the company isn't opposed to new regulation, it believes the bills presently under consideration would "break" popular consumer services.

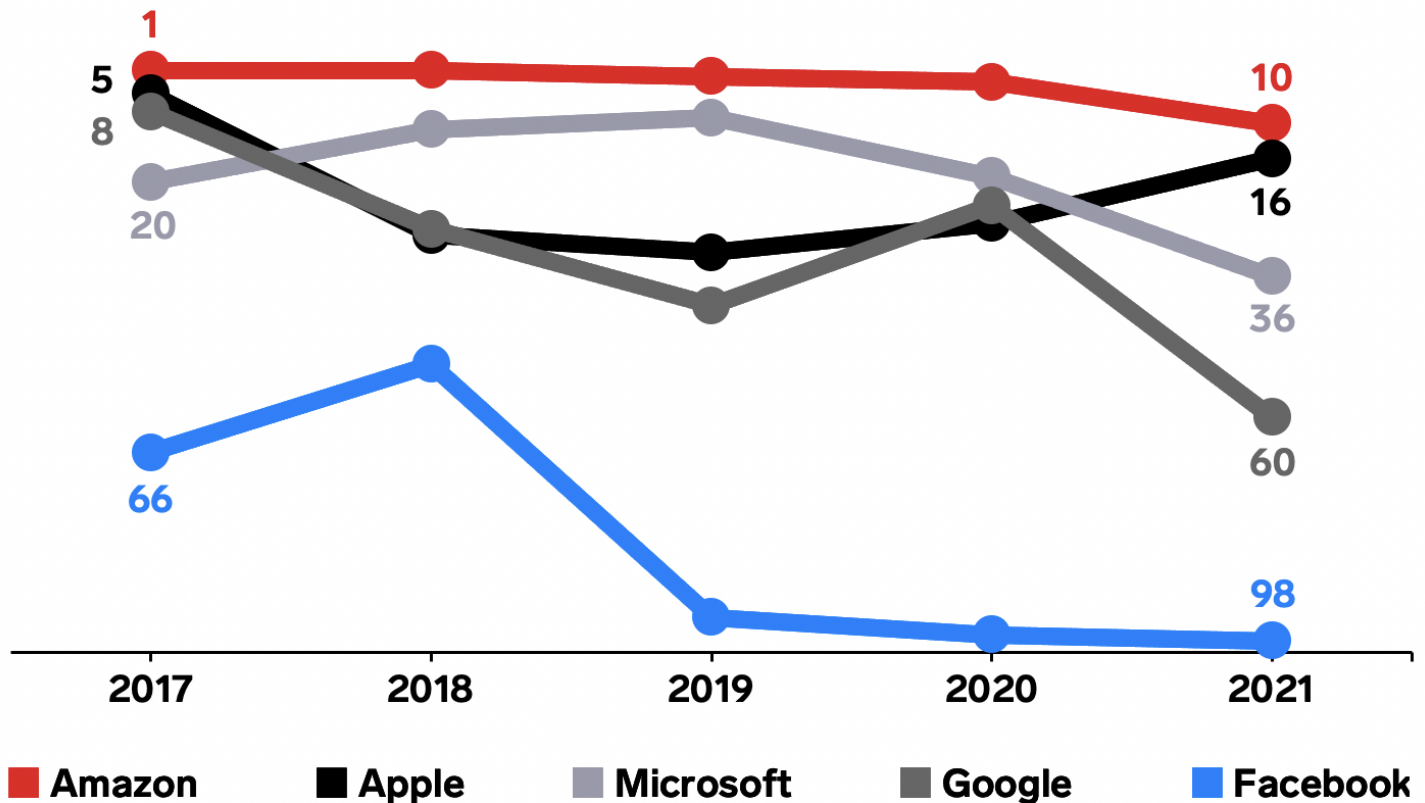
How we got here: The proposed measures are the result of a 16-month [investigation](#) into the four companies by the House Judiciary antitrust subcommittee, completed last year, which [found](#) that the Big Four hold monopoly power and that antitrust laws should be revised to promote fair competition.

Big Tech companies see the antitrust bills as an existential threat to their business model. The growing antitrust sentiment is not isolated to the US—the same companies have been met with increasing regulatory [resistance](#) overseas, including in [Europe](#) and Japan. The recent [appointment](#) of vocal antitrust proponent Lina Khan as FTC chair is representative of the urgency lawmakers feel to curb monopolistic and anticompetitive practices.

What's next? While it is unlikely that all the proposals will become law as written, Congress still has the best opportunity thus far to curb the dominance of Big Tech. The aim is to [give regulators](#) the tools and parameters necessary to set tighter controls on tech companies. Legislation could make it harder for the Big Four to acquire competing startups and prevent them from using their dominance in one area of business to influence their involvement in another.

Technology Company Reputation Rankings, April 2021

relative ranking by reputation from 1 to 100



Source: Axios/Harris, May 2021

Methodology: The Axios Harris Poll 100 is based on a survey of 42,935 US adults in a nationally representative sample conducted April 8–21, 2021. The Axios Harris poll first identifies the 100 most visible companies and then ranks them based on what respondents think of them.

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