



3423 M Street NW
Washington, DC 20007
Phone: (202)-997-6671

August 14, 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

I am a restaurant owner in the Washington, D.C., area, and I am very concerned with Google's business practices. Google has been taking off Yelp and TripAdvisor reviews from their search when people look for my business, replacing it with their own reviews. I worked very hard to build my brand and reputation, so I don't like that this is happening. Yelp and TripAdvisor reviews are more reliable than Google because Google reviews can be changed. Google's reviews are less trusted, and their priority on search results can hurt my business. That is only the start of my concerns, however. Google's new practice of selling ads to third-party delivery services is just as harmful, and it needs to stop.

My restaurant's knowledge panel presents Google users with vital information, such as my website, phone number, and a menu. It is upsetting that Google is selling a link in this location to third-party services because they did not notify me or ask my permission to place these ads. Even worse, I already offer third-party delivery services through a company that I trust and correspond with. Google has taken the management of my business out of my hands, giving these third-party businesses leverage over my brand. I have no control over the quality of these services that are working with my company. I, as the business owner, should be in complete control of how my brand is represented.

Google is misleading searchers by siphoning off my customers to these third-party delivery services without my consent--all just to make advertising profits. These third-party services also charge up to 40% per order. That is entirely unfair; I have no say in this matter or control over my brand. Google is using their name and trusted brand to profit and take money away from the small business owner. This is akin to a tax being levied on small businesses by Google. I am shocked at how disrespectful Google is being to the businesses that help keep them going.

Google has not clarified or discussed this policy with business owners, so we don't know what is going on. I feel the FTC needs to open an investigation into this company to see how they are using our information and brand for their own benefit. They need to clarify what is happening so that small business owners like me can know the consequences of this new policy.

Sincerely,

Teresa Mollegas
Owner