

Status of Company-Owned Outlets  
For years 2004 to 2006

Column 1 State	Column 2 Year	Column 3 Outlets at Start of Year	Column 4 Outlets Opened	Column 5 Outlets Reac- quired From Franchisees	Column 6 Outlets Closed	Column 7 Outlets Sold to Franchisees	Column 8 Outlets at End of the Year
	2006	3	0	0	3	0	0
OR	2004	4	0	1	0	0	5
	2005	5	0	0	2	0	3
	2006	3	0	0	0	1	2
Totals	2004	5	0	2	0	0	7
	2005	7	2	0	3	0	6
	2006	6	0	0	3	1	2

APPENDIX F TO PART 436—SAMPLE ITEM 20(5) TABLE—PROJECTED NEW FRANCHISED  
OUTLETS

Projected New Franchised Outlets  
As of December 31, 2006

Column 1 State	Column 2 Franchise Agreements Signed But Outlet Not Opened	Column 3 Projected New Franchised Outlets in the Next Fiscal Year	Column 4 Projected New Company- Owned Outlets in the Current Fiscal Year
CO	2	3	1
NM	0	4	2
Total	2	7	3

**PART 437—DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS AND PROHIBITIONS CONCERNING BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES (Eff. until 3-1-12)**

- Sec.
- 437.1 The Rule.
- 437.2 Definitions.
- 437.3 Severability.

AUTHORITY: 15 U.S.C. 41-58.

SOURCE: 72 FR 15563, Mar. 30, 2007, unless otherwise note.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 76 FR 76860, Dec. 8, 2011, part 437 was revised, effective March 1, 2012. For the convenience of the user, the new part 437 follows the text of this part.

**§ 437.1 The Rule.**

In connection with the advertising, offering, licensing, contracting, sale, or other promotion in or affecting commerce, as “commerce” is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act, of any business opportunity, or any relationship which is represented either orally or in writing to be a business oppor-

tunity, it is an unfair or deceptive act or practice within the meaning of Section 5 of that Act for any business opportunity seller or business opportunity broker:

(a) To fail to furnish any prospective business opportunity purchaser with the following information accurately, clearly, and concisely stated, in a legible, written document at the earlier of the “time for making of disclosures” or the first “personal meeting”:

(1)(i) The official name and address and principal place of business of the business opportunity seller, and of the parent firm or holding company of the business opportunity seller, if any;

(ii) The name under which the business opportunity seller is doing or intends to do business; and

(iii) The trademarks, trade names, service marks, advertising or other commercial symbols (hereinafter collectively referred to as “marks”) which identify the goods, commodities, or

§ 437.1

16 CFR Ch. I (1-1-12 Edition)

services to be offered, sold, or distributed by the prospective business opportunity purchaser, or under which the prospective business opportunity purchaser will be operating.

(2) The business experience during the past 5 years, stated individually, of each of the business opportunity seller's current directors and executive officers (including, and hereinafter to include, the chief executive and chief operating officer, financial, business opportunity marketing, training and service officers). With regard to each person listed, those persons' principal occupations and employers must be included.

(3) The business experience of the business opportunity seller and the business opportunity seller's parent firm (if any), including the length of time each:

(i) Has conducted a business of the type to be operated by the business opportunity purchaser;

(ii) Has offered or sold a business opportunity for such business;

(iii) Has conducted a business or offered or sold a business opportunity for a business

(A) Operating under a name using any mark set forth under paragraph (a)(1)(iii) of this section, or

(B) Involving the sale, offering, or distribution of goods, commodities, or services which are identified by any mark set forth under paragraph (a)(1)(iii) of this section; and

(iv) Has offered for sale or sold business opportunities in other lines of business, together with a description of such other lines of business.

(4) A statement disclosing who, if any, of the persons listed in paragraphs (a)(2) and (3) of this section:

(i) Has, at any time during the previous seven fiscal years, been convicted of a felony or pleaded nolo contendere to a felony charge if the felony involved fraud (including violation of any business opportunity law, or unfair or deceptive practices law), embezzlement, fraudulent conversion, misappropriation of property, or restraint of trade;

(ii) Has, at any time during the previous seven fiscal years, been held liable in a civil action resulting in a final judgment or has settled out of court

any civil action or is a party to any civil action

(A) Involving allegations of fraud (including violation of any business opportunity law, or unfair or deceptive practices law), embezzlement, fraudulent conversion, misappropriation of property, or restraint of trade, or

(B) Which was brought by a present or former business opportunity purchaser or business opportunity purchasers and which involves or involved the business opportunity relationship; *Provided, however,* That only material individual civil actions need be so listed pursuant to this paragraph (4)(ii) of this section, including any group of civil actions which, irrespective of the materiality of any single such action, in the aggregate is material;

(iii) Is subject to any currently effective State or Federal agency or court injunctive or restrictive order, or is a party to a proceeding currently pending in which such order is sought, relating to or affecting business opportunity activities or the business opportunity seller-purchaser relationship, or involving fraud (including violation of any business opportunity law, or unfair or deceptive practices law), embezzlement, fraudulent conversion, misappropriation of property, or restraint of trade.

Such statement shall set forth the identity and location of the court or agency; the date of conviction, judgment, or decision; the penalty imposed; the damages assessed; the terms of settlement or the terms of the order; and the date, nature, and issuer of each such order or ruling. A business opportunity seller may include a summary opinion of counsel as to any pending litigation, but only if counsel's consent to the use of such opinion is included in the disclosure statement.

(5) A statement disclosing who, if any, of the persons listed in paragraphs (a)(2) and (3) of this section at any time during the previous 7 fiscal years has:

(i) Filed in bankruptcy;

(ii) Been adjudged bankrupt;

(iii) Been reorganized due to insolvency; or

(iv) Been a principal, director, executive officer, or partner of any other person that has so filed or was so adjudged or reorganized, during or within

1 year after the period that such person held such position in such other person. If so, the name and location of the person having so filed, or having been so adjudged or reorganized, the date thereof, and any other material facts relating thereto, shall be set forth.

(6) A factual description of the business opportunity offered to be sold by the business opportunity seller.

(7) A statement of the total funds which must be paid by the business opportunity purchaser to the business opportunity seller or to a person affiliated with the business opportunity seller, or which the business opportunity seller or such affiliated person imposes or collects in whole or in part on behalf of a third party, in order to obtain or commence the business opportunity operation, such as initial business opportunity fees, deposits, down payments, prepaid rent, and equipment and inventory purchases. If all or part of these fees or deposits are returnable under certain conditions, these conditions shall be set forth; and if not returnable, such fact shall be disclosed.

(8) A statement describing any recurring funds required to be paid, in connection with carrying on the business opportunity business, by the business opportunity purchaser to the business opportunity seller or to a person affiliated with the business opportunity seller, or which the business opportunity seller or such affiliated person imposes or collects in whole or in part on behalf of a third party, including, but not limited to, royalty, lease, advertising, training, and sign rental fees, and equipment or inventory purchases.

(9) A statement setting forth the name of each person (including the business opportunity seller) the business opportunity purchaser is directly or indirectly required or advised to do business with by the business opportunity seller, where such persons are affiliated with the business opportunity seller.

(10) A statement describing any real estate, services, supplies, products, inventories, signs, fixtures, or equipment relating to the establishment or the operation of the business opportunity business which the business oppor-

tunity purchaser is directly or indirectly required by the business opportunity seller to purchase, lease or rent; and if such purchases, leases or rentals must be made from specific persons (including the business opportunity seller), a list of the names and addresses of each such person. Such list may be made in a separate document delivered to the prospective business opportunity purchaser with the prospectus if the existence of such separate document is disclosed in the prospectus.

