



1316 Springfield Avenue
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August 9, 2018

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

We are owners of Ambassador Fish & Chicken, a fast-food restaurant with five New Jersey locations and around 20 employees. Our restaurant has its name, locations, menu, and website listed on Google. However, some searchers may not be able to find that information because delivery services like GrubHub typically have more customer reviews and come up higher on the list of search results. Google is pushing these delivery services to create profits for itself and the third-party services, and that's unfair to small businesses that don't use these services. What it amounts to is a Google Tax.

Let's say a customer searches for our restaurant, but is instead presented with a similar one that uses GrubHub. That customer's business is going to go to the restaurant that uses GrubHub, and part of that money goes to Grubhub. We are missing out on business because that is happening. We don't have enough money to pay for our restaurant to come up higher in the search results and it's unfair that other restaurants are given priority because of their reviews.

We should have some say as to how our search results appear on Google. We need to be made aware of what is happening, perhaps by being notified by email. Specifically, we'd like control over what shows on the knowledge panel on Google--and what doesn't. We don't want to use Grubhub, and we don't want to be tied to GrubHub. Thus, we should be asked if we want to be, or not. It is our *right* to know what's going on.

When people are searching for restaurants and the results are intercepted by third-party ordering company ads, the services charge as much as 40% on every order. We believe these services are ripping off both the restaurant and the customer. It's the restaurants who pay the highest price. The profit margin in restaurants is very small, to begin with, and this kind of thing only makes it more difficult for small businesses to survive.

Some restaurants can pay "big bucks" to come up higher in search results, but the rest of us cannot. And it's unfair that results for a restaurant rank higher because it has more reviews. Either way, nobody is going to scroll to the bottom of the list to find us. As a small business, this situation is eventually going to affect our bottom line. Other people are going to make a lot more money off of what is happening. And us? We'll be on the bottom of the list. We must not let this situation squeeze us out of business. The unfair Google Tax needs to be stopped.

Sincerely,

Ahmad Akarah and Mounia Abbadi
Owners