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## **SUBMISSION TO THE PANEL REVIEWING COMPETITIVE NEUTRALITY OF THE ABC AND SBS, DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS & ARTS**

Urban Cinefile, Australia's pre-eminent online movie magazine (established in 1997), had over some years built a business model syndicating its original editorial content (movie reviews, star interviews, feature stories) to a number of online clients, including Telstra, Optus, AOL, Yahoo! Australia New Zealand, and others.

Syndication fees were the company's primary source of revenue; online advertising was virtually impossible to sell.

The company syndicated movie-related content (including managing movie trailer supplies) to Yahoo! Australia NZ for more than six years, until July 21, 2005 (2 final invoices attached). The agreement generated annual revenue rising from approximately \$12,000 to about \$60,000 in the last two years.

At a meeting in February 2005, Yahoo! executive [REDACTED] advised that ABC TV had offered to supply raw transcripts of At The Movies episodes free of charge to Yahoo!, for use as content. These transcripts of movie reviews presented on air by Margaret Pomeranz and David Stratton would replace the movie reviews syndicated by Urban Cinefile. The contract would not be renewed: it was terminated effective July 21, 2005. (There is no suggestion that Margaret Pomeranz and David Stratton, our professional colleagues & friends, were aware of the ABC's offer, or if they were, that it displaced our contract.)

This action represented a significant and irreplaceable loss of revenue for our business, and was especially hard to accept as the 'competitor' to whom we lost the business was the ABC - 1) a Government-owned entity and 2) 'competed' unfairly, providing for free what we were providing for a fee. (Refer Q 8 and Q 11 in the Panel's Scope of this Inquiry.)

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April 30, 2018