(11) A description of the basis for calculating, and, if such information is readily available, the actual amount of, any revenue or other consideration to be received by the business opportunity seller or persons affiliated with the business opportunity seller from suppliers to the prospective business opportunity purchaser in consideration for goods or services which the business opportunity seller requires or advises the business opportunity purchaser to obtain from such suppliers.

(12)(i) A statement of all the material terms and conditions of any financing arrangement offered directly or indirectly by the business opportunity seller, or any person affiliated with the business opportunity seller, to the prospective business opportunity purchaser; and

(ii) A description of the terms by which any payment is to be received by the business opportunity seller from

(A) Any person offering financing to a prospective business opportunity purchaser; and

(B) Any person arranging for financing for a prospective business opportunity purchaser.

(13) A statement describing the material facts of whether, by the terms of the business opportunity agreement or other device or practice, the business opportunity purchaser is:

(i) Limited in the goods or services he or she may offer for sale;

(ii) Limited in the customers to whom he or she may sell such goods or services;

(iii) Limited in the geographic area in which he or she may offer for sale or sell goods or services; or

(iv) Granted territorial protection by the business opportunity seller, by

**§ 437.1**

**16 CFR Ch. I (1-1-12 Edition)**

which, with respect to a territory or area,

(A) The business opportunity seller will not establish another, or more than any fixed number of, business opportunities or company-owned outlets, either operating under, or selling, offering, or distributing goods, commodities or services, identified by any mark set forth under paragraph (a)(1)(iii) of this section; or

(B) The business opportunity seller or its parent will not establish other business opportunities or company-owned outlets selling or leasing the same or similar products or services under a different trade name, trademark, service mark, advertising or other commercial symbol.

(14) A statement of the extent to which the business opportunity seller requires the business opportunity purchaser (or, if the business opportunity purchaser is a corporation, any person affiliated with the business opportunity purchaser) to participate personally in the direct operation of the business opportunity.

(15) A statement disclosing, with respect to the business opportunity agreement and any related agreements:

(i) The term (i.e., duration of arrangement), if any, of such agreement, and whether such term is or may be affected by any agreement (including leases or subleases) other than the one from which such term arises;

(ii) The conditions under which the business opportunity purchaser may renew or extend;

(iii) The conditions under which the business opportunity seller may refuse to renew or extend;

(iv) The conditions under which the business opportunity purchaser may terminate;

(v) The conditions under which the business opportunity seller may terminate;

(vi) the obligations (including lease or sublease obligations) of the business opportunity purchaser after termination of the business opportunity by the business opportunity seller, and the obligations of the business opportunity purchaser (including lease or sublease obligations) after termination of the business opportunity by the business opportunity purchaser and

after the expiration of the business opportunity;

(vii) The business opportunity purchaser's interest upon termination of the business opportunity, or upon refusal to renew or extend the business opportunity, whether by the business opportunity seller or by the business opportunity purchaser;

(viii) The conditions under which the business opportunity seller may repurchase, whether by right of first refusal or at the option of the business opportunity seller (and if the business opportunity seller has the option to repurchase the business opportunity, whether there will be an independent appraisal of the business opportunity, whether the repurchase price will be determined by a predetermined formula and whether there will be a recognition of goodwill or other intangibles associated therewith in the repurchase price to be given the business opportunity purchaser);

(ix) The conditions under which the business opportunity purchaser may sell or assign all or any interest in the ownership of the business opportunity, or of the assets of the business opportunity business;

(x) The conditions under which the business opportunity seller may sell or assign, in whole or in part, its interest under such agreements;

(xi) The conditions under which the business opportunity purchaser may modify;

(xii) The conditions under which the business opportunity seller may modify;

(xiii) The rights of the business opportunity purchaser's heirs or personal representative upon the death or incapacity of the business opportunity purchaser; and

(xiv) The provisions of any covenant not to compete.

(16) A statement disclosing, with respect to the business opportunity seller and as to the particular named business being offered:

(i) The total number of business opportunity purchasers operating at the end of the preceding fiscal year;

(ii) The total number of company-owned outlets operating at the end of the preceding fiscal year;

## Federal Trade Commission

## § 437.1

(iii) The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of

(A) The 10 business opportunity outlets of the named business opportunity business nearest the prospective business opportunity purchaser's intended location; or

(B) All business opportunity purchasers of the business opportunity seller; or

(C) All business opportunity purchasers of the business opportunity seller in the State in which the prospective business opportunity purchaser lives or where the proposed business opportunity is to be located, *Provided, however*, That there are more than 10 such business opportunity purchasers. If the number of business opportunity purchasers to be disclosed pursuant to paragraph (a)(16)(iii)(B) or (C) of this section exceeds 50, such listing may be made in a separate document delivered to the prospective business opportunity purchaser with the prospectus if the existence of such separate document is disclosed in the prospectus;

(iv) The number of business opportunities voluntarily terminated or not renewed by business opportunity purchasers within, or at the conclusion of, the term of the business opportunity agreement, during the preceding fiscal year;

(v) The number of business opportunities reacquired by purchase by the business opportunity seller during the term of the business opportunity agreement, and upon the conclusion of the term of the business opportunity agreement, during the preceding fiscal year;

(vi) The number of business opportunities otherwise reacquired by the business opportunity seller during the term of the business opportunity agreement, and upon the conclusion of the term of the business opportunity agreement, during the preceding fiscal year;

(vii) The number of business opportunities for which the business opportunity seller refused renewal of the business opportunity agreement or other agreements relating to the business opportunity during the preceding fiscal year; and

(viii) The number of business opportunities that were canceled or terminated by the business opportunity sell-

er during the term of the business opportunity agreement, and upon conclusion of the term of the business opportunity agreement, during the preceding fiscal year.

With respect to the disclosures required by paragraphs (a)(16) (v), (vi), (vii), and (viii) of this section, the disclosure statement shall also include a general categorization of the reasons for such reacquisitions, refusals to renew or terminations, and the number falling within each such category, including but not limited to the following: failure to comply with quality control standards, failure to make sufficient sales, and other breaches of contract.

(17)(i) If site selection or approval thereof by the business opportunity seller is involved in the business opportunity relationship, a statement disclosing the range of time that has elapsed between signing of business opportunity agreements or other agreements relating to the business opportunity and site selection, for agreements entered into during the preceding fiscal year; and

(ii) If operating business opportunity outlets are to be provided by the business opportunity seller, a statement disclosing the range of time that has elapsed between the signing of business opportunity agreements or other agreements relating to the business opportunity and the commencement of the business opportunity purchaser's business, for agreements entered into during the preceding fiscal year.

With respect to the disclosures required by paragraphs (a)(17) (i) and (ii) of this section, a business opportunity seller may at its option also provide a distribution chart using meaningful classifications with respect to such ranges of time.

(18) If the business opportunity seller offers an initial training program or informs the prospective business opportunity purchaser that it intends to provide such person with initial training, a statement disclosing:

(i) The type and nature of such training;

(ii) The minimum amount, if any, of training that will be provided to a business opportunity purchaser; and

(iii) The cost, if any, to be borne by the business opportunity purchaser for the training to be provided, or for obtaining such training.

(19) If the name of a public figure is used in connection with a recommendation to purchase a business opportunity, or as a part of the name of the business opportunity operation, or if the public figure is stated to be involved with the management of the business opportunity seller, a statement disclosing:

(i) The nature and extent of the public figure's involvement and obligations to the business opportunity seller, including but not limited to the promotional assistance the public figure will provide to the business opportunity seller and to the business opportunity purchaser;

(ii) The total investment of the public figure in the business opportunity operation; and

(iii) The amount of any fee or fees the business opportunity purchaser will be obligated to pay for such involvement or assistance provided by the public figure.

(20)(i) A balance sheet (statement of financial position) for the business opportunity seller for the most recent fiscal year, and an income statement (statement of results of operations) and statement of changes in financial position for the franchisor for the most recent three fiscal years. Such statements are required to have been examined in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards by an independent certified or licensed public accountant.

*Provided, however,* That where a business opportunity seller is a subsidiary of another corporation which is permitted under generally accepted accounting principles to prepare financial statements on a consolidated or combined statement basis, the above information may be submitted for the parent if (A) the corresponding unaudited financial statements of the business opportunity seller are also provided, and (B) the parent absolutely and irrevocably has agreed to guarantee all obligations of the subsidiary;

(ii) Unaudited statements shall be used only to the extent that audited statements have not been made, and

provided that such statements are accompanied by a clear and conspicuous disclosure that they are unaudited. Statements shall be prepared on an audited basis as soon as practicable, but, at a minimum, financial statements for the first full fiscal year following the date on which the business opportunity seller must first comply with this part shall contain a balance sheet opinion prepared by an independent certified or licensed public accountant, and financial statements for the following fiscal year shall be fully audited.

(21) All of the foregoing information in paragraphs (a)(1) through (20) of this section shall be contained in a single disclosure statement or prospectus, which shall not contain any materials or information other than that required by this part or by State law not preempted by this part. This does not preclude business opportunity sellers or brokers from giving other nondeceptive information orally, visually, or in separate literature so long as such information is not contradictory to the information in the disclosure statement required by paragraph (a) of this section. This disclosure statement shall carry a cover sheet distinctively and conspicuously showing the name of the business opportunity seller, the date of issuance of the disclosure statement, and the following notice imprinted thereon in upper and lower case bold-face type of not less than 12 point size:

INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY PURCHASERS REQUIRED BY FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

\* \* \* \* \*

To protect you, we've required your business opportunity seller to give you this information. We haven't checked it, and don't know if it's correct. It should help you make up your mind. Study it carefully. While it includes some information about your contract, don't rely on it alone to understand your contract. Read all of your contract carefully. Buying a business opportunity is a complicated investment. Take your time to decide. If possible, show your contract and this information to an advisor, like a lawyer or an accountant. If you find anything you think may be wrong or anything important that's been left out, you should let us know about it. It may be against the law.

## Federal Trade Commission

## § 437.1

There may also be laws on business opportunities in your state. Ask your state agencies about them.

Federal Trade Commission,  
Washington, D.C.

*Provided*, That the obligations to furnish such disclosure statement shall be deemed to have been met for both the business opportunity seller and the business opportunity broker if either such party furnishes the prospective business opportunity purchaser with such disclosure statement.

(22) All information contained in the disclosure statement shall be current as of the close of the business opportunity seller's most recent fiscal year. After the close of each fiscal year, the business opportunity seller shall be given a period not exceeding 90 days to prepare a revised disclosure statement and, following such 90 days, may distribute only the revised prospectus and no other. The business opportunity seller shall, within a reasonable time after the close of each quarter of the fiscal year, prepare revisions to be attached to the disclosure statement to reflect any material change in the business opportunity seller or relating to the business opportunity business of the business opportunity seller, about which the business opportunity seller or broker, or any agent, representative, or employee thereof, knows or should know. Each prospective business opportunity purchaser shall have in his or her possession at the "time for making of disclosures," the disclosure statement and quarterly revision for the period most recent to the "time for making of disclosures" and available at that time. Information which is required to be audited pursuant to paragraph (a)(20) of this section is not required to be audited for quarterly revisions. *Provided, however*, That the unaudited information is accompanied by a statement in immediate conjunction therewith that clearly and conspicuously discloses that such information has not been audited.

(23) A table of contents shall be included within the disclosure statement.

(24) The disclosure statement shall include a comment which either positively or negatively responds to each disclosure item required to be in the disclosure statement, by use of a state-

ment which fully incorporates the information required by the item. Each disclosure item therein must be preceded by the appropriate heading, as set forth in Note 3 of this part.

(b) To make any oral, written, or visual representation to a prospective business opportunity purchaser which states a specific level of potential sales, income, gross or net profit for that prospective business opportunity purchaser, or which states other facts which suggest such a specific level, unless:

(1) At the time such representation is made, such representation is relevant to the geographic market in which the business opportunity is to be located;

(2) At the time such representation is made, a reasonable basis exists for such representation and the business opportunity seller has in its possession material which constitutes a reasonable basis for such representation, and such material is made available to any prospective business opportunity purchaser and to the Commission or its staff upon reasonable demand.

*Provided, further*, That in immediate conjunction with such representation, the business opportunity seller shall disclose in a clear and conspicuous manner that such material is available to the prospective business opportunity purchaser; and *Provided, however*, That no provision within paragraph (b) of this section shall be construed as requiring the disclosure to any prospective business opportunity purchaser of the identity of any specific business opportunity purchaser or of information reasonably likely to lead to the disclosure of such person's identity; and *Provided, further*, That no additional representation as to a prospective business opportunity purchaser's potential sales, income, or profits may be made later than the "time for making of disclosures";

(3) Such representation is set forth in detail along with the material bases and assumptions therefor in a single legible written document whose text accurately, clearly and concisely discloses such information, and none other than that provided for by this part or by State law not preempted by

this part. Each prospective business opportunity purchaser to whom the representation is made shall be furnished with such document no later than the “time for making of disclosure”; *Provided, however*, That if the representation is made at or prior to a “personal meeting” and such meeting occurs before the “time for making of disclosures”, the document shall be furnished to the prospective business opportunity purchaser to whom the representation is made at that “personal meeting”;

(4) The following statement is clearly and conspicuously disclosed in the document described by paragraph (b)(3) of this section in immediate conjunction with such representation and in not less than twelve point upper and lower-case boldface type:

CAUTION

These figures are only estimates of what we think you may earn. There is no assurance you'll do as well. If you rely upon our figures, you must accept the risk of not doing as well.

(5) The following information is clearly and conspicuously disclosed in the document described by paragraph (b)(3) of this section in immediate conjunction with such representation:

(i) The number and percentage of outlets of the named business opportunity business which are located in the geographic markets that form the basis for any such representation and which are known to the business opportunity seller or broker to have earned or made at least the same sales, income, or profits during a period of corresponding length in the immediate past as those potential sales, income, or profits represented; and

(ii) The beginning and ending dates for the corresponding time period referred to by paragraph (b)(5)(i) of this section, *Provided, however*, That any business opportunity seller without prior business opportunity experience as to the named business opportunity business so indicate such lack of experience in the document described in paragraph (b)(3) of this section.

*Except*, That representations of the sales, income or profits of existing business opportunity outlets need not

comply with paragraph (b) of this section.

