



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

John E. Murphy, Acting U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MIDLAND MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FRAUD USING EBAY

John E. Murphy, Acting United States Attorney, announced that 34-year-old Midland resident Timothy Wayne Finkle faces up to 20 years in federal prison after pleading guilty to wire fraud involving a scheme to steal money from customers of the eBay website.

Appearing before United States Magistrate Timothy Bommer on Friday, Finkle admitted that in December 2007 and January 2008, he placed numerous gold, silver and platinum items for sale on eBay. After items were sold or winning bids accepted, Finkle received payments from purchasers via PayPal, but delivered none of the merchandise. Finkle further admitted that at the time he posted the various gold, silver and platinum items, he had neither the ability nor the intention to fulfill any orders.

Finkle was suspended from the website once his fraudulent activity came to light. In all, more than 70 customers around the world were victimized, and eBay/Paypal has reimbursed nearly all of them. Ebay estimates losses caused by Finkle total approximately \$89,000.

Finkle is scheduled to be sentenced in September.

The case was investigated by the Midland Police Department and the Special Investigations Group of eBay/Paypal. Assistant United States Attorney John S. Klassen is prosecuting the matter for the government.

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