



PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: Elizabeth M. Martinez
Executive Assistant U.S. Attorney
Public Affairs Officer
elizabeth.martinez@usdoj.gov
505.224.1469

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**WEB-DESIGNER PLEADS GUILTY TO
UNLAWFUL COMPUTER INTRUSION**

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning, Andrew West, 40, of Albuquerque, entered a guilty plea to an information charging him with fraud in connection with computers in Albuquerque federal court. At sentencing, West faces a maximum penalty of five years of imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, and restitution as ordered by the Court. West was released under pretrial supervision pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

The information to which West pleaded guilty charged West with accessing a protected computer without authorization and with the intention of committing fraud and obtaining money in Nov. 2011, in Bernalillo County, N.M.

According to West's plea agreement, in early Nov. 2011, West executed a scheme to defraud an artist who routinely sold his artwork through on-line sales and collected payment using a Paypal account. West admitted that he obtained unauthorized access to the victim's computer system and caused the payments that were intended to go into the victim's Paypal account to be diverted to a Paypal account he created and controlled. Between Nov. 6, 2011 and Nov. 17, 2011, West unlawfully diverted more than \$4000 intended for the victim's account to an account that he controlled. Under the terms of the plea agreement, West will pay restitution to the victim of his crime.

The case was investigated by the FBI as part of its Cyber Criminal Computer Intrusion Initiative, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney John C. Anderson.

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