

Microsoft and Activision Blizzard: the latest news on the acquisition

Microsoft announced that it intends to acquire Activision Blizzard for \$68.7 billion, a deal that will make Microsoft one of the biggest gaming companies in the world. With the deal, popular gaming franchises like *Call of Duty*, *Warcraft*, *Overwatch*, and more will be in the fold of Microsoft's ever-expanding portfolio of studios, alongside Bethesda and its own Xbox Game Studios.

Also included as part of the deal is King, the makers of *Candy Crush*, signaling that Microsoft may utilize the company to compete in the mobile space. In early 2021, Take-Two Interactive (which houses developers like 2K, Private Division, and Rockstar Games) purchased Zynga for \$12.7 billion.

Though the deal hasn't come to pass, Microsoft's intent to acquire Activision Blizzard raises questions around antitrust and around how Microsoft might steer Activision Blizzard's toxic company culture and make adjustments to its leadership's role to promote an equitable work environment moving forward. The acquisition was announced after several high-profile claims of sexual harassment were levied against Activision Blizzard, and in July 2021, the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) sued Activision Blizzard for promoting a culture of "constant sexual harassment."

On December 8th, the FTC announced it was suing Microsoft to block the deal, saying, "we seek to stop Microsoft from gaining control over a leading independent game studio and

using it to harm competition in multiple dynamic and fast-growing gaming markets.” Microsoft’s vice president and chairman Brad Smith responded by saying “We have been committed since Day One to addressing competition concerns, including by offering earlier this week proposed concessions to the FTC. While we believed in giving peace a chance, we have complete confidence in our case and welcome the opportunity to present our case in court.”

We’ll be keeping you updated with the latest news on the big acquisition here, with reports that interrogate how the gaming world might change (in good ways and in bad ways) with one of the largest third-party game studios under Microsoft’s ownership.

<https://www.theverge.com/2022/1/18/22889421/microsoft-acquires-activision-blizzard-call-of-duty-warcraft-king-gaming-buy-news-reports>