
Justice Department Closes Antitrust Investigation of Seattle Times/Hearst Communications Joint Operating Agreement

2005-05-17

WilmerHale scored an important victory last week for its client, The Seattle Times Company, when the Justice Department (the Department) announced it was closing its investigation into whether The Seattle Times had violated the antitrust laws through its management of its joint operating agreement with the Hearst Corporation, which owns the other metropolitan daily in Seattle, *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. Click [here](#) to view Justice Department press release. The Department's two-year-long investigation had focused on whether The Seattle Times, as manager of the JOA, had engaged in conduct that made no business sense but for its tendency to reduce competition and thereby monopolize the Seattle newspaper market. The Department, in closing the investigation, stated that it had found no indication that The Seattle Times had engaged in such conduct.

This is the second victory this year for WilmerHale's newspaper industry antitrust practice. In March, the firm secured clearance for the acquisition of its client, HomeTown Communications Network, by Gannett Corporation, which owned competing daily newspapers in the same metropolitan areas as HomeTown. Click [here](#) to view complete HomeTown story.

[William Kolasky](#) handled the matter for the firm, working closely with The Seattle Times' regular corporate counsel, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP.