

Embargoed for Wednesday, Nov 18 at 10 am CET



The Coalition for App Fairness Increases Activity In Europe As Regulators Investigate App Store Policies

As EU membership grows, the organisation hires top competition lawyer as antitrust concerns intensify across Europe

BRUSSELS, Nov. 18, 2020 – The Coalition for App Fairness (CAF) announced today that it is increasing its focus in Europe to work with policymakers in upcoming regulation, serve as a fierce advocate for EU-based developers who have been harmed by Apple’s draconian policies, and protect Europeans’ freedom of choice.

The EU has shown a desire to curtail Apple’s anticompetitive behaviour and protect innovation with multiple investigations taking place at the European Commission and by the French and Dutch competition authorities. To support CAF’s various activities in Europe, the Coalition has retained top antitrust lawyer Damien Geradin as outside counsel to represent their interests and ensure that forthcoming regulation in the EU reflects the Coalition’s 10 “[App Store Principles](#),” which establish the fair standard of conduct across the app ecosystem.

“The chorus of concerns that various practices of Apple with regard to the App Store may breach competition law is only growing louder. This includes the obligation on app developers selling digital goods and services to use Apple’s in-app payment solution (IAP) and pay a 30% commission,” said Damien Geradin, Founder of Geradin Partners. “I am proud to represent CAF, the most formidable organisation to date that’s taking a stand against Apple’s anticompetitive — and illegal — behaviour.”

European members account for CAF’s largest regional membership base, so the focus on European regulation helps represent the needs of the diverse set of apps in this global fight. Current members include the Austrian medical startup, Breath Ball; French music streaming service, Deezer; Spanish parental control service, Qustodio; Scandinavian media group, Schibsted, and countless more that have been impacted by Apple’s unfair and monopolistic actions.

“Apple wields unchecked power over the mobile ecosystem through its app store, frequently banning consumer access to apps on a whim and leaving behind a path of destroyed mobile businesses in its wake,” said Casey Potenzzone, Chief Strategy Officer at Nexway. “Apple shows no signs of voluntarily easing up on its profit-suppressing 30% app tax, its self-preferencing and inequitably enforced app store rules, and its tight grip on developers of all sizes, which is why Nexway is proud to stand with CAF to force a change of the status quo.”

The EU-based Coalition members have been an integral part of CAF since the start and represent the growing global traction of CAF’s mission for widespread adoption of the App Store principles. In fact, nearly half of the Coalition’s members are now based in Europe, with Germany, France and the U.K. leading the charge.

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“European news publishers suffer from Apple’s anti-competitive commercial practices and we have long expressed concerns over Apple’s behaviour in the online marketplace,” said Angela Mills Wade, Executive Director at European Publishers Council. “As the European Commission formally investigates Apple’s business practices, the Coalition for App Fairness will be the leading voice for European companies in advocating for necessary reform in the App Stores.”

European app creators, developers, and companies are welcome to join the Coalition for App Fairness at appfairness.org.

About the Coalition for App Fairness

The Coalition for App Fairness is an independent nonprofit organisation formed to protect consumer choice, foster competition, and create a level playing field for all app and game developers globally. Originally formed by Basecamp, Blix, Blockchain.com, Deezer, Epic Games, the European Publishers Council, Match Group, News Media Europe, Prepear, Protonmail, Skydemon, Spotify, and Tile, CAF has rapidly grown from 13 to 50 members since launching in September. CAF offers membership to companies of any size — join today at appfairness.org.

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“Entrepreneurs invest significant time, ingenuity, and risk to create something novel, only to have Apple’s oppressive policies control the outcome,” said Ben Bucksch, CEO of CAF member, Beonex. “It is completely unfair for Apple to dictate what my business should be and their monopolistic control is harmful to innovation.”

“After being forced to implement IAP against our wishes, we sent an email to customers notifying them of the change. Apple threatened to remove our app and blocked our updates for almost a month,” said Andy Yen, CEO at ProtonMail. “It’s clear Apple only cares about money, while we care about our customers and should be able to communicate with them freely. We joined CAF to prevent Apple from further harming us and other developers.”