

Southern District of Florida

Press Release

AMERICAN MERCHANT TECHNOLOGIES, INC., DEFENDANT PLEADS GUILTY TO CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT WIRE FRAUD IN BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY SCHEME

April 11, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

R. Alexander Acosta, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, and Henry Gutierrez, Inspector in Charge, Miami Division, United States Postal Inspection Service, announced that defendant **Walter Henderson** entered a guilty plea on April 11, 2007, in Miami Federal District Court to one count of an Information, charging him with conspiracy to commit wire fraud. Sentencing is scheduled for June 21, 2007 at 8:30am before Judge Seitz.

Henderson was a Project Manager and salesman for American Merchant Technologies, Inc. ("AMT"), a Miami-based company that purportedly sold automated teller machines, public access internet terminals, and point of sale terminal business opportunities to consumers across the United States.

AMT was in business from April 2004 until December 2004. According to the Information, AMT salespersons made materially false statements to potential purchasers, including that AMT was a profitable business opportunity, and that a locating company would secure high-traffic locations for AMT distributors to place their terminals. To effectuate the fraud, AMT salespersons provided potential purchasers with the names of individuals who were purportedly successful AMT business opportunity owners as references. In fact, however, AMT paid these individuals to act as references to fraudulently induce potential purchasers to buy an AMT business opportunity. While AMT was in business, these phony references spoke to a number of potential purchasers of an AMT business opportunity. Through this scheme, more than 50 persons were victimized, resulting in more than \$1,000,000 in victim losses.

The AMT prosecution is part of an ongoing crackdown on business opportunity fraud in South Florida that is being carried out by the United States Department of Justice, the United States Attorney's Office in Miami, the United States Postal Inspection Service, and the Federal Trade Commission. Mr. Acosta commended the investigative efforts of the United States Postal Inspection Service. The case is being prosecuted by Jeffrey Steger, Trial Attorney, United States Department of Justice, Office of Consumer Litigation.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida at <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/fls>. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Southern District of Florida at <http://www.flsd.uscourts.gov> or on <http://pacer.flsd.uscourts.gov>.

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