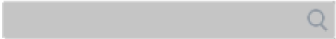


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AT&T sued for improperly billing web call service for deaf

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AP Photo, file

(CBS/AP) The Justice Department is suing AT&T, hoping to recover millions after the Dallas telecommunications giant allegedly billed the government improperly for services designed for the deaf and hard-of-hearing who place calls by typing messages over the web.

The lawsuit states that the web call system was abused by people overseas who used it to defraud merchants in the U.S. by ordering goods with stolen credit cards and counterfeit checks. In response, the federal government ordered telecom companies to register users.

According to The Associated Press, the suit says AT&T failed to adopt procedures to detect or prevent fraudulent users from registering.

The government claims the company feared its call volumes would drop once fraudulent users were prevented from calling on the system.

The government reimbursed AT&T \$1.30 per minute for every call on this system.



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