

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BEFORE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS: Edith Ramirez, Chairwoman
Julie Brill
Maureen K. Ohlhausen
Terrell McSweeney

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)	
In the Matter of)	
)	DOCKET NO.
Step N Grip, LLC)	
a corporation.)	
)	

COMPLAINT

Pursuant to the provisions of the Federal Trade Commission Act, as amended, 15 U.S.C. § 41, et seq., and by virtue of the authority vested in it by said Act, the Federal Trade Commission (“Commission”), having reason to believe that Step N Grip, LLC, has violated the provisions of Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, 15 U.S.C. § 45, and it appearing to the Commission that a proceeding by it in respect thereof would be in the public interest, hereby issues this Complaint stating its charges as follows:

NATURE OF THE CASE

- Step N Grip, LLC (“Step N Grip”) markets and sells over the internet a rug device. Step N Grip invited its closest rival to fix and raise prices for the two companies’ competing rug devices. By inviting collusion, Step N Grip endangered competition and violated Section 5 of the FTC Act.

RESPONDENT

- Step N Grip is a limited liability corporation organized, existing, and doing business under and by virtue of the laws of Michigan with its principal place of business in New Lothrop, Michigan 48460.
- Step N Grip markets and sells a device called NeverCurl that is intended to prevent the corner of a rug from curling. Step N Grip sells its rug device over the internet on Amazon.com. Step N Grip also sells from its own website.

JURISDICTION

4. At all times relevant herein, Step N Grip has been, and is now, a corporation as “corporation” is defined in Section 4 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, 15 U.S.C. § 44.
5. The business practices of Step N Grip, including the acts and practices alleged herein, are in commerce or affect commerce, as “commerce” is defined in Section 4 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, 15 U.S.C. § 44.

INVITATION TO COLLUDE

6. The closest competitor to Step N Grip is Competitor A, a company that markets and sells a rug device similar to NeverCurl. For several months prior to June 1, 2015, Step N Grip generally sold NeverCurl on Amazon.com for \$13.95 per package, and Competitor A sold its competing device on Amazon.com for \$16.99 per package.
7. On June 1, 2015, Competitor A lowered its price on Amazon.com to \$13.49 in order to compete more aggressively with Step N Grip. Step N Grip responded by lowering its price on Amazon.com to \$12.95.
8. On June 7, 2015, Competitor A lowered its price on Amazon.com to \$11.95 in response to Step N Grip. That same day, Step N Grip lowered its price on Amazon.com to \$11.95. Also on June 7, 2015, Step N Grip sent an email message to Competitor A. The communication, in its entirety, read: “We both sell at \$12.95? Or, \$11.95?” Step N Grip subsequently raised the price of NeverCurl to \$12.95.
9. Competitor A reported the invitation to collude to the Federal Trade Commission.

VIOLATION CHARGED

10. As set forth in Paragraphs 6 through 9 above, Step N Grip invited its competitor to agree to fix and raise the price of rug devices in violation of Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, as amended.
11. The acts and practices of Step N Grip, as alleged herein, constitute unfair methods of competition in or affecting commerce in violation of Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, as amended. Such acts and practices of Step N Grip will continue or recur in the absence of appropriate relief.

