

Google announces first mass lay-offs

Google has announced its first mass lay-offs with plans to shed some 300 workers in its online advertising unit DoubleClick, which it acquired last month for \$2.3 billion.

The cuts represent about a quarter of DoubleClick's 1,200 US employees and a second round of cuts is expected to focus on DoubleClick's overseas offices, the San Francisco Chronicle reported Thursday.

'Since our acquisition of DoubleClick closed March 11, we have been working to match and align DoubleClick employees in the US with our organisational plan for the business,' Google said in a statement. 'As with many mergers, this review has resulted in a reduction in headcount at the acquired company.'

DoubleClick is based in New York and has a large office in San Francisco. Some of the employees being laid off were being offered jobs as contractors.

Google, the leading Internet search and advertising company, also said it was putting up for sale DoubleClick's search engine marketing unit, a move that would enable Google to avoid a conflict over the editorial independence of its search results.

The unit helps customers improve their placement within Google's search results and helps advertisers place their ads next to those results.

'It is clear to us that we do not want to be in the search engine marketing business,' said a blog post by Tom Phillips, the Google director overseeing the DoubleClick integration effort.

'Maintaining objectivity in both search and advertising is paramount to our mission and core to the trust we ask from our users,' it added.

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