

CMA requires viagogo to sell StubHub's international business

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has concluded that the merger between viagogo and Stubhub will lead to a substantial reduction in competition in the secondary ticketing market in the UK. This could lead to customers who use secondary ticketing platforms facing higher fees or poorer service in future. To address this concern, the CMA is requiring viagogo to sell StubHub's business outside North America.

This will mean that the StubHub international business – including in the UK – will be independently owned and run by a separate company, with no input from viagogo.

The CMA will determine key conditions of the sale, such as the right of the purchaser to use the StubHub brand for the next 10 years. The CMA will also need to approve the purchaser of the business before any sale.

Viagogo acquired StubHub in February 2020. StubHub's ticketing business operates in a number of territories including North America, the UK and several countries in Europe, and South America and Asia. In the UK, viagogo and StubHub are the 2 main providers of secondary ticketing platforms.

To reach today's decision, a group of independent CMA panel members considered evidence from customers, competitors and other stakeholders, including consumer groups.

The evidence shows that viagogo and StubHub compete closely against each other in the UK's secondary ticketing market and have no significant competitors. Together, they have a combined market share of more than 90% and are the number 1 and number 2 players respectively in the UK.

The CMA also reviewed the evidence on whether other distribution channels – capped-price ticket exchanges, classified ad sites (like Gumtree), social media and the primary ticketing market itself – would be able to compete strongly with the merged entity. It found that these would not be able to stop the merged business from pushing up fees or reducing quality of service.

The CMA has been mindful of the significant impact that the coronavirus (COVID-19) is currently having on the live events industry through-out its investigation. However, the evidence is that viagogo and StubHub would remain important competitors as and when the live events industry recovers.

Stuart McIntosh, Chair of the CMA inquiry group, said:

The CMA has focused on ensuring competition in this sector works best for UK consumers. After examining all the options, including unwinding the merger in full, the evidence shows that viagogo selling StubHub's international business will resolve our

competition concerns, effectively and proportionately.

Creating a fully independent StubHub international business will maintain competition in the UK and help ensure that the users of these ticketing platforms don't face higher prices or poorer quality of service.

For more information, visit the [viagogo/StubHub merger inquiry case page](#).

Notes to editors

1. Secondary Ticketing Platforms facilitate the resale of tickets to live sports, music and theatrical events, where resale of such tickets is permitted.