

NY seeks to delete phony online reviews

September 23 2013

New York's attorney general is trying to dismantle what he calls a system of creating false online review for products and services.

On Monday, Eric Schneiderman (SHNEYE'-dur-muhn) settled cases with 19 companies that included \$350,000 in penalties after a yearlong investigation into the fake plaudits sometimes called "astroturfing." The term is based on the synthetic grass used on [sports fields](#).

Schneiderman says he found companies that filed false reviews on Yelp, Google Local, CitySearch and other websites.

Many were written by people in Philippines, Bangladesh and Eastern Europe for \$1 to \$10 per review.

Some fraudulent writers also defended their fake reviews on websites challenging the reviews.

One undercover agent was able to hire a company to create a false positive impression of a fictitious company.

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