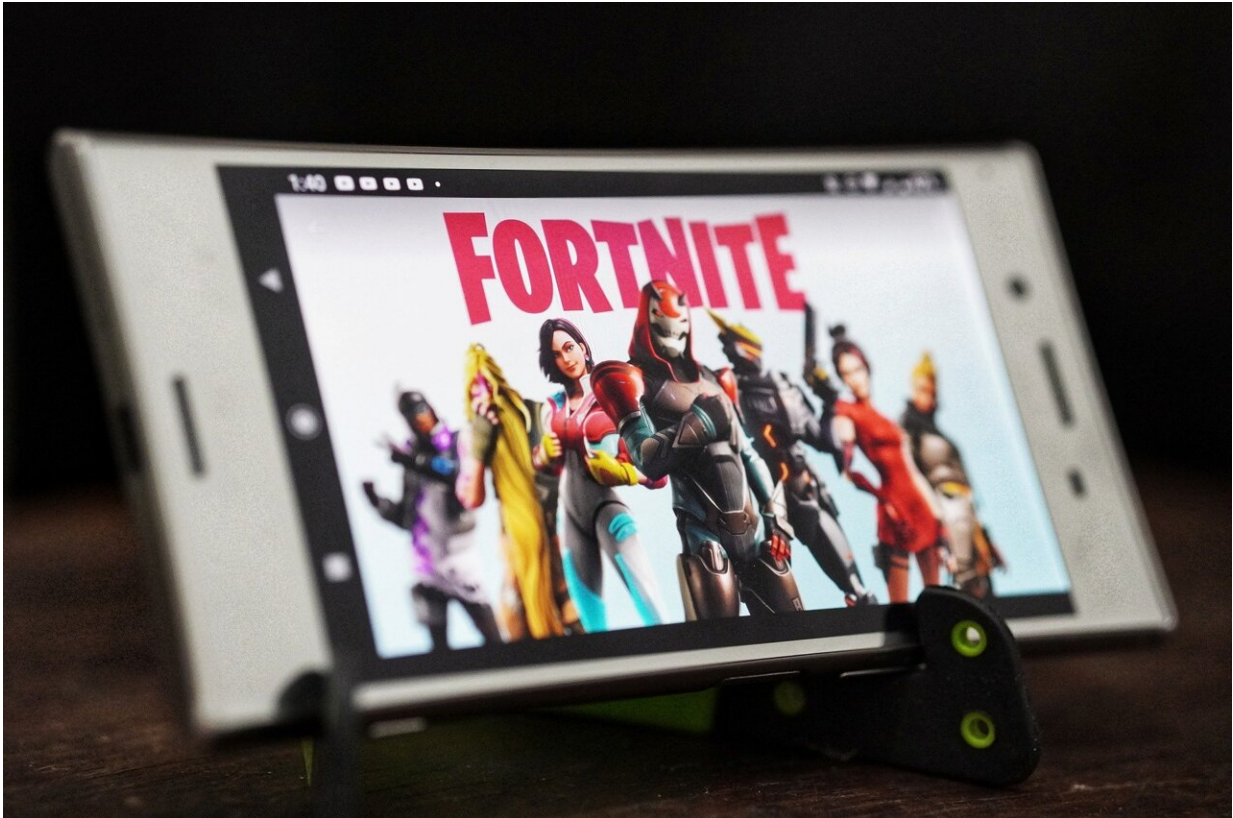


Epic-Apple feud tests EU big tech law

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Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

Epic Games on Wednesday called on the EU to swiftly enforce its major new law governing big tech after Apple halted the Fortnite-maker's effort to develop a competing app store for its devices.

"We see Apple's decision to block us from competing as a blatant effort

to kneecap their leading competitor as enabled by the DMA," Epic CEO Tim Sweeney told reporters.

Sweeney was referring to the Digital Markets Act, a landmark European law that comes into force on Thursday and that orders the world's biggest tech companies to open up their platforms to competition.

Epic a few year ago embarked on a mission through courts and regulators to demand that Apple and Google open up their iPhone and Android devices to competing app stores and stop taking a significant commission for purchases made on their devices.

Hearing the call, the EU included the demand in the DMA, but Epic said its first effort to introduce its own stores on the iPhone was rejected, partly as punishment for its public criticism of Apple.

Sweeney compared it to "feudal lords mounting the skulls of their former enemies on their castle" in an effort "to dissuade others" from speaking out.

Specifically, Apple on March 2 closed Epic's developer account that allowed it to build the software necessary to launch its stand alone stores on Apple devices.

In a letter made available by Epic, a lawyer for Apple cites the frequent criticism made by Sweeney against Apple as well as past behavior in which Epic flouted Apple's app [store](#) rules.

"Epic's egregious breach of its contractual obligations to Apple led courts to determine that Apple has the right to terminate (Epic activity) at any time and at Apple's sole discretion," an Apple spokesperson said in an email to AFP.

"In light of Epic's past and ongoing behavior, Apple chose to exercise that right," the spokesperson added.

For Epic, the rejection demonstrated that "Apple has no intention of allowing true competition" on Apple devices.

Given the clear violation of the DMA, "there needs to be swift action," Sweeney said.

Apple needs "to be called out for what they're doing in the same way that any other person would be called out if they violated the law in this way," he said.

Epic said it had notified the European Commission, which is in charge of enforcing the landmark law.

"We are very confident that this is exactly the type of action that the DMA was designed to try to get at," said Corie Wright, Vice President of Public Policy for Epic Games.

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