(c) To make any oral, written, or visual representation to a prospective business opportunity purchaser which states a specific level of sales, income, gross or net profits of existing outlets (whether business opportunity purchaser-owned or company-owned) of the named business opportunity business, or which states other facts which suggest such a specific level, unless:

(1) At the time such representation is made, such representation is relevant to the geographic market in which the business opportunity is to be located;

(2) At the time such representation is made, a reasonable basis exists for such representation and the business opportunity seller has in its possession material which constitutes a reasonable basis for such representation, and such material is made available to any prospective business opportunity purchaser and to the Commission or its staff upon reasonable demand, *Provided, however*, That in immediate conjunction with such representation, the business opportunity purchaser discloses in a clear and conspicuous manner that such material is available to the prospective franchisee; and *Provided, further*, That no provision within paragraph (c) of this section shall be construed as requiring the disclosure to any prospective business opportunity purchaser of the identity of any specific business opportunity purchaser or of information reasonably likely to lead to the disclosure of such person's identity; and *Provided, further*, That no additional representation as to the sales, income, or gross or net profits of existing outlets (whether business opportunity purchaser-owned or company-owned) of the named business opportunity business may be made later than the “time for making of disclosures”;

(3) Such representation is set forth in detail along with the material bases and assumptions therefor in a single legible written document which accurately, clearly and concisely discloses such information, and none other than that provided for by this part or by State law not preempted by this part. Each prospective business opportunity purchaser to whom the representation

is made shall be furnished with such document no later than the “time for making of disclosures,” *Provided, however*, That if the representation is made at or prior to a “personal meeting” and such meeting occurs before the “time for making of disclosures,” the document shall be furnished to the prospective business opportunity purchaser to whom the representation is made at that “personal meeting”;

(4) The underlying data on which the representation is based have been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles;

(5) The following statement is clearly and conspicuously disclosed in the document described by paragraph (c)(3) of this section in immediate conjunction with such representation, and in not less than twelve point upper and lower case boldface type:

**CAUTION**

Some outlets have [sold] [earned] this amount. There is no assurance you'll do as well. If you rely upon our figures, you must accept the risk of not doing as well.

(6) The following information is clearly and conspicuously disclosed in the document described by paragraph (c)(3) of this section in immediate conjunction with such representation:

(i) the number and percentage of outlets of the named business opportunity business which are located in the geographic markets that form the basis for any such representation and which are known to the business opportunity seller or broker to have earned or made at least the same sales, income, or profits during a period of corresponding length in the immediate past as those potential sales, income, or profits represented; and

(ii) The beginning and ending dates for the corresponding time period referred to by paragraph (c)(6)(i) of this section, *Provided, however*, That any business opportunity seller without prior business opportunity experience as to the named business opportunity business so indicate such lack of experience in the document described in paragraph (c)(3) of this section.

(d) To fail to provide the following information within the document(s) required by paragraphs (b)(3) and (c)(3) of this section whenever any representa-

tion is made to a prospective business opportunity purchaser regarding its potential sales, income, or profits, or the sales, income, gross or net profits of existing outlets (whether business opportunity purchaser-owned or company-owned) of the named business opportunity business:

(1) A cover sheet distinctively and conspicuously showing the name of the business opportunity seller, the date of issuance of the document and the following notice imprinted thereon in upper and lower case boldface type of not less than twelve point size:

INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY PURCHASERS ABOUT BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY [SALES] [INCOME] [PROFIT] REQUIRED BY THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION.

To protect you, we're required the business opportunity seller to give you this information. We haven't checked it and don't know if it's correct. Study these facts and figures carefully. If possible, show them to someone who can advise you, like a lawyer or an accountant. Then take your time and think it over.

If you find anything you think may be wrong or anything important that's been left out, let us know about it. It may be against the law.

There may also be laws on business opportunities in your State. Ask your State agencies about them.

Federal Trade Commission,  
Washington, D.C.

(2) A table of contents. *Provided, however*, That each prospective business opportunity purchaser to whom the representation is made shall be notified at the “time for making of disclosures” of any material change (about which the business opportunity seller, broker, or any of the agents, representations, or employees thereof, knows or should know) in the information contained in the document(s) described by paragraphs (b)(3) and (c)(3) of this section.

(e) To make any oral, written, or visual representation for general dissemination (not otherwise covered by paragraph (b) or (c) of this section) which states a specific level of sales, income, gross or net profits, either actual or potential, of existing or prospective outlets (whether business opportunity purchaser-owned or company-owned) of

the named business opportunity business or which states other facts which suggest such a specific level, unless:

(1) At the time such representation is made, a reasonable basis exists for such representation and the business opportunity seller has in its possession material which constitutes a reasonable basis for such representation and which is made available to the Commission or its staff upon reasonable demand;

(2) The underlying data on which each representation of sales, income or profit for existing outlets is based have been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles;

(3) In immediate conjunction with such representation, there shall be clearly and conspicuously disclosed the number and percentage of outlets of the named business opportunity business which the business opportunity seller or broker knows to have earned or made at least the same sales, income, or profits during a period of corresponding length in the immediate past as those sales, income, or profits represented, and the beginning and ending dates for said time period;

(4) In immediate conjunction with each such representation of potential sales, income or profits, the following statement shall be clearly and conspicuously disclosed:

CAUTION

These figures are only estimates; there is no assurance you'll do as well. If you rely upon our figures, you must accept the risk of not doing as well.

*Provided, however,* That if such representation is not based on actual experience of existing outlets of the named business opportunity business, that fact also should be disclosed;

(5) No later than the earlier of the first "personal meeting" or the "time for making of disclosures," each prospective business opportunity purchaser shall be given a single, legible written document which accurately, clearly and concisely sets forth the following information and materials (and none other than that provided for by this part or by State law not preempted by this part):

(i) The representation, set forth in detail along with the material bases and assumptions therefor;

(ii) the number and percentage of outlets of the named business opportunity business which the business opportunity seller or broker knows to have earned or made at least the same sales, income or profits during a period of corresponding length in the immediate past as those sales, income, or profits represented, and the beginning and ending dates for said time period;

(iii) With respect to each such representation of sales, income, or profits of existing outlets, the following statement shall be clearly and conspicuously disclosed in immediate conjunction therewith, printed in not less than 12 point upper and lower case boldface type:

CAUTION

Some outlets have [sold] [earned] this amount. There is no assurance you'll do as well. If you rely upon our figures, you must accept the risk of not doing as well.

(iv) With respect to each such representation of potential sales, income, or profits, the following statement shall be clearly and conspicuously disclosed in immediate conjunction therewith, printed in not less than 12 point upper and lower case boldface type:

CAUTION

These figures are only estimates. There is no assurance you'll do as well. If you rely upon our figures, you must accept the risk of not doing as well.

(v) If applicable, a statement clearly and conspicuously disclosing that the business opportunity seller lacks prior business opportunity experience as to the named business opportunity business;

(vi) If applicable, a statement clearly and conspicuously disclosing that the business opportunity seller has not been in business long enough to have actual business data;

(vii) A cover sheet, distinctively and conspicuously showing the name of the business opportunity seller, the date of issuance of the document, and the following notice printed thereon in not less than 12 point upper and lower case boldface type:

## Federal Trade Commission

## § 437.2

### INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY PURCHASERS ABOUT BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY [SALES] [INCOME] [PROFIT] REQUIRED BY THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

To protect you, we've required the business opportunity seller to give you this information. We haven't checked it and don't know if it's correct. Study these facts and figures carefully. If possible, show them to someone who can advise you, like a lawyer or an accountant. If you find anything you think may be wrong or anything important that's been left out, let us know about it. It may be against the law. There may also be laws about business opportunities in your State. Ask your State agencies about them.

Federal Trade Commission,  
Washington, D.C.

