

From: Mark Peter Hughes [mailto:ma[REDACTED]]
Sent: Saturday, June 23, 2012 10:25 AM
To: Read, John [John.Read@ATR.USDOJ.gov]
Subject: Re Proposed E-Book Settlement

John R. Read, Esq. (john.read@usdoj.gov)
Chief, Litigation III
Antitrust Division, United States Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Read,

Brick-and-mortar bookstores serve the public interest in important ways that Amazon simply can't. I'm writing in regards to the proposed e-book settlement currently under consideration. I feel strongly that it's not in the public interest for the government to help Amazon use e-books to target traditional brick-and-mortar bookstores.

Many important books will never find their audience unless they're displayed on bookstore shelves and tables. These books include children's picture books, art books, and many cookbooks, which have to be seen and held to be appreciated. Bookstores are also destinations for readers, in a way that no online store can replicate. No one plans to take their kids to Amazon on Saturday to browse and pick out a book, for example, and people don't escape to Amazon to unplug and relax for a while. Those trips matter. Marketing studies confirm that readers are far more likely to buy unknown books by unfamiliar authors if they see them in a bookstore. Amazon, on the other hand, excels as a search engine for books readers have already heard of. This is one of the reasons the online market skews heavily toward familiar authors. Amazon expands the readership of known authors while bookstores expand readerships for great and popular authors of the future.

A healthy, competitive book market is vital to our culture. Clearly, Amazon is committed to capturing the U.S. book market by forcibly moving it online, where it can more easily eliminate its competitors. Economic history tells us that monopolists tend to dictate terms to all participants in their markets. For the sake of our literary culture, our book market deserves a better fate.

Thank you for considering how brick-and-mortar bookstores serve the public interest in ways Amazon can't.

-- Mark Hughes, 26 Lake Rd, Wayland, MA