

splashpokebowl

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August 10, 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

As the owner of a Hawaiian restaurant that has been opened for six months, I wanted to reach out to you about a troubling situation. I feel as if I have no control over my Google knowledge panel. That's because space in the panel is being sold to advertisers. So places like GrubHub and Seamless can appear at the top of this panel and direct customers to paid delivery services, which charge restaurants a commission to deliver meals. I want customers to be able to order directly from my website, and I shouldn't have to worry about the extra costs of paying a commission to third-party delivery services when it comes to running my business.

When I heard that Groupon put out an ad for my restaurant without my knowledge, I was very unhappy. They told me they can bring me new customers, but I think we have lost a portion of revenue to third party services. That's because we end up paying a 20 to 30 percent fee to these places. This is basically a Google Tax, and it makes me very unhappy.

As a restaurant owner, I should have a say about how my restaurant is presented on the Google knowledge panel. If I don't want a third party service on it, I should be able to remove it. I want more control over the knowledge panel. All owners should be in control, and we should be able to remove what we don't want. I hope you will do what you can to help the many business owners like me who are working hard to make a living. We deserve to be in control of our online presence, and we should not be burdened with a Google Tax.

Sincerely,

Wanlu Duan
Owner