

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

*In the Matter of*

TRU-VANTAGE INTERNATIONAL, L.L.C. a limited liability company.

DOCKET NO.

COMPLAINT

The Federal Trade Commission, having reason to believe that Tru-Vantage International, L.L.C., a limited liability company ("respondent"), has violated the provisions of the Federal Trade Commission Act, and it appearing to the Commission that this proceeding is in the public interest, alleges:

1. Respondent Tru-Vantage International, L.L.C., is an Illinois limited liability company, with its principal office or place of business at 7300 North Lehigh Avenue, Niles, Illinois 60714.
2. Respondent has advertised, offered for sale, sold, and distributed products to the public, including but not limited to, Howard Berg's Mega Reading.
3. Respondent's advertisements include, but are not limited to, program-length television commercials which run for 30 minutes or less and fit within normal television broadcasting time slots. Respondent's television commercials were and are broadcast on network, independent and cable television stations throughout the United States. Several of the respondent's television commercials are identified as "Vantage Point with host Kevin Trudeau."
4. The acts and practices of respondent alleged in this complaint have been in or affecting commerce, as "commerce" is defined in Section 4 of the Federal Trade Commission Act.
5. Respondent has created, disseminated or has caused to be disseminated advertisements for Howard Berg's Mega Reading, including but not necessarily limited to the attached Exhibit A. These advertisements contain the following statements:

Berg: "I teach children not just how to read faster but to comprehend, retain and stay focused. . . . So, Mega Reading is a complete accelerated learning system that doesn't just teach you to read quickly.

Trudeau: Right.

Berg: On a skimming level.

Trudeau: Right.

Berg: But to comprehend, apply and use it. Even under test situations.

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Berg: I'm working with companies like Pfizer, Mobil Oil, that have high tech reading. And they used it because it was easy to retain complicated information.

Trudeau: So, even the detailed complicated material, people can read quickly and grasp it and comprehend it and recall it.

Berg: Over long periods of time.

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Berg: They hired me to train their editors not only in how to speed read but how to make books easier to comprehend, because my program teaches people how to understand text.

Trudeau: Right.

Berg: Not just blur through it.

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Trudeau: Folks, if you want more information on Howard's program, Mega Reading program, it's a home study course that you can go through at your leisure and it will virtually release your own super reading speed, mega reading. You'll be able to read almost as fast as Howard. Virtually quadruple, five, ten times your reading speed right now.

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Berg: I have a letter here from a girl who has brain damage.

Trudeau: Right.

Berg: Brain damage. She was in a car accident and half her brain stopped functioning. It was electrically dead.

Trudeau: Right.

Berg: And she writes. It says that on a coffee break in my word shop, she went three to 600 words per minute. This is someone with severe brain damage. So yes, it works for anyone. And you can't get worse than that.

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Berg: At the end of the workshop, every child and parent had at least doubled except for one.

Trudeau: Uh-huh.

Berg: That child was reading at five seconds a page and I quizzed her.

Trudeau: Five seconds.

Berg: Five seconds a page. And the vice principal was there.

Trudeau: And they're reading it?

Berg: Comprehending it and retaining it.

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Berg: Anybody. In fact, I had a blind student in Huntsville, Alabama.

Trudeau: Yeah.

Berg: I swear to you it's true.

Trudeau: Wait a minute. You can't read if you can't see.

Berg: She was reading in Braille.

Trudeau: Oh, okay.

Berg: And she took the program to learn the memory skills. Because a lot of people when they hear speed reading, they think fast reading. With Mega Reading it's not just fast reading, it's fast learning. Remember what Tommy said, it's a complete accelerated learning program. And what I teach them is storing, retrieving, recalling, focusing.

6. Through the means described in Paragraph 5, respondent has represented, expressly or by implication, that Howard Berg's Mega Reading is successful in teaching anyone, including adults, children and disabled individuals, to significantly increase their reading speed while substantially comprehending and retaining the material.

7. In truth and in fact Howard Berg's Mega Reading is not successful in teaching anyone, including adults, children and disabled individuals, to significantly increase their reading speed while substantially comprehending and retaining the material. Therefore, the representation set forth in Paragraph 6 was, and is, false or misleading.

8. Through the means described in Paragraph 5, respondent has represented, expressly or by implication, that it possessed and relied upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representation set forth in Paragraph 6, at the time the representation was made.

9. In truth and in fact, respondent did not possess and rely upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representation set forth in Paragraph 6, at the time the representation was made. Therefore, the representation set forth in Paragraph 8 was, and is, false or misleading.

10. The acts and practices of respondent as alleged in this complaint constitute unfair or deceptive acts or practices in or affecting commerce in violation of Section 5(a) of the Federal Trade Commission Act.

THEREFORE, the Federal Trade Commission this day of , 199 , has issued this complaint against respondents.

By the Commission.

Donald S. Clark  
Secretary

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