

Tech businesses accused of duping computer users



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Federal authorities are investigating tech businesses in **Delray Beach** accused of charging people for unnecessary computer repairs after diagnosing phantom problems.

The Federal Trade Commission last week obtained a temporary restraining order against OMG Tech Help LLC, Vast Tech Support LLC and related entities, alleging a scheme that took in more than \$22 million.

In its court filing, the FTC said the companies advertised a computer scan system to detect problems with slow-running systems, flagging items such as temporary files and cookies as "errors," and then offering to fix the software with a \$29.95 download. The companies then sold a longer-term maintenance plan to consumers who believed their computers were riddled with problems, court documents allege.

An FTC spokesman on Friday said the agency "couldn't comment at this time."

The companies listed as defendants include Vast Tech Support, 2855 S. Congress Ave. in **Delray Beach**, and OMG Tech Help of **Delray Beach**, also located at 2855 S. Congress Ave. Company officers listed as defendants are Jon-Paul Vasta, president; Mark Donahue, chief operating officer; and Elliot Loewenstern, managing partner of Vast, and related companies, Success Capital and OMG Tech Help.

Vasta and his associates couldn't be reached for comment.

U.S. District Judge Kenneth Marra entered an order Nov. 12 in the Southern District Court appointing Miami lawyer David S. Mandel as the receiver for OMG Tech Help LLC, Vast Tech Support LLC and the related entities.

The receiver posted a message on omgtechhelp.wix.com, saying the FTC's investigation continues and any additional information will be posted on the website.

The FTC said in its court filing that the firms have violated the Fair Trade Commission Act, the Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act and the Telemarketing Sales Rule.

Also cited in the filing was Boost Software of Boston and Naples, Fla. Boost transacts business through telemarketers at **Delray Beach**-based Vast, the filing says. Boost's president, Amit Mehta, also is named in the FTC's action.

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