

Dear Supervisors:

I am a resident of the City of San Francisco. I am also a businessman with a small law practice in the City. I employ two people and support several others. I advertise in the Valley Yellow Pages and have been a past advertiser in the AT&T pages.

I think the proposal to limit the distribution of the Valley Yellow Pages is laudable and the Board of Supervisors should sleep much better, knowing that trees have been saved.

However, in balancing the noble nature of the presumed goal of saving trees, please consider the harm to the small businesses that depend on Yellow Page advertising:

- 1) Over 70% of my business is based on my Valley Yellow Pages advertising. Without the ability to advertise through Valley Yellow Pages, my practice would wither and die. Google and similar search engines are dominating the marketplace. The businesses with the most money will be the ones who are able to claim a place on the first pages of Google and the like. Not so with the Yellow Pages where small businesses can still find a place to thrive. The Board of Supervisors would necessarily drive up advertising costs by limiting the available marketplace. I really don't want to give my limited advertising dollars to Silicon Valley internet moguls.
- 2) I have grown my law practice largely through advertising in the Valley Yellow Pages and could not sustain it without that advertising vehicle. While I have no idea what the future would hold for me personally, a 20% drop in revenue would require me to lay-off one employee. A 40% drop in revenue and I would be back to working for myself in a one-man shop.

The truth is, I believe that the written word on paper, whether it be books, magazines, newspapers or Yellow Pages, is likely to be in its death stages. I'm sure that the Board of Supervisors could pass a law making the sale of books illegal within city limits. After all, it would save considerable paper when electronic book readers are so very available. But maybe stores like Borders will just go away anyway (oh, but they probably will soon with their bankruptcy filing; I also notice the Barnes & Noble just closed at the Wharf as well).

Why don't you just let the marketplace sort this out. If the Yellow Pages stops being a vehicle for effective advertising, then advertisers will just go away and it will die anyway. Just like Borders.

Very truly yours,
Marty K. Courson