

# Nevada businesses say Amazon deal levels playing field

By Bill O'Driscoll, Reno Gazette-Journal

An even playing field, that's all book-seller Christine Kelly wants.

Kelly has operated Sundance Bookstore and Music in Reno for 26 years, and she and has watched online retailing's rise in part from not charging sales tax while she and other brick-and-mortar business owners must do so under the law. In Washoe County, that means 7.725 percent more on her customers' bills.

Now it appears that competitive bump will be leveled off. Starting in January 2014, online retail giant Amazon.com Inc., which has 20 U.S. distribution centers including sites in Fernley and North Las Vegas, will collect sales tax on purchases originating in Nevada.

"I believe in competition, different forms of commerce," Kelly said in hailing Amazon's plan announced last week. "But it's gotta be balanced and fair. I've no problem paying taxes, it just needs to be applied fairly. This elephant has been in our living room for a long time."

The issue of taxing Internet-based sales, especially collecting from out-of-state retailers, has long been difficult for states to resolve – as well as to enforce.

In Nevada, "We have had voluntary collection where a number of companies have agreed to collect tax on merchandise they ship to the state," said Carole Vilardo, president of the Nevada Taxpayers Association.

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