



Benjamin Sirota Speaks with Quartz on UK Antitrust Regulator Ordering Facebook to Sell Giphy

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For the first time, the UK's antitrust regulator ordered an American tech company to sell one of its major acquisitions. The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) ruled that Meta Platforms, Facebook's parent company, must divest Giphy, a GIF database and search engine. As Benjamin Sirota, a former U.S. federal antitrust prosecutor, told *Quartz*, this spells trouble for Facebook and other large tech companies.

The CMA's decision, based on alleged harm to Facebook's competitors and the potential for Facebook to dominate the UK digital advertising market with the acquisition of Giphy, comes as antitrust regulators across the globe – including Europe and the U.S. – toughen oversight of tech companies.

Even so, Mr. Sirota noted, the ruling was a particularly aggressive maneuver, since the two firms do not necessarily overlap in function and have weak ties to the British market, and it signals a greater willingness of antitrust regulators to proactively step in when they see potential for abuse. It also points to the difficult antitrust regulatory environment Big Tech faces: "My first thought was: Is there going to be any deal in this climate when Facebook is not going to be challenged?" said Mr. Sirota.

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