(viii) A table of contents;

(6) Each prospective business opportunity purchaser shall be notified at the "time for making of disclosures" of any material changes that have occurred in the information contained in this document.

(f) To make any claim or representation which is contradictory to the information required to be disclosed by this part.

(g) To fail to furnish the prospective business opportunity purchaser with a copy of the business opportunity seller's business opportunity agreement and related agreements with the document, and a copy of the completed business opportunity and related agreements intended to be executed by the parties at least 5 business days prior to the date the agreements are to be executed.

*Provided, however,* That the obligations defined in paragraphs (b) through (g) of this section shall be deemed to have been met for both the business opportunity seller and the broker if either such person furnishes the prospective business opportunity purchaser with the written disclosures required thereby.

(h) To fail to return any funds or deposits in accordance with any conditions disclosed pursuant to paragraph (a)(7) of this section.

### § 437.2 Definitions.

As used in this part, the following definitions shall apply:

(a) The term *business opportunity* means any continuing commercial re-

lationship created by any arrangement or arrangements whereby:

(1) A person (hereinafter "business opportunity purchaser") offers, sells, or distributes to any person other than a "business opportunity seller" (as hereinafter defined), goods, commodities, or services which are:

(i)(A) Supplied by another person (hereinafter "business opportunity seller"); or

(B) Supplied by a third person (e.g., a supplier) with whom the business opportunity purchaser is directly or indirectly required to do business by another person (hereinafter "business opportunity seller"); or

(C) Supplied by a third person (e.g., a supplier) with whom the business opportunity purchaser is directly or indirectly advised to do business by another person (hereinafter "business opportunity seller") where such third person is affiliated with the business opportunity seller; and

(ii) The business opportunity seller:

(A) Secures for the business opportunity purchaser retail outlets or accounts for said goods, commodities, or services; or

(B) Secures for the business opportunity purchaser locations or sites for vending machines, rack displays, or any other product sales displays used by the business opportunity purchaser in the offering, sale, or distribution of said goods, commodities, or services; or

(C) Provides to the business opportunity purchaser the services of a person able to secure the retail outlets, accounts, sites or locations referred to in paragraphs (a)(ii)(A) and (B) of this section; and

(2) The business opportunity purchaser is required as a condition of obtaining or commencing the business opportunity operation to make a payment or a commitment to pay to the business opportunity seller, or to a person affiliated with the business opportunity seller.

(3) Exemptions. The provisions of this part shall not apply to a business opportunity:

(i) Which is a "fractional business opportunity"; or

(ii) Where pursuant to a lease, license, or similar agreement, a person

§ 437.2

16 CFR Ch. I (1–1–12 Edition)

offers, sells, or distributes goods, commodities, or services on or about premises occupied by a retailer-grantor primarily for the retailer-grantor's own merchandising activities, which goods, commodities, or services are not purchased from the retailer-grantor or persons whom the lessee is directly or indirectly

(A) Required to do business with by the retailer-grantor or

(B) Advised to do business with by the retailer-grantor where such person is affiliated with the retailer-grantor; or

(iii) Where the total of the payments referred to in paragraph (a)(2) of this section made during a period from any time before to within 6 months after commencing operation of the business opportunity purchaser's business, is less than \$500; or

(iv) Where there is no writing which evidences any material term or aspect of the relationship or arrangement; or

(v) Which complies with the franchise disclosure requirements set forth at part 436 or falls under one or more of the exemptions set forth at § 436.8 of part 436.

(4) Exclusions. The term "business opportunity" shall not be deemed to include any continuing commercial relationship created solely by:

(i) The relationship between an employer and an employee, or among general business partners; or

(ii) Membership in a bona fide "cooperative association"; or

(iii) An agreement for the use of a trademark, service mark, trade name, seal, advertising, or other commercial symbol designating a person who offers on a general basis, for a fee or otherwise, a bona fide service for the evaluation, testing, or certification of goods, commodities, or services; or

(iv) An agreement between a licensor and a single licensee to license a trademark, trade name, service mark, advertising or other commercial symbol where such license is the only one of its general nature and type to be granted by the licensor with respect to that trademark, trade name, service mark, advertising, or other commercial symbol.

(4) Any relationship which is represented either orally or in writing to

be a business opportunity (as defined in paragraph (a) of this section) is subject to the requirements of this part.

(b) The term *person* means any individual, group, association, limited or general partnership, corporation, or any other business entity.

(c) The term *business opportunity seller* means any person who participates in a business opportunity relationship as a business opportunity seller, as denoted in paragraph (a) of this section.

(d) The term *business opportunity purchaser* means any person

(1) Who participates in a business opportunity relationship as a business opportunity purchaser, as denoted in paragraph (a) of this section, or

(2) To whom an interest in a business opportunity is sold.

(e) The term *prospective business opportunity purchaser* includes any person, including any representative, agent, or employee of that person, who approaches or is approached by a business opportunity seller or broker, or any representative, agent, or employee thereof, for the purpose of discussing the establishment, or possible establishment, of a business opportunity relationship involving such a person.

(f) The term *business day* means any day other than Saturday, Sunday, or the following national holidays: New Year's Day, Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

(g) The term *time for making of disclosures* means ten (10) business days prior to the earlier of

(1) The execution by a prospective business opportunity purchaser of any business opportunity agreement or any other agreement imposing a binding legal obligation on such prospective business opportunity purchaser, about which the business opportunity seller, broker, or any agent, representative, or employee thereof, knows or should know, in connection with the sale or proposed sale of a business opportunity, or

(2) The payment by a prospective business opportunity purchaser, about which the business opportunity seller, broker, or any agent, representative, or employee thereof, knows or should

know, of any consideration in connection with the sale or proposed sale of a business opportunity.

(h) The term *fractional business opportunity* means any relationship, as denoted by paragraph (a) of this section, in which the person described therein as a business opportunity purchaser, or any of the current directors or executive officers thereof, has been in the type of business represented by the business opportunity relationship for more than 2 years and the parties anticipated, or should have anticipated, at the time the agreement establishing the business opportunity relationship was reached, that the sales arising from the relationship would represent no more than 20 percent of the sales in dollar volume of the business opportunity purchaser.

(i) The term *affiliated person* means a person (as defined in paragraph (b) of this section):

(1) Which directly or indirectly controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with, a business opportunity seller; or

(2) Which directly or indirectly owns, controls, or holds with power to vote, 10 percent or more of the outstanding voting securities of a business opportunity seller; or

(3) Which has, in common with a business opportunity seller, one or more partners, officers, directors, trustees, branch managers, or other persons occupying similar status or performing similar functions.

(j) The term *business opportunity broker* means any person other than a business opportunity seller or a business opportunity purchaser who sells, offers for sale, or arranges for the sale of a business opportunity.

(k) The term *sale of a business opportunity* includes a contract or agreement whereby a person obtains a business opportunity or an interest in a business opportunity for value by purchase, license, or otherwise. This term shall not be deemed to include the renewal or extension of an existing business opportunity where there is no interruption in the operation of the business opportunity business by the business opportunity purchaser, unless the new contracts or agreements contain material changes from those in effect be-

tween the business opportunity seller and business opportunity purchaser prior thereto.

(1) A *cooperative association* is either

(1) An association of producers of agricultural products authorized by section 1 of the Capper-Volstead Act, 7 U.S.C. 291; or

(2) An organization operated on a cooperative basis by and for independent retailers which wholesales goods or furnishes services primarily to its member-retailers.

(m) The term *fiscal year* means the business opportunity seller's fiscal year.

