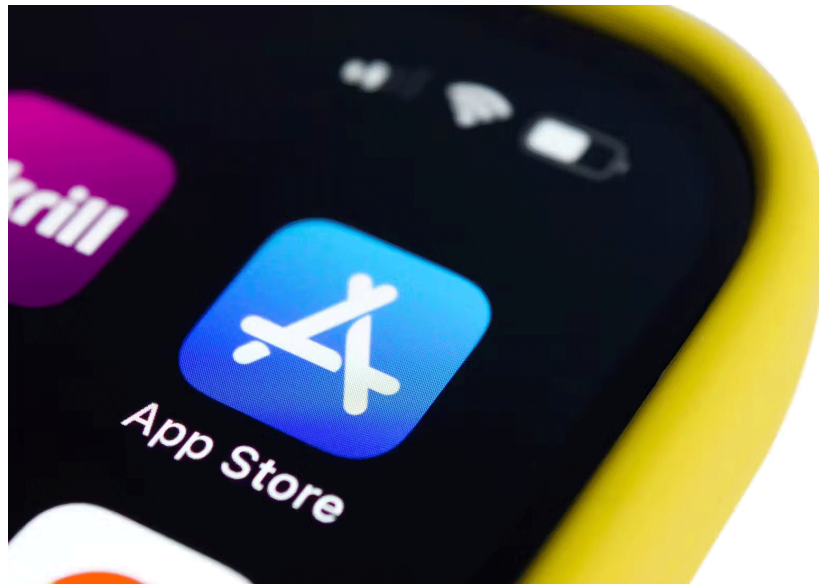


Apple Makes 3 Big Changes in the EU: Will They Soon Roll Out Worldwide?

The European Commission is forcing Apple to make major changes to how its devices work in the EU, such as rolling out support for third-party app stores and alternative payment options.

Here are some of the key changes to Apple's operating system in the EU.

1. Alternative App Store



The Apple App Store has long been the only place you can download software for Apple devices—other than sideloading apps from outside sources onto your iPhone.

But that's all changing for EU users, anyway. Apple is now allowing app developers and other third parties to offer iOS and iPadOS apps on alternative app stores, and even their own websites.

Apple said this would lead to increased risk, so the company introduced additional security measures, such as certifying iOS/iPadOS apps and authorizing app store developers.

This could lead to two things: One, you paying less for software, and two, more versions of software from developers, not restricted by Apple.

2. Support for third-party browser engines



The European Commission also wants Apple to give developers more options for their web browsing apps. To that end, Apple is now allowing developers to use browser engines other than WebKit.

This could lead to a more immersive browsing experience in apps that offer this engine. While it's still early days, things could move quickly. As 9to5Google points out, Google even has official instructions for building your own Chromium-based iPhone browser prototype.

3. More diverse payment options



Developers in the EU are getting more payment options for their digital goods, given the restrictions on Apple Pay. They can offer alternative payment methods for their apps and services, meaning less commission for Apple, in return for deeper discounts and savings for consumers.

EU users will have a number of new ways to pay, either within the app itself or via a link to an external payment option. On the other hand, contacting support can be confusing and more cumbersome when it comes to getting a refund if something goes wrong.

Will Apple bring these changes to the world?

Apple doesn't seem to be very keen on these "interoperability" changes, so it's unlikely the company will expand them to the US and other markets around the world.

In general, don't expect to be able to download apps from alternative app stores or pay using other methods outside the EU anytime soon. That's unlikely to happen unless governments impose similar requirements on the tech giants as the EU does.

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