

Facebook Goes to Trial Over Instagram and WhatsApp

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Mark Zuckerberg, the boss of Meta (the company that owns Facebook), had to speak in court during very important trial. The US government says Meta might have broken the law by buying Instagram and WhatsApp to stop other companies from competing. These two apps were small when Facebook bought them over 10 years ago, but now they are super popular.

The government's lawyers say that Meta didn't want to compete fairly. Instead, they say Meta bought Instagram and WhatsApp because the company was worried about losing its top spot in social media.

Instagram was bought for \$1 billion in 2012. WhatsApp was bought in 2014 for even more--\$22 billion! These apps helped Facebook stay popular, especially with younger people, and made it easier for the company to switch from desktop computers to mobile phones.

The government wants Meta to give up control of these apps, which could hurt the company's money-making business. Meta says the case is unfair. They believe Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook have lots of competition, like TikTok, YouTube, and Apple's iMessage. Meta also says that the government already approved these deals years ago, so it's wrong to go back now and try to undo them.

The judge will decide if Meta has to split up and separate the apps into different companies. This trial is important because it could change the way big tech companies grow and how the government controls them. Other companies like Google and Amazon are also facing similar cases.

Comprehension Questions:

1. The government wants Meta to give up control of Instagram and WhatsApp. What does "give up control" mean here?

- a) To stop trying
- b) To take more control
- c) To stop owning or managing
- d) To make the apps bigger

2. What does Meta think about the trial?

- a) It will make their apps more popular
- b) It is fair and necessary
- c) It is a great chance to advertise
- d) It is unfair and wrong



3. What might happen if Meta loses the trial?
- a) The company will get bigger
 - b) It will control more apps
 - c) It may have to separate its apps
 - d) Facebook will be shut down forever
4. Why did Meta buy Instagram and WhatsApp, according to the government?
- a) To make more friends online
 - b) To stop using desktop computers
 - c) To avoid losing their power in social media
 - d) To help small companies grow
5. Which of these statements is false?
- a) The government wants Meta to give up Instagram and WhatsApp
 - b) Meta says there is still strong competition in social media
 - c) The judge will decide what happens next
 - d) Meta created Instagram and WhatsApp
6. Why did buying Instagram and WhatsApp help Meta?
- a) It helped reach more people, especially on phones
 - b) It stopped people from using Facebook
 - c) It made the government happy
 - d) Meta now has the most photos of cats
7. What can we guess about Meta's reason for saying there is still competition?
- a) They want to show they are not too powerful
 - b) They want to buy TikTok
 - c) They are bored of Facebook
 - d) They want to leave the social media world
8. Why is the trial important for other big tech companies?
- a) They might have to go to court too
 - b) They want to work with Meta
 - c) They are buying WhatsApp
 - d) They will stop using mobile phones
9. What can we guess about the government's goal in this case?
- a) To help Meta get more users
 - b) To stop big companies from being too powerful
 - c) To ban all social media apps
 - d) To create a new app
10. What is the main idea of the article?
- a) Meta, Google, and Amazon are very powerful companies
 - b) Nobody likes Mark Zuckerberg because he's weird and ugly
 - c) A trial about Meta could change how tech companies grow
 - d) Meta bought WhatsApp for \$22 billion

Speaking and Writing Activities:

- Discuss these questions with a partner or a small group
 - Choose one topic and write a response to it. Show your writing to a classmate or teacher.
1. Do you think big companies like Meta should be allowed to buy smaller companies like Instagram and WhatsApp? Why or why not?
 2. Do you use social media apps? Which one do you like best, and why?
 3. Do you trust big tech companies to use your personal data responsibly? Why or why not?