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Federal Trade Commission
Office of the Secretary
600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Suite CC-5610 (Annex C)
Washington, DC 20580

Re: Competition and Consumer Protection in the 21st Century Hearing, Project Number P181201

I've been operating my restaurant for 36 years and have 10 employees. Things have been changing a lot recently, especially online information about my business. I don't check my restaurant's online presence a lot, but I've seen GrubHub advertised on it before, and there may have been another third-party service on the boxed-in information people see when they search for a business. This information that is known as the "knowledge panel" can affect my business.

There could be bad information being passed out, and many of these third-party services have more reviews than my restaurant. These things make me feel like I have no control over my own business. I truly think Google oversteps its boundaries by placing these third-party ads in the knowledge panel for my business. We business owners have too much to think about as it is. We should not be burdened with additional sources of stress.

My business is mine, but it feels as if Google now wants a partnership without asking me or paying for it. I believe we may have lost some of our revenue to third-party services, which charge a commission to businesses they deliver for. This Google Tax confused me at first because I did not sign up for it.

I worry that my customers may be getting incorrect information from sources that have nothing to do with me. How do I combat that? I shouldn't have to worry about my restaurant's knowledge panel. I should be the one in control, not Google. It makes me feel as if my pockets are being picked again. It's bad enough I deal with rising taxes and such. Now I have to worry about this? What's going on?

I'm also unhappy that customers can go through a third-party to order instead of ordering through my website. I feel robbed. This needs to be investigated, and I hope we find out why Google has been given this authority and power. Is this even legal? Please find the answers to these questions and ensure that restaurant owners are in charge of their businesses and not subject to a Google Tax that does nothing to help them.

Sincerely,

8.9.18

Steve Varetimos
Owner