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- Reviews
- Artists
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## Former Executive at 'American Idol' Parent Facing Jail for Fraud

By Richard Smirke, London | October 08, 2014 8:30 AM EDT



A former senior executive at the TV production company behind *American Idol* and *The X-Factor* is facing a jail sentence for fraud.

**Ian Ousey** pleaded guilty at Highbury Corner Magistrates Court to stealing almost £225,000 (\$360,000) from London-based production company FremantleMedia, which owns the rights to the *American Idol*, *X-Factor* and *Got Talent* entertainment brands.

According to *The Times* in London, Ousey of Ascot, Berkshire, admitted submitting false invoices for a four-year period between 2008 to 2012, while employed in the role of FremantleMedia's Chief Financial Officer.

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The newspaper states that the 51-year-old exec first began taking money from the Bertelsmann-owned company when he faced missing a payment on Portuguese holiday home and risked losing the property. Ousey's deception was discovered after bosses questioned his use of the company credit card to book overseas flights.

"He submitted a false invoice for a company that did not exist, but which had a similar name to one that did supply to [Fremantle]," his barrister, **Samuel Parrish**, said at the trial. "Once he started it seems he couldn't stop."

Mr Parrish went on to say that, following Ousey's confession of fraud, "His professional life, perhaps his family life, has come to a complete and utter end," *The Times* reports.

Having pleaded guilty to a single count of fraud by abuse of position, Ousey was released on unconditional bail and is due to be sentenced at Blackfriars Crown Court at a later date to be determined.

**Rodney Hylton-Potts**, the defendant's solicitor, said that since admitting his crimes, Ousey had repaid Fremantle £164,000 (\$260,000) in cash, £200,000 (\$320,000) in bonus and severance payments and surrendered £1.2 million (\$1.9 million) in pension entitlements.

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