(n) The term *material, material fact, and material change* shall include any fact, circumstance, or set of conditions that has a substantial likelihood of influencing a reasonable business opportunity purchaser in the making of a significant decision relating to a named business opportunity business or that has any significant financial impact on a business opportunity purchaser or prospective business opportunity purchaser.

(o) The term *personal meeting* means a face-to-face meeting between a business opportunity seller or broker (or any agent, representative, or employee thereof) and a prospective business opportunity purchaser which is held for the purposes of discussing the sale or possible sale of a business opportunity.

### § 437.3 Severability.

If any provision of this part or its application to any person, act, or practice is held invalid, the remainder of the part or the application of its provisions to any person, act, or practice shall not be affected thereby.

NOTE 1: The Commission expresses no opinion as to the legality of any practice mentioned in this part. A provision for disclosure should not be construed as condonation or approval with respect to the matter required to be disclosed, nor as an indication of the Commission's intention not to enforce any applicable statute.

NOTE 2: By taking action in this area, the Federal Trade Commission does not intend to annul, alter, affect, or exempt any person subject to the provisions of this part from complying with the laws or regulations of any State, municipality, or other local government with respect to business opportunity practices, except to the extent that

those laws or regulations are inconsistent with any provision of this part, and then only to the extent of the inconsistency. For the purposes of this part, a law or regulation of any State, municipality, or other local government is not inconsistent with this part if the protection such law or regulation affords any prospective business opportunity purchaser is equal to or greater than that provided by this part. Examples of provisions that provide protection equal to or greater than that provided by this part include laws or regulations which require more complete record keeping by the business opportunity seller or the disclosure of more complete information to the business opportunity purchaser.

NOTE 3: [As per § 437.1(a)(24) of this part]:

#### DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Pursuant to 16 CFR 437.1 et seq., a Trade Regulation Rule of the Federal Trade Commission regarding Disclosure Requirements and Prohibitions Concerning Business Opportunities, the following information is set forth on [name of business opportunity seller] for your examination:

1. Identifying information as to the business opportunity seller;
2. Business experience of the business opportunity seller's directors and executive officers.
3. Business experience of the business opportunity seller.
4. Litigation history.
5. Bankruptcy history.
6. Description of business opportunity.
7. Initial funds required to be paid by a business opportunity purchaser.
8. Recurring funds required to be paid by a business opportunity purchaser.
9. Affiliated persons the business opportunity purchaser is required or advised to do business with by the business opportunity seller.
10. Obligations to purchase.
11. Revenues received by the business opportunity seller in consideration of purchases by a business opportunity purchaser.
12. Financing arrangements.
13. Restriction on sales.
14. Person participation required of the business opportunity purchaser in the operation of the business opportunity.
15. Termination, cancellation, and renewal of the business opportunity.
16. Statistical information concerning the number of business opportunity purchasers (and company-owned outlets).
17. Site selection.
18. Training programs.
19. Public figure involvement in the business opportunity.
20. Financial information concerning the business opportunity seller.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 76 FR 76860, Dec. 8, 2011, part 437 was revised, effective March 1, 2012. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

### PART 437—BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY RULE (Eff. 3-1-12)

Sec.

- 437.1 Definitions.
- 437.2 The obligation to furnish written documents.
- 437.3 The disclosure document.
- 437.4 Earnings claims.
- 437.5 Sales conducted in Spanish or other languages besides English.
- 437.6 Other prohibited practices.
- 437.7 Record retention.
- 437.8 Franchise exemption.
- 437.9 Outstanding orders; preemption.
- 437.10 Severability.

APPENDIX A TO PART 437—DISCLOSURE OF IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

APPENDIX B TO PART 437—DISCLOSURE OF IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY (SPANISH-LANGUAGE VERSION)

AUTHORITY: 15 U.S.C. 41–58.

#### § 437.1 Definitions.

The following definitions shall apply throughout this part:

(a) *Action* means a criminal information, indictment, or proceeding; a civil complaint, cross claim, counterclaim, or third party complaint in a judicial action or proceeding; arbitration; or any governmental administrative proceeding, including, but not limited to, an action to obtain or issue a cease and desist order, an assurance of voluntary compliance, and an assurance of discontinuance.

(b) *Affiliate* means an entity controlled by, controlling, or under common control with a business opportunity seller.

(c) *Business opportunity* means a commercial arrangement in which:

(1) A seller solicits a prospective purchaser to enter into a new business; and

(2) The prospective purchaser makes a required payment; and

(3) The seller, expressly or by implication, orally or in writing, represents that the seller or one or more designated persons will:

(i) Provide locations for the use or operation of equipment, displays, vending machines, or similar devices, owned, leased, controlled, or paid for by the purchaser; or

(ii) Provide outlets, accounts, or customers, including, but not limited to, Internet outlets, accounts, or customers, for the purchaser's goods or services; or

(iii) Buy back any or all of the goods or services that the purchaser makes, produces,

fabricates, grows, breeds, modifies, or provides, including but not limited to providing payment for such services as, for example, stuffing envelopes from the purchaser's home.

(d) *Designated person* means any person, other than the seller, whose goods or services the seller suggests, recommends, or requires that the purchaser use in establishing or operating a new business.

(e) *Disclose or state* means to give information in writing that is clear and conspicuous, accurate, concise, and legible.

(f) *Earnings claim* means any oral, written, or visual representation to a prospective purchaser that conveys, expressly or by implication, a specific level or range of actual or potential sales, or gross or net income or profits. Earnings claims include, but are not limited to:

(1) Any chart, table, or mathematical calculation that demonstrates possible results based upon a combination of variables; and

(2) Any statements from which a prospective purchaser can reasonably infer that he or she will earn a minimum level of income (e.g., "earn enough to buy a Porsche," "earn a six-figure income," or "earn your investment back within one year").

(g) *Exclusive territory* means a specified geographic or other actual or implied marketing area in which the seller promises not to locate additional purchasers or offer the same or similar goods or services as the purchaser through alternative channels of distribution.

(h) *General media* means any instrumentality through which a person may communicate with the public, including, but not limited to, television, radio, print, Internet, billboard, Web site, commercial bulk email, and mobile communications.

(i) *Material* means likely to affect a person's choice of, or conduct regarding, goods or services.

(j) *New business* means a business in which the prospective purchaser is not currently engaged, or a new line or type of business.

(k) *Person* means an individual, group, association, limited or general partnership, corporation, or any other business entity.

(l) *Prior business* means:

(1) A business from which the seller acquired, directly or indirectly, the major portion of the business' assets; or

(2) Any business previously owned or operated by the seller, in whole or in part.

(m) *Providing locations, outlets, accounts, or customers* means furnishing the prospective purchaser with existing or potential locations, outlets, accounts, or customers; requiring, recommending, or suggesting one or more locators or lead generating companies; providing a list of locator or lead generating companies; collecting a fee on behalf of one or more locators or lead generating companies; offering to furnish a list of locations; or otherwise assisting the prospective purchaser

in obtaining his or her own locations, outlets, accounts, or customers, *provided, however*, that advertising and general advice about business development and training shall not be considered as "providing locations, outlets, accounts, or customers."

(n) *Purchaser* means a person who buys a business opportunity.

(o) *Quarterly* means as of January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1.

(p) *Required payment* means all consideration that the purchaser must pay to the seller or an affiliate, either by contract or by practical necessity, as a condition of obtaining or commencing operation of the business opportunity. Such payment may be made directly or indirectly through a third party. A required payment does not include payments for the purchase of reasonable amounts of inventory at bona fide wholesale prices for resale or lease.

