

Ebook antitrust monitor to end imposed stint at Apple

October 14 2015



New York federal Judge Denise Cote found Apple guilty in July 2013 of a price-fixing conspiracy over the period in late 2009 and early 2010, during which Apple negotiated contracts with publishers ahead of its iPad launch

An antitrust monitor imposed on Apple as the result of an e-book price-fixing case two years ago will end his stint on Friday, according to a judge's ruling.

"The monitor has ably performed a significant public service in a difficult environment," US district [court](#) Judge Denise Cote said in a brief ruling on Tuesday.

"The court concludes that the monitor's term will not be extended."

Apple bristled at having to accommodate a monitor after an [antitrust case](#) ended in 2013 with a finding that the California-based technology giant led an illegal conspiracy to fix prices of e-books.

The finding was upheld by the US Court of Appeals but might be headed to the US Supreme Court for review.

Neither Apple nor lawyers representing plaintiffs in the case opposed letting the monitor's two-year term expire as scheduled on Friday, according to court documents.

"Although the monitor faced a challenging relationship with Apple, that did not prevent him from fulfilling the fundamental purpose of the monitorship: ensuring that Apple implemented a significantly strengthened antitrust compliance program," the US Department of Justice and state attorneys general said in a letter to Cote.

Apple denies wrongdoing

New York federal Judge Cote found Apple guilty in July 2013 of a price-fixing conspiracy over the period in late 2009 and early 2010, during which Apple negotiated contracts with publishers ahead of its iPad launch.



Apple said in 2013 that it brought fresh competition to an e-book market dominated by online giant Amazon and did not conspire to fix e-book pricing

Apple agreed to pay some \$450 million in compensation in the case, contingent on its appeal.

The US Justice Department sued Apple and major publishers alleging the price-fixing scheme was aimed at ending a discounting effort by Amazon. The move almost instantly raised the prices consumers paid for

e-books to \$12.99, \$14.99 or higher, according to the US complaint.

Apple argued unsuccessfully that it brought fresh competition to an e-book market dominated by online giant Amazon and did not conspire to fix e-book pricing.

"Due to the injunction and monitorship, Apple has entirely revamped its antitrust compliance program," Cote said in her ruling.

"It is to be hoped that this program will benefit not only the American public, but Apple as well."

© 2015 AFP

Citation: Ebook antitrust monitor to end imposed stint at Apple (2015, October 14) retrieved 6 July 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-10-ebook-antitrust-imposed-stint-apple.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.