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Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 9:11 PM
To: Read, John [John.Read@ATR.USDOJ.gov]
Subject: Publishers and Ebooks Public Comment

Mr. Read,

I am a bookseller in Cleveland Heights, Ohio and was relieved and gratified when publishers began using the agency model to price ebooks. I felt that an injustice was being addressed and sensed a greater stability in the market after the prices went into effect. As a small businessperson, I felt dismayed and betrayed when the Justice Dept. decided to sue the publishers.

Here is an excerpt from a letter I wrote to customers after the recent Justice Dept decision:

"The result of the new agency policy stabilized the book industry. Ebook prices were raised to an average of 12.99 which reflected the true cost of doing business. Amazon went from a 90 percent share of the ebook market to 60 percent, with Barnes and Noble able to gain significant share with their Nook. Even independent bookstores could now compete---that is why Mac's is able to sell ebooks on our website. **The publishers move created a level playing field and forged a healthy competitive environment.**

The Justice Dept. did not see it that way and hence the lawsuit. It's as if the Justice Dept. is handing a monopoly right back to Amazon.

Independent bookstores are used to competing and we try to do the best things to thrive without complaint, but the corporate welfare handed to Amazon is galling. I have long been angered that Amazon does not collect sales tax and stymies and fights states that try to collect what is their due. Bookstores collect sales tax for the state, badly needed sales tax, why can't the internet vendors? Take a look at the state's economy and connect the dots."

I fear that if the ebook pricing is removed from the purvey of the publishers and placed back with Amazon the whole industry will be destabilized. There has been a healthy ecology between authors, publishers, distributors, booksellers and readers and that is all in jeopardy if publishers are not allowed to charge a fair price for books.

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