



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney
District of Maryland

Rod J. Rosenstein
United States Attorney

Vickie E. LeDuc
Public Information Officer

36 S. Charles Street
Fourth Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2692

410-209-4800
TTY/TDD: 410-962-4462
410-209-4885
FAX 410-962-3091
Vickie.LeDuc@usdoj.gov

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**CONTACT AUSA VICKIE E. LEDUC or
MARCIA MURPHY at (410) 209-4885**

PARKVILLE MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO SELLING COUNTERFEIT GOODS

Sold Counterfeit Name Brand Handbags and Watches over the Internet

Baltimore, Maryland - Anthony DiFatta, age 42, of Parkville, Maryland, pleaded guilty today to trafficking in counterfeit goods, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein.

According to the plea agreement, from at least June 2005, through December 2007, Difatta sold counterfeit watches and handbags through several websites, including websites that were setup by Difatta himself. Difatta accepted payment for the counterfeit goods through PayPal. PayPal records for Difatta's account show income totaling \$104,814 from the sale of counterfeit goods for the time period June 29, 2005 through Nov 15, 2007. Difatta conducted his illegal business over the Internet.

On December 22, 2006, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) initiated undercover purchases from Difatta, including one pair of Dolce & Gabbana sunglasses; three Rolex watches; one Prada black large hobo bag; and one Chanel black cambro handbag for \$240 and transferred the funds via Paypal. After the items were received, experts from Rolex and Chanel examined the items and determined that they were counterfeit. Both companies sent letters to Difatta informing him of the illegal nature of his counterfeit sales and requesting that he stop selling counterfeit products. Not only did Difatta not stop selling counterfeit products, he set up a new and different website dedicated specifically to selling counterfeit Chanel products.

On October 24, 2007, agents conducted a search of Difatta's residence and recovered approximately 650 counterfeit items. Difatta acknowledged that the brand name items that he sold over the Internet were counterfeit. The infringement amount attributable to DiFatta resulting from his sales of counterfeit goods exceeded \$70,000 but was less than \$120,000.

DiFatta faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison, followed by three years of supervised release and a \$2 million fine. U.S. District Judge William D. Quarles, Jr. has scheduled sentencing for June 23, 2008 at 1:00 p.m.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein thanked U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement and U.S. Customs and Border Protection for their investigative work. Mr. Rosenstein commended Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Anthony Teelucksingh, who is detailed to the District of Maryland from the U.S. Department of Justice Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section, and is prosecuting the case.