

From: SUSAN PORTER [mailto:susanbo[REDACTED]]
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 8:12 AM
To: Read, John [John.Read@ATR.USDOJ.gov]
Subject: Comments re: Agency Model

Maine Coast Book Shop, Inc.
P.O. Box 309
Damariscotta, Maine 04543

June 25, 2012

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

Dear John Read,

We believe your decision to eliminate the Agency Model for the sale of e-books by Hachette, HarperCollins and Simon & Schuster will strike another blow to the independent bookstores selling e-books. If it is your goal to protect consumer interest, this action will only serve to further destroy the competitive marketplace as the small bookseller finds it impossible to compete with the discounted prices offered by the bigger players. Our book shop provides services beyond the sale of a book. In a very small town (pop.1800) we are the biggest presence on our Main Street and cooperate with the library and theater to bring authors and events to our community. We have a supportive community, but our base has eroded measurably as customers simply “click” on a link to find a discounted e-book. If your goal is to protect consumer interest, that action will only serve to destroy it, as we find it impossible to compete with the discounted prices offered. You will have quite the opposite effect.

The price of “cheap” is high. Competition will not exist. The resulting loss of independent bookstores is the worst thing that could happen; outlets for hundreds of thousands of books (small or even undiscovered books that would otherwise never be carried or hand-sold by the few remaining chain stores) would disappear. Think of the loss to the world of literature! The elimination of the Agency Model would only serve to concentrate power, strangle competition and have a hugely negative impact on the world of books.

Respectfully,

Susan & Barnaby Porter
Owners, Maine Coast Book Shop

Susan Porter
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