

Epic Games and Google face off in court over app store

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Epic Games, the company behind hit video game 'Fortnite', accuses Apple and Google of leaving them and other developers with little option other than tightly controlled app shops, where hefty commissions must be paid.

The maker of hit videogame Fortnite, Epic Games, and Google faced off in federal court in San Francisco as a trial began over whether the

internet giant wields monopoly power at its Play Store.

Lawyers began opening remarks to jurors who will hear from witnesses including Google chief executive Sundar Pichai in the weeks ahead.

Epic accused Google of turning its back on the "Don't be Evil" motto touted when the tech firm was founded in 1998.

"Google has relegated its motto to nearly an afterthought, and is using its size to do evil upon competitors, innovators, customers, and users in a slew of markets it has grown to monopolize," Epic argued in legal filings.

Epic sued Google and Apple in 2020, accusing the tech titans of abusing control of their respective shops selling apps and other [digital content](#) for [mobile devices](#) powered by iOS or Android software.

Google and Apple take percentages of all [financial transactions](#) at their app shops, prompting complaints by developers about what has been referred to as an unfair "tax" imposed by the companies.

Apple and Google regularly argue that their app shop commissions are industry-standard, and that they pay for benefits such as reach; transaction security, and ferreting out malware.

Google has adjusted its Play shop to adapt to regulation in Europe.

The issue of alternative payment methods on app marketplaces has been contentious.

Apple lost a legal battle in 2021 in the United States against Epic on the question, but a judge ruled that Apple's control of the App Store was not a monopoly.

Both companies have appealed the verdict.

Epic's court battle against Apple was heard by a judge rather than a jury, with judge's tending to focus on points of law.

Jury to decide

Monday, Epic's case against Google began playing out in front of jurors, who could see matters differently than a judge does.

"This case is about doing the right thing in one important area, the Android mobile ecosystem, where Google unlawfully maintains monopolies," Epic said in a legal filing.

"Google has eliminated competition in the distribution of Android apps using myriad contractual and technical barriers," the video game maker charged in its complaint.

Google has consistently defended itself against the accusation, noting that people with Android-powered smartphones or tablets are free to get apps at online venues other than its Play Store.

Epic is asking the jury to order Google to loosen its grip on the Play Store.

Google is also defending itself in [federal court](#) in Washington, where justice department officials accuse the company of acting illegally to preserve the dominance of its world-leading search engine.

At the heart of the case by the US Department of Justice is Google's massive revenue sharing deals in which iPhone maker Apple takes a big cut of Google ad revenue made from being the default search engine on Apple devices.

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