

From: Daniel Gabriel Whyatt [REDACTED]
Sent on: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 3:34:14 PM
To: Mobile Ecosystems <MobileEcosystems@cma.gov.uk>
Subject: Questionnaire

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you as there is no obvious way to communicate like there is for devs.

I find it odd that you only have a questionnaire for developers, I think it is just as important, if not more so to have the views of the citizenry. I have noticed a worrying trend in many of these cases in that regulators are purportedly acting on behalf of "consumers" - which by the way I loathe this descriptor for customers - and yet there is never any real consultation of their wishes or views. Moreover it is in a developer's interest to complain no matter what the status quo is if they see an opportunity to make more money, which rather taints their viewpoints in my opinion.

Whilst I agree that there are problems with huge corporations vacuuming up the lions share of profits, I do not think this approach of potentially tearing apart valued ecosystems is the correct path. I can assure you that Apple users in particular are loyal customers due to the benefits of the tightly integrated ecosystem.

Again, it is neither Apple's nor Google's fault that there is not more competition in the OS market. There are myriad large and competent companies that could create their own operating systems - Samsung; Huawei; Microsoft and Xiaomi to name but a few. I do not think one can argue that fierce competition denotes a lack of competition, and until other players decide to enter the OS landscape it is difficult to make an informed decision. This is what I think should be encouraged.

I can say honestly that Both myself and my family and friends collectively as long time Apple/iOS users, - but also as persons who use or are familiar with android and windows - would not choose to move to different and untrusted app stores, nor would any of us want to make any such changes to the ecosystem if they were available. We purchase iOS devices specifically because they operate in the manner that they do, and I would bet that a huge proportion if not the vast majority of users would feel the same should you take the time to enquire. I would be willing to answer any specific questions should you have them.

Most Customers are not as uninformed as people may suppose and are well aware of what they are buying into and the pros and cons beforehand.

As an example of some of the lunacy I have witnessed in recent times, let's compare Apple's App Store policy with any supermarket or big box retailer. Nobody would expect or force Tesco to allow individuals to walk in off the street and open pop up stores to sell their wares and have easy access to a customer base, in fact they would likely be arrested..

Nor would one complain that Tesco or Sainsbury's are competing against the brands sold in-store with their own label versions of products, which is what is currently happening with Apple and google. The current commission model is more than fair when one compares it with what came before when people were forced to pay for shelf space. Moreover IAP in particular is pure profit, it costs the developers nothing at all for digital goods or credit. So to blame Apple for falsely inflated prices is ludicrous when the developers could charge almost nothing and still be winning. Perhaps in this instance they should be a tiered commission approach depending on the annual turnover of the

developers where large companies pay more and it gradually reduces. Perhaps free/freemium apps should be done away with entirely and a minimum price should be set whereby Apple or Google can only charge a commission on the sale of the app itself. I can say I have never heard of anybody presuming to tell Curry's or John Lewis that they have no right to charge whatever margins they set for products on their shelves. Of course there is a difference between high street and digital stores but it amounts to the same thing. However, it still comes back in the end to a lack of other options which again is not Apple or Google's fault. The most important thing that needs to happen is to encourage new OS and ecosystems, be they nationalised or private entities.

I hope it is in some way helpful.

Sincerely,

Daniel.