



April 3, 2025

The Honorable Abigail Slater
Assistant Attorney General for the Antitrust Division
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Ms. Slater:

The American Booksellers Association (ABA), the national non-profit trade association representing over 2,800 bookstore locations, strongly opposes any potential acquisition of TikTok by Amazon.

Amazon's market share in the bookselling industry makes it, by any antitrust standard, a monopoly. An Amazon takeover of TikTok would prevent a fair market, deter healthy competition and innovation, and further entrench Amazon's monopoly power to the detriment of consumers, competition, and innovation. Amazon already has a chokehold on e-commerce — controlling a substantial share of online retail and dominating the bookselling market — and cloud computing and digital advertising — creating a sprawling network that competitors struggle to challenge.

If Amazon were to acquire TikTok, it would not only eliminate its emerging rival — TikTok is a formidable player in e-commerce, empowering creators and small businesses to reach consumers directly — but also control TikTok's vast user data and algorithms, integrating it all into Amazon's existing operations. This would amplify Amazon's ability to manipulate markets, lock in customers, and squeeze out competitors — particularly in e-commerce, where TikTok's influence is expanding, and in bookselling, where Amazon could leverage TikTok's platform and its "BookTok" community to tighten its stranglehold on the book industry. The long-term result will mean fewer choices for consumers, decline in sales for small businesses, and a loss in sales tax revenue and jobs for communities.

Since the entire book industry is dependent on TikTok to drive sales and attract readers — and many independent bookstores rely on TikTok for their businesses to connect with readers, promote titles, and drive sales — an Amazon takeover of TikTok would force independent bookstores to allow their main competitor access to their analytics or to abandon an important and growing market channel. Moreover, Amazon would control the algorithms, prioritizing their own books or partnerships while de-prioritizing their competitors such as independent bookstores. Amazon's further monopolization of the book market would not only potentially increase prices for consumers as it does with any competitors, but it would also give too much power over authors and readers to a single corporation, reducing the range of books available and consumers' choice.

The Antitrust Division has a critical responsibility to prevent such consolidations of power. ABA urges the Department of Justice to thoroughly investigate any proposal involving Amazon acquiring TikTok and to take decisive action to block it, should it arise. Preserving TikTok as an independent platform is essential to maintaining a competitive landscape in e-commerce, bookselling, and beyond, ensuring that consumers and businesses alike benefit from a diverse, dynamic, and fair marketplace.

If you have any questions or need further information as it pertains to this letter, please feel free to contact me or the ABA's Advocacy & Public Policy Director, David Grogan, at david@bookweb.org.

Sincerely,

Allison K Hill
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