

authentic reviews from customers who had received and had a chance to use the products, the complaint charges Sitejabber with deceptive conduct in violation of section 5.

Sitejabber is also accused of having provided its retail clients with widgets by which the retailers could embed the IFPR-derived product ratings on their own websites. These widgets had no purpose other than to represent that those product ratings were derived from the reviews of consumers who had received and had a chance to use the product in question. This representation was false given that the ratings were obtained from consumers who had not received the product when they provided the rating. For offering this widget, the complaint charges Sitejabber with a further section 5 violation for providing the means and instrumentalities for the commission of deceptive acts and practices.

Sitejabber's condemned business practices are very different from Rytr's. Rytr provided an AI-powered writing tool which could be used to generate draft consumer reviews.⁵ Although a consumer or business could have used Rytr's tool to generate a false product review, and that false product review could in some circumstances violate section 5's prohibition on deceptive acts or practices, that was not necessarily the case.⁶ Indeed, the Commission did not supply a single example of someone having used Rytr's tool to violate section 5.⁷ A consumer also could have used Rytr's tool to generate an initial draft of a perfectly honest consumer review.⁸ The mere fact that someone could use a product to commit fraud does not make that product the means and instrumentalities to commit fraud.⁹ In my view, the provision of a product or service with potential unlawful uses is not the provision of the means and instrumentalities to violate section 5 unless (1) the instrumentality in question "has no or de minimis legal use";¹⁰ (2) the provider of the instrumentality had the purpose of facilitating the section 5 violation;¹¹ or (3) the provider "knows, or has reason to know, that the person to whom the product or service was supplied will use it to violate section 5."¹²

Whereas Rytr's review generator tool satisfied none of those requirements, the

allegations in the complaint here show that Sitejabber's product satisfies all three. First, there is no legitimate purpose for a widget displaying an instant product review rating. No reasonable consumer would be interested in a one-to-five-star product rating derived from reviews left by other consumers who had not yet received or used the product.¹³ When a consumer views a product rating, he reasonably assumes that the rating is based on reviewers' experiences with the product, not with the purchasing process. Second, because the widgets had no use other than to deceive consumers, we can reasonably infer that Sitejabber knew that every single one of its clients was using them for that purpose. Finally, there is ample evidence that Sitejabber's very purpose in offering the widgets was to assist in the deception of consumers. The widgets were nothing but an extension of the same deception that Sitejabber was carrying out on its own website using the same deceptive ratings and on behalf of the same clients.

I therefore concur in the Commission's complaint and proposed consent order against Sitejabber.

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UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA

Performance Review Board Members

AGENCY: United States Agency for Global Media.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM) announces the members of its SES Performance Review Board (PRB).

ADDRESSES: USAGM Office of Human Resources, 330 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20237.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ellona Fritschie, Senior Advisor, at efritschie@usagm.gov or (202) 920-2400.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 4314, USAGM publishes this notice announcing the individuals who will serve as members of the PRB for a term of one year. The PRB is responsible for: (1) reviewing performance appraisals and ratings of Senior Executive Service and Senior

Level members; and (2) making recommendations on other performance management issues, such as pay adjustments, bonuses, and Presidential Rank Awards. The names, position titles, and appointment types of each member of the PRB are set forth below:

1. Grant Turner, Chief Risk Officer, Career SES
2. David Kotz, Chief Management Officer, Career SES
3. Sylvia Rosabal, Director, Office of Cuban Broadcasting, Non-Career SES
4. Adrienne Fleming, Deputy Director, TSI, Career SES

Dated: November 13, 2024.

Armanda Matthews,

Program Support Specialist, U.S. Agency for Global Media.

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GULF COAST ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION COUNCIL

[Docket No.: 111132024-1111-05]

Senior Executive Service Performance Review Board Membership

AGENCY: Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (GCERC).

ACTION: Notice of Performance Review Board (PRB) appointments.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) Performance Review Board. The PRB is comprised of a Chairperson and a mix of state representatives and career senior executives that meet annually to review and evaluate performance appraisal documents and provide a written recommendation to the Chairperson of the Council for final approval of each executive's performance rating, performance-based pay adjustment, and performance award.

DATES: The board membership is applicable beginning on January 1, 2024 and ending on December 31, 2024.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mary S. Walker, Executive Director, Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council, telephone 504-210-9982.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 4314(c)(4), the persons named below have been selected to serve on the PRB:

Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council

Walker, Mary S., Executive Director,
Mary.Walker@restorethegulf.gov, 504-210-9982

⁵ Ferguson Rytr Dissent at 1-2.

⁶ *Id.* at 6-7.

⁷ *Id.* at 2.

⁸ *Id.* at 7.

⁹ *Id.* at 5-6.

¹⁰ *Id.* at 6.

¹¹ *Id.* at 7-9.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ FTC Policy Statement on Deception, 103 F.T.C. 174, 175 (1984), <https://www.ftc.gov/legal-library/browse/ftc-policy-statement-deception>, appended to *In Re Cliffdale Assocs., Inc.*, 103 F.T.C. 110 (1984) (in determining whether a practice is deceptive "we examine the practice from the perspective of a consumer acting reasonably").