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The guy doing these apps is very aggressive and has signed up all the name brand content folks for news, travel, sports. He is part of the Bing team and to date the apps have been viewed as extensions of Bing services. Food and drink certainly seems new to me and doesn't quite fit that mold but I don't know what Bing has in store down the road.

I am surprised that he would be offering a direct way to acquire books from the built-in apps as that would run counter to how the Windows product would think about apps. There's a seam in the org where the Windows team (not the Bing team that creates the apps) ultimately owns the definition of the apps. I guess I would be surprised if the Windows team genuinely thinks that doing inbox sales of food/drink books is a good thing (does it scale globally, how does it impact the overall Windows app store and who thinks they should be there, and so on -- Apple doesn't really do anything as specific as this).

As for them, the questions they are asking are right. The history of freemium business models when it comes to upsell from preinstalled software on any PC or phone is not a pretty one. Freemium in general has not worked very well. Given the high quality nature of their content I am not sure.

In general this is not a new point of view for me. I've always been skeptical of the value of doing deals for partners where the value delivered is distribution and the partner basically gives up all their IP in hopes of some upsell down the road. It hasn't worked as far back as anyone can recall. The only place it worked was for anti-virus software and that was primarily based on fear, not genuine demand.

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