

From: Lisa Sullivan [mailto:lisa.sullivan@doj.gov]]
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 9:32 AM
To: Read, John
Subject: DOJ case re: agency model ebook pricing

June 24, 2012

John Read
Chief, Litigation III Section
Antitrust Division
US Department of Justice
450 5th Street, NW, Suite 4000
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Mr. Read,

I am writing to you in reference to the Department of Justice's suit against publishers in regards to ebook agency model pricing. I have concerns that this case assists not in fixing a problem in the publishing market, but validates a monopoly at Amazon. I believe that the DOJ views this case as big New York publishers colluding in price fixing versus the American public. As an independent bookstore owner in a small town in Vermont, my view is quite the opposite. I maintain a community-driven bookstore and am able to offer ebooks for sale via my website because of the agency model. Without it, Amazon undercut prices on every ebook. Amazon chose to sell ebooks at a loss prior to the agency model, effectively cutting competitors out of the market.

When considering this case I urge you not to think in terms of large publishers raising prices versus the average American saving a few dollars. Please consider the implications as they really are: a huge online retailer versus the small stores in every community in this country. It saddens me that we have reached a point where the laws that exist to protect consumers from monopolies are being used to support one.

I think the DOJ needs to examine why any business would want to sell a product at a consistent loss. Perhaps I'm missing something in the complex math, but I'd take a profit margin of 30% over a loss of 30% any day. Perhaps that's because I'm not simply selling books at a loss in order to sell more of something else. The publishing industry is basically being held hostage by a single company. Hopefully, we'll figure that out while there is still an industry.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,
Lisa

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