



28 April, 2020

1-14-1 Tamagawa

Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 158-0094, Japan

Mr. Didier Reynders  
European Commissioner for Justice and Consumers  
Rue de la Loi, 200  
1049 Brussels, Belgium

Dear Commissioner Reynders,

Thank you for your letter of April 21.

Our global marketplaces are redoubling efforts to supply critical products and supplies. We are working with our merchants to increase access to vital products such as face masks, liquid sanitizers, or sanitizing wipes. On our e-commerce platforms, we monitor for price-gouging and prevent scammers from offering fake quack cures.

We find it effective to fight against price gouging, using price filters. We find it more difficult to determine the quality of products, particularly masks. These offers can only be reviewed manually. We do not stock or handle these products ourselves. It would be helpful if regulatory authorities put out a list of authorized brands.

1. **Number of proactive removals:** Our European marketplaces proactively have removed around 2870 product pages due to price gouging and misleading claims. We have removed corona from the descriptions. Our filtering systems have blocked hundreds of listings from appearing online on a daily basis.
2. **Number of removals based on notices from competent authorities and/or consumers:** We have removed 17 product listings based on notices from competent authorities.
3. **Number of accounts suspended from our marketplaces due to COVID-19 related infringements:** We have suspended 13 accounts. Most merchants contacted changed listings in a cooperative and timely manner.

We are participating in the European Commission's Product Safety initiative and working hard with the Commission not only to improve our own performance in preventing and taking down unsafe products from sale, but also in partnering with regulators to improve both the accuracy and speed of their regulatory notices.

We would like to take this opportunity to detail additional actions<sup>1</sup> that Rakuten is taking to ease the

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://rakuten.today/blog/rakuten-empowers-businesses-covid-19-pandemic-response.html>





COVID-19 crisis. For merchants, we provide the possibility of trading. For consumers, we provide critical supplies and keep us informed and entertained. For students, we allow studies to continue:

- Throughout the world, our marketplaces are helping a wide variety of brick and mortar merchants keep their businesses open. In Europe, Rakuten France and Rakuten Germany are helping retailers transition online – offering free selling plans, reduced fees, and personal support. Rakuten France is holding special accelerated training webinars for new merchants.
- In all our markets, Rakuten Advertising supports brands with data and insights through free Rakuten Intelligence webinars and network performance evaluations. Its COVID-19 Resource Center provides regular updates for retailers and publishing partners.

During the lockdown, Rakuten informs and entertains.

- Rakuten Viber has communicated WHO safety guidelines to 200 million users in 22 languages through in-app messages. Its #SocialDistancing sticker packs educate about the virus's danger. The messaging service supports government health institutions in 11 countries and provides real-time updates and approved information to over 10 million members.
- Rakuten Kobo has launched the #StayHomeandRead campaign in more than 27 countries. It is working with publishers and governments to offer a wide assortment of books. Over the last 30-days, Kobo has given away more than 10 million books worldwide.
- Rakuten TV has added more than 100 movies to stream free of charge. It has reached an agreement with broadcasters to allow users to experience first-run cinema at home. In its home Barcelona base, the company donated tablets and movies to hospital patients who cannot see their relatives due to COVID-19 medical quarantine.

At this difficult moment, Rakuten vows to play its part to cope with COVID and to help our societies prevail and thrive.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kentaro Hyakuno', is written over a faint, light-colored signature line.

**Kentaro Hyakuno**  
Group Executive Vice President  
COO (Chief Operating Officer)  
Rakuten, Inc.