

# Epic Games vs. Apple: Behind the Curtain

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On August 13, 2020, Epic Games made a drastic move by pushing an update that will ensure in-app purchases for Fortnite V-Bucks to be maintained by Epic's own payment system, bypassing Apple and Google's 30% cut. This would lead to Fortnite to be removed from the store shelves for infringing their Terms of Service. In return, Epic responded to this action with two separate lawsuits against Apple and Google. As a response, Apple threatened Epic with revoking their developer licenses for iOS and macOS, thus simply blocking Unreal Engine to be supported by iOS and macOS, hindering the development of many games benefiting from this. Fortunately, after a court hearing, Epic's request to prevent Apple from taking away developer licenses was granted, but Apple's decision on Fortnite's removal from the iOS store was not. The reasoning behind this decision is fairly simple: removal of the developer accounts and hindering the Unreal Engine support would be quite devastating for the gaming industry in general, whilst Apple's decision to remove Fortnite from their digital store did not cause irreparable harm to the Epic, basically they did it to themselves.

I find that Epic's presenting an 80 pages long lawsuit against Apple all of a sudden as fairly staged and calculated. This 30% revenue sharing cut is nothing new and almost unanimously applied by every single digital app store provider. However, Tim Sweeney, co-founder and CEO of Epic Games, argued that as little as 8% cut would be sufficient to run any digital storefront profitably, hence why the Epic Games Store operates only at a 12% cut. This means Epic has long been in disagreement with Apple and Google's "taxations" and knew that bypassing traditional transaction methods were a clear violation of Terms of Service. Epic was not after their monetary loss, either. More importantly, a sentence found in the lawsuit clearly states "But for Apple's illegal restraints, Epic would provide a competing app store on iOS devices, which would allow iOS users to download apps in an innovative, curated store and would provide users the choice to use Epic's or another third-party's in-app payment processing tool." Which basically means that Epic is after a much larger fish: an own app store. Considering the

competition between Epic Games Store and Valve's Steam, Epic is already far ahead of many others when it comes to PC. The only thing barricading them from creating a mobile app store seems like Apple and Google's Terms of Service.

Epic's master plan seems to be putting an end to all the monopolistic organizations and ensure an environment that would enable every company and organization to compete with each other fair and square, offering a more profitable business for everyone. Knowing this, we can say that the whole case is a colossal form of PR campaign and raising awareness, hence the "1984" advertisement. Epic seems to be prepared for anything comes down the line, so does Apple, just like every other billion-dollar worth company. We will see what comes next, until then stay tuned.

#### References:

- Epic Games v. Apple. (2020, September 30). Retrieved October 01, 2020, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic\\_Games\\_v.\\_Apple](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic_Games_v._Apple)
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