

 An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#)

## JUSTICE NEWS

### Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, March 23, 2017

## Former Coach USA Inc. Executive Sentenced to 15 Months in Prison for Obstruction of Justice

A former executive of Coach USA Inc. was sentenced today for attempting to conceal and destroy documents relevant to a civil antitrust investigation and for providing false and misleading statements during the course of civil antitrust litigation, the Department of Justice announced.

Ralph Groen, of North Carolina, the former vice president of information technology for Coach USA Inc. (Coach), was ordered to serve 15 months in prison and ordered to pay a \$5000 criminal fine. On Oct. 14, 2016, Groen pleaded guilty to corruptly obstructing, influencing and impeding a civil antitrust investigation and subsequent litigation brought by the United States and State of New York.

According to court documents filed in this case in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, Groen directed his subordinates to recall, conceal and destroy end-of-month backup tapes containing emails that were relevant and responsive to the litigation. Additionally, according to court documents, Groen provided false and misleading information to Coach's investigators and to the United States during the course of a deposition taken as part of the litigation.

The civil litigation, which was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, related to the New York City hop-on, hop-off tour bus market and challenged Coach's and City Sights LLC's formation of the Twin America LLC joint venture in 2009. On Nov. 17, 2015, the district court entered a final judgment requiring Coach and City Sights to pay \$7.5 million in disgorgement and to make divestitures to address the competitive harm alleged in the division's lawsuit.

Today's sentence is a result of an investigation into obstruction of justice conducted by the Antitrust Division's Washington Criminal I Section and the FBI's Washington Field Office. Anyone with information on price fixing, bid rigging and other anticompetitive conduct should contact the Antitrust Division's Citizen Complaint Center at 1-888-647-3258, visit <http://www.justice.gov/atr/contact/newcase.html> or call the FBI's Washington Office at 202-278-2000.

---

**Topic(s):**

Antitrust

**Press Release Number:**

17-309

**Component(s):**

[Antitrust Division](#)

*Updated March 23, 2017*