

Judge denies US bid to block Meta virtual reality deal: reports

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A US judge on Wednesday denied a request by regulators to bar Facebook parent company Meta from buying virtual reality firm Within Unlimited, but allowed time to appeal the ruling, reports said.

The Federal Trade Commission filed a complaint in [federal court](#) in July, arguing that Meta is trying to unfairly buy advantage in the virtual reality market with the purchase of Within, maker of fitness app "Supernatural".

Thwarting the takeover would be a blow to Meta's ambitions to lead the way into a future in which internet life plays out in virtual realms in the metaverse.

In refusing to grant an FTC request to block Meta from proceeding with the acquisition, the judge put any closing of the deal on hold for a week to allow regulators time to appeal his decision, according to reports in Bloomberg and the Wall Street Journal.

"The court's ruling in the Meta/Within case is consistent with decades of legal precedent," said Matt Schruers, president of the Computer and Communications Industry association trade group.

"This decision will encourage innovation and investment by increasing legal certainty around technology transactions."

The judge's decision was filed under seal, meaning it was not available to the public. Meta declined requests for comment.

"This acquisition poses a reasonable probability of eliminating both present and future competition," the FTC complaint said. "And Meta would be one step closer to its ultimate goal of owning the entire 'Metaverse.'"

The social media giant said when the suit was filed that the FTC's move defied reality, and expressed confidence that its buy of Within would be good for VR users as well as developers who make apps in that market.

"The FTC's case is based on ideology and speculation, not evidence," Meta said in response to an AFP inquiry at the time.

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