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Apple Wins U.S. Appeal Over iCloud Storage Claims

July 24, 2025

– Categories: *Crypto*



Apple has successfully overturned a U.S. government-backed appeal that alleged the company misled customers by charging for iCloud storage, even for data from its preinstalled apps.

Apple has successfully overturned a United States appeal that claimed the company shortchanged customers by charging for cloud storage tied

to preinstalled applications. The ruling ends a proposed class-action lawsuit that questioned the tech giant's iCloud storage practices.

The United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit dismissed the appeal, which alleged Apple misled users by requiring them to purchase additional storage on its iCloud service particularly for data generated by default apps such as iMessage, Photos, and Notes. The claim argued that this practice effectively forced consumers to pay for storing data created by essential features, despite these being preinstalled and integral to the device.

However, the court found no evidence that Apple had deceived its users. The panel ruled that Apple clearly outlined its terms and conditions, and customers had agreed to these terms when subscribing to iCloud. The judgment stated that Apple was not under any obligation to provide free storage for data generated by default applications and that users had the choice to either use the free 5-gigabyte tier or pay for more capacity.

This outcome marks a significant win for Apple and its broader digital services strategy, which includes subscriptions for iCloud, Apple Music, and other offerings. Legal analysts note that the decision reinforces a company's ability to monetize its ecosystem, so long as its terms are transparent and consumers have options.

The original lawsuit was filed in California in 2019 and sought to represent millions of Apple users nationwide. Plaintiffs claimed the company engaged in unfair business practices and violated consumer protection laws by implicitly tying core app usage to paid iCloud upgrades. But the court determined that Apple's disclosures were sufficient and that the practice did not amount to wrongdoing.

Notably, the ruling arrives at a time when regulatory scrutiny of major technology firms is intensifying in both the United States and the United Kingdom. In this case, however, the judiciary has upheld contractual clarity and user consent as the decisive factors.

Apple declined to comment on the ruling. Legal representation for the plaintiffs has not yet issued a public response.

With this legal hurdle now cleared, Apple appears set to continue expanding its services model without immediate threat from this line of legal challenge reinforcing the importance of contract law over regulatory overreach.