(q) *Seller* means a person who offers for sale or sells a business opportunity.

(r) *Signature* or *signed* means a person's affirmative steps to authenticate his or her identity.

It includes a person's handwritten signature, as well as an electronic or digital form of signature to the extent that such signature is recognized as a valid signature under applicable federal law or state contract law.

(s) *Written* or *in writing* means any document or information in printed form or in any form capable of being downloaded, printed, or otherwise preserved in tangible form and read. It includes: type-set, word processed, or handwritten documents; information on computer disk or CD-ROM; information sent via email; or information posted on the Internet. It does not include mere oral statements.

#### **§ 437.2 The obligation to furnish written documents.**

In connection with the offer for sale, sale, or promotion of a business opportunity, it is a violation of this Rule and an unfair or deceptive act or practice in violation of Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act ("FTC Act") for any seller to fail to furnish a prospective purchaser with the material information required by §§ 437.3(a) and 437.4(a) of this part in writing at least seven calendar days before the earlier of the time that the prospective purchaser:

(a) Signs any contract in connection with the business opportunity sale; or

(b) Makes a payment or provides other consideration to the seller, directly or indirectly through a third party.

#### **§ 437.3 The disclosure document.**

In connection with the offer for sale, sale, or promotion of a business opportunity, it is a violation of this Rule and an unfair or deceptive act or practice in violation of Section 5 of the FTC Act, for any seller to:

(a) Fail to disclose to a prospective purchaser the following material information in a single written document in the form and using the language set forth in appendix A to this part; or if the offer for sale, sale, or promotion of a business opportunity is conducted in Spanish, in the form and using the language set forth in appendix B to this part; or if the offer for sale, sale, or promotion of a business opportunity is conducted in a language other than English or Spanish, using the form and an accurate translation of the language set forth in appendix A to this part:

(1) *Identifying information.* State the name, business address, and telephone number of the seller, the name of the salesperson offering the opportunity, and the date when the disclosure document is furnished to the prospective purchaser.

(2) *Earnings claims.* If the seller makes an earnings claim, check the “yes” box and attach the earnings statement required by § 437.4. If not, check the “no” box.

(3) *Legal actions.* (i) If any of the following persons has been the subject of any civil or criminal action for misrepresentation, fraud, securities law violations, or unfair or deceptive practices, including violations of any FTC Rule, within the 10 years immediately preceding the date that the business opportunity is offered, check the “yes” box:

- (A) The seller;
- (B) Any affiliate or prior business of the seller; or
- (C) Any of the seller’s officers, directors, sales managers, or any individual who occupies a position or performs a function similar to an officer, director, or sales manager of the seller.

(ii) If the “yes” box is checked, disclose all such actions in an attachment to the disclosure document. State the full caption of each action (names of the principal parties, case number, full name of court, and filing date). For each action, the seller may also provide a brief accurate statement not to exceed 100 words that describes the action.

(iii) If there are no actions to disclose, check the “no” box.

(4) *Cancellation or refund policy.* If the seller offers a refund or the right to cancel the purchase, check the “yes” box. If so, state all material terms and conditions of the refund or cancellation policy in an attachment to the disclosure document. If no refund or cancellation is offered, check the “no” box.

(5) *References.* (i) State the name, state, and telephone number of all purchasers who purchased the business opportunity within the last three years. If more than 10 purchasers purchased the business opportunity within the last three years, the seller may limit the disclosure by stating the name, state, and telephone number of at least the 10 purchasers within the past three years who are located nearest to the prospective purchaser’s location. Alternatively, a seller

may furnish a prospective buyer with a list disclosing all purchasers nationwide within the last three years. If choosing this option, insert the words “See Attached List” without removing the list headings or the numbers 1 through 10, and attach a list of the references to the disclosure document.

(ii) Clearly and conspicuously, and in immediate conjunction with the list of references, state the following: “If you buy a business opportunity from the seller, your contact information can be disclosed in the future to other buyers.”

(6) *Receipt.* Attach a duplicate copy of the disclosure document to be signed and dated by the purchaser. The seller may inform the prospective purchaser how to return the signed receipt (for example, by sending to a street address, email address, or facsimile telephone number).

(b) Fail to update the disclosures required by paragraph (a) of this section at least quarterly to reflect any changes in the required information, including, but not limited to, any changes in the seller’s refund or cancellation policy, or the list of references; *provided, however*, that until a seller has 10 purchasers, the list of references must be updated monthly.

#### § 437.4 Earnings claims.

In connection with the offer for sale, sale, or promotion of a business opportunity, it is a violation of this Rule and an unfair or deceptive act or practice in violation of Section 5 of the FTC Act, for the seller to:

(a) Make any earnings claim to a prospective purchaser, unless the seller:

(1) Has a reasonable basis for its claim at the time the claim is made;

(2) Has in its possession written materials that substantiate its claim at the time the claim is made;

(3) Makes the written substantiation available upon request to the prospective purchaser and to the Commission; and

(4) Furnishes to the prospective purchaser an earnings claim statement. The earnings claim statement shall be a single written document and shall state the following information:

(i) The title “EARNINGS CLAIM STATEMENT REQUIRED BY LAW” in capital, bold type letters;

(ii) The name of the person making the earnings claim and the date of the earnings claim;

(iii) The earnings claim;

(iv) The beginning and ending dates when the represented earnings were achieved;

(v) The number and percentage of all persons who purchased the business opportunity prior to the ending date in paragraph (a)(4)(iv) of this section who achieved at least the stated level of earnings;

(vi) Any characteristics of the purchasers who achieved at least the represented level

of earnings, such as their location, that may differ materially from the characteristics of the prospective purchasers being offered the business opportunity; and

(vii) A statement that written substantiation for the earnings claim will be made available to the prospective purchaser upon request.

(b) Make any earnings claim in the general media, unless the seller:

(1) Has a reasonable basis for its claim at the time the claim is made;

(2) Has in its possession written material that substantiates its claim at the time the claim is made;

(3) States in immediate conjunction with the claim:

(i) The beginning and ending dates when the represented earnings were achieved; and

(ii) The number and percentage of all persons who purchased the business opportunity prior to the ending date in paragraph (b)(3)(i) of this section who achieved at least the stated level of earnings.

(c) Disseminate industry financial, earnings, or performance information unless the seller has written substantiation demonstrating that the information reflects, or does not exceed, the typical or ordinary financial, earnings, or performance experience of purchasers of the business opportunity being offered for sale.

(d) Fail to notify any prospective purchaser in writing of any material changes affecting the relevance or reliability of the information contained in an earnings claim statement before the prospective purchaser signs any contract or makes a payment or provides other consideration to the seller, directly or indirectly, through a third party.

**§ 437.5 Sales conducted in Spanish or other languages besides English.**

(a) If the seller conducts the offer for sale, sale, or promotion of a business opportunity in Spanish, the seller must provide the disclosure document required by § 437.3(a) in the form and language set forth in appendix B to this part, and the disclosures required by §§ 437.3(a) and 437.4 must be made in Spanish.

(b) If the seller conducts the offer for sale, sale, or promotion of a business opportunity in a language other than English or Spanish, the seller must provide the disclosure document required by § 437.3(a) using the form and an accurate translation of the language set forth in appendix A to this part, and the disclosures required by §§ 437.3(a) and 437.4 must be made in that language.

**§ 437.6 Other prohibited practices.**

In connection with the offer for sale, sale, or promotion of a business opportunity, it is a violation of this part and an unfair or deceptive act or practice in violation of Section 5 of the FTC Act for any seller, directly or indirectly through a third party, to:

(a) Disclaim, or require a prospective purchaser to waive reliance on, any statement made in any document or attachment that is required or permitted to be disclosed under this Rule;

(b) Make any claim or representation, orally, visually, or in writing, that is inconsistent with or contradicts the information required to be disclosed by §§ 437.3 (basic disclosure document) and 437.4 (earnings claims document) of this Rule;

(c) Include in any disclosure document or earnings claim statement any materials or information other than what is explicitly required or permitted by this Rule. For the sole purpose of enhancing the prospective purchaser's ability to maneuver through an electronic version of a disclosure document or earnings statement, the seller may include scroll bars and internal links. All other features (e.g., multimedia tools such as audio, video, animation, or pop-up screens) are prohibited;

(d) Misrepresent the amount of sales, or gross or net income or profits a prospective purchaser may earn or that prior purchasers have earned;

(e) Misrepresent that any governmental entity, law, or regulation prohibits a seller from:

(1) Furnishing earnings information to a prospective purchaser; or

(2) Disclosing to prospective purchasers the identity of other purchasers of the business opportunity;

(f) Fail to make available to prospective purchasers, and to the Commission upon request, written substantiation for the seller's earnings claims;

(g) Misrepresent how or when commissions, bonuses, incentives, premiums, or other payments from the seller to the purchaser will be calculated or distributed;

(h) Misrepresent the cost, or the performance, efficacy, nature, or central characteristics of the business opportunity or the goods or services offered to a prospective purchaser;

(i) Misrepresent any material aspect of any assistance offered to a prospective purchaser;

(j) Misrepresent the likelihood that a seller, locator, or lead generator will find locations, outlets, accounts, or customers for the purchaser;

(k) Misrepresent any term or condition of the seller's refund or cancellation policies;

(l) Fail to provide a refund or cancellation when the purchaser has satisfied the terms and conditions disclosed pursuant to § 437.3(a)(4);

(m) Misrepresent a business opportunity as an employment opportunity;

(n) Misrepresent the terms of any territorial exclusivity or territorial protection offered to a prospective purchaser;

(o) Assign to any purchaser a purported exclusive territory that, in fact, encompasses

the same or overlapping areas already assigned to another purchaser;

(p) Misrepresent that any person, trademark or service mark holder, or governmental entity, directly or indirectly benefits from, sponsors, participates in, endorses, approves, authorizes, or is otherwise associated with the sale of the business opportunity or the goods or services sold through the business opportunity;

(q) Misrepresent that any person:

(1) Has purchased a business opportunity from the seller or has operated a business opportunity of the type offered by the seller; or

(2) Can provide an independent or reliable report about the business opportunity or the experiences of any current or former purchaser.

(r) Fail to disclose, with respect to any person identified as a purchaser or operator of a business opportunity offered by the seller:

(1) Any consideration promised or paid to such person. Consideration includes, but is not limited to, any payment, forgiveness of debt, or provision of equipment, services, or discounts to the person or to a third party on the person's behalf; or

(2) Any personal relationship or any past or present business relationship other than as the purchaser or operator of the business opportunity being offered by the seller.

#### § 437.7 Record retention.

To prevent the unfair and deceptive acts or practices specified in this Rule, business opportunity sellers and their principals must prepare, retain, and make available for inspection by Commission officials copies of the following documents for a period of three years:

(a) Each materially different version of all documents required by this Rule;

(b) Each purchaser's disclosure receipt;

(c) Each executed written contract with a purchaser; and

(d) All substantiation upon which the seller relies for each earnings claim from the time each such claim is made.

#### § 437.8 Franchise exemption.

The provisions of this Rule shall not apply to any business opportunity that constitutes a "franchise," as defined in the Franchise Rule, 16 CFR part 436; *provided, however*, that the provisions of this Rule shall apply to any such franchise if it is exempted from the provisions of part 436 because, either:

(a) Under § 436.8(a)(1), the total of the required payments or commitments to make a required payment, to the franchisor or an affiliate that are made any time from before to within six months after commencing operation of the franchisee's business is less than \$500, or

(b) Under § 436.8(a)(7), there is no written document describing any material term or aspect of the relationship or arrangement.

#### § 437.9 Outstanding orders; preemption.

(a) A business opportunity required by prior FTC or court order to follow the Franchise Rule, 16 CFR part 436, may petition the Commission to amend the order or to stipulate to an amendment of the court order so that the business opportunity may follow the provisions of this part.

(b) The FTC does not intend to preempt the business opportunity sales practices laws of any state or local government, except to the extent of any conflict with this part. A law is not in conflict with this Rule if it affords prospective purchasers equal or greater protection, such as registration of disclosure documents or more extensive disclosures. All such disclosures, however, must be made in a separate state disclosure document.

#### § 437.10 Severability.

The provisions of this part are separate and severable from one another. If any provision is stayed or determined to be invalid, the remaining provisions shall continue in effect.

APPENDIX A to PART 437

**DISCLOSURE OF IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY**

Required by the Federal Trade Commission, Rule 16 C.F.R. Part 437

Name of Seller: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Salesperson: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

[Name of Seller] has completed this form, which provides important information about the business opportunity it is offering you. The Federal Trade Commission, an agency of the federal government, requires that [Name of Seller] complete this form and give it to you. However, the Federal Trade Commission has not seen this completed form or checked that the information is true. **Make sure that this information is the same as what the salesperson told you about this opportunity.**

<p><b>LEGAL ACTIONS:</b> Has [Name of Seller] or any of its key personnel been the subject of a civil or criminal action involving misrepresentation, fraud, securities law violation, or unfair or deceptive practices, including violations of any FTC Rule, within the past 10 years?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES → <i>If the answer is yes, [Name of Seller] must attach a list of all such legal actions to this form.</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>																																										
<p><b>CANCELLATION OR REFUND POLICY:</b> Does [Name of Seller] offer a cancellation or refund policy?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES → <i>If the answer is yes, [Name of Seller] must attach a statement describing this policy to this form.</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>																																										
<p><b>EARNINGS:</b> Has [Name of Seller] or its salesperson discussed how much money purchasers of this business opportunity can earn or have earned? In other words, have they stated or implied that purchasers can earn a specific level of sales, income, or profit?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES → <i>If the answer is yes, [Name of Seller] must attach an Earnings Claims Statement to this form. Read this statement carefully. You may wish to show this information to an advisor or accountant.</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>																																										
<p><b>REFERENCES:</b> In the section below, [Name of Seller] must provide you with contact information for at least 10 people who have purchased a business opportunity from them. If fewer than 10 are listed, this is the total list of all purchasers. <b>You may wish to contact the people below to compare their experiences with what [Name of Seller] told you about the business opportunity.</b></p> <p>Note: If you purchase a business opportunity from [Name of Seller], your contact information can be disclosed in the future to other potential buyers.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th><u>Name</u></th> <th><u>State</u></th> <th><u>Telephone Number</u></th> <th><u>Name</u></th> <th><u>State</u></th> <th><u>Telephone Number</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>6.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>7.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>8.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4.</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>9.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>5.</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>10.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<u>Name</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Telephone Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Telephone Number</u>	1.				6.			2.				7.			3.				8.			4.				9.			5.				10.		
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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing above, you are acknowledging that you have received this form. This is not a purchase contract. To give you enough time to research this opportunity, the Federal Trade Commission requires that after you receive this form, [Name of Seller] must wait at least seven calendