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Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 9:50 PM
To: Read, John [John.Read@ATR.USDOJ.gov]
Cc: Dan Cullen
Subject: Letter for the DOJ

John Read
Chief, Litigation III Section
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U.S. Department of Justice
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Mr. Read:

I am writing regarding the proposed settlement between the three book publishers (Simon and Schuster, HarperCollins and Hachette book Group) and the United States regarding e-book pricing.

I am the owner of a small independent bookstore in the northern suburbs of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I have been in the bookselling business for 18 years. The past three as owner of a small business has been the most challenging for two reasons: the economy and the proliferation of e-books.

I feel that it is misguided of the Department of Justice to focus its anti-trust efforts against Apple and the major book publishers for their implementation of the agency model. The agency model only helped foster competition. This perfectly legitimate business model was in response to Amazon.com's policy and practice of selling e-books below cost. Amazon.com's predatory pricing was intended and designed to drive any other potential competition out of the market, thus giving them a virtual monopoly on the sale of e-books.

Because of the agency model, my small business was able to sell e-books at a competitive price to my customers. E-books are a growing percentage of my business and the ability to provide my customers the products they want in a fair competitive environment is essential. Simply put, losing the agency model will negatively impact my business and my customers. If I lose the ability to offer competitive prices on e-books I will lose customers. Because of Amazon.com's predatory pricing and their proprietary system, without the agency model my customers will have only one choice for the product they want and they will be locked into buying it from only one supplier. I feel strongly that for everyone involved, the authors, the publishers and all retail outlets for books, that this would be a step in the wrong direction.

The Department of Justice needs to focus on the devastating effect that [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)'s policies have had on bookstores, including the recently bankrupt Borders, Barnes and Noble and the thousands of independent booksellers around the country. The United States should be pursuing policies that discourage excessive domination in one market, especially when that domination will reduce the choice of the consumers. I shudder to think what will happen to our literary culture if one corporation is permitted to have complete control over the public's access to our literary culture.

The current litigation and settlements with the major book publishers is the equivalent of reading a paragraph out of an entire book and assuming to understand the whole story. Taking a small portion of the story out of context without looking at the entire narrative and acting on it will have far reaching negative effects on everyone in the industry. I urge the Department of Justice to take the time to read the whole book.

Sincerely,

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