

Calif. man charged in Net 'click fraud'

March 30 2006

A California man has been charged with using a "click fraud" scheme to chisel the FreeRide Web site out of reward points used to obtain free merchandise.

Allen Tam, 32, of Daly City, allegedly used source code he obtained from his employer to set up a "robot" program that registered scores of clicks on the FreeRide Web site, racking up reward points in the process that were redeemed for products offered by Amazon.com and other Internet retailers.

The points are rewarded to FreeRide users who fill out online surveys.

The U.S. Attorney's office in San Francisco said Wednesday that Tam was indicted on charges of conspiracy, mail fraud and wire fraud and could face five to 20 years in prison for each count. No initial court date has been set.

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