

From: Betty Bolte [mailto:scribebol[REDACTED]]
Sent: Saturday, June 23, 2012 10:02 AM
To: Read, John [John.Read@ATR.USDOJ.gov]
Subject: The DOJ should get out of book selling

Mr. Read,

As a published author of nonfiction and soon fiction (with any luck), I'd like to take a moment to share my thoughts on the pending case regarding the alleged collusion among Apple and five publishers. It seems to me that Amazon is actually doing a disservice to the authors by selling their books at a loss, which then encourages readers to expect to pay less for the same work. Believe me, researching and writing a book is a lot of work and requires not only time and education, but also a huge amount of talent. Talent that becomes undervalued as a result of Amazon's predatory and monopolistic actions. I believe that Apple and company fought back with the best weapon at their disposal, the price of the books, but not by colluding together. Rather, it was simply by realizing the best path forward for the creative and technical folks working hard to bring the best books to market at the most reasonable cost possible. While Amazon provides a service, they cannot replace the experience of walking into a brick-and-mortar bookstore. We need our bookstores that we can physically browse the contents of the books, not just see a thumbnail picture of the cover and sample pages along with reviews (that may be planted to be good or bad). The community that is created through coming together to share the reading experience is very powerful and critical to the health of our society.

A healthy, competitive book market is vital to our culture. It's not in the public interest for the government to help Amazon use e-books to target traditional brick-and-mortar bookstores. Undercutting the cover price only leads to undercutting the authors and publishers and all who work to create the books that people read.

Thank you for your time.

Betty Bolté

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