



# Department of Justice

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**District of Kansas**

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## **JURY CONVICTS PREPARER** **OF FALSE OR FRAUDULENT RETURNS**

KANSAS CITY, KAN. – The owner of a tax preparation business was convicted Wednesday on charges of preparing false or fraudulent tax returns for customers who took advice from Renaissance, The Tax People.

**Gene Franklin**, 58, Gladstone, Mo., was convicted on two counts of preparing false or fraudulent tax returns.

Franklin owned Franklin & Company, Inc., an income tax preparation business with offices in Kansas City, Butler, Mo., and Overland Park, Kan.

Evidence presented at trial showed Franklin advised clients and prepared tax returns fraudulently reporting business expenses in a manner promoted by Renaissance in literature, sales presentations and videos. Franklin joined Renaissance as an “Independent Marketing Associate,” who drew revenue from bringing other members into the network. Additionally, Franklin was an “Affiliated Tax Professional” with Renaissance, which enabled him to promote his tax preparation business at Renaissance meetings. Through the affiliation with Renaissance, the gross receipts for Franklin & Company increased almost 50 percent due to the large number of new clients.

The founder of Renaissance, The Tax People, Michael Craig Cooper, was convicted in February on more than 70 counts of mail fraud, wire fraud, money laundering and conspiracy.

On other charges against Franklin, the jury was hung on a conspiracy charge, found him not guilty on one count of preparing a false or fraudulent return and reached no verdict on two other counts of preparing a false or fraudulent return.

A co-defendant, Donald Chapin of Shawnee, Kan., was found not guilty on the conspiracy charge and not guilty on three counts of preparing a false or fraudulent return. The jury reached no verdict on another count of preparing a false or fraudulent tax return.

Franklin is set for sentencing June 30. He faces a maximum penalty of 3 years and a fine up to \$250,000 on each count.

The Internal Revenue Service, Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott Rask, and the Department of Justice Tax Division Trial Attorney Joseph Rillotta worked on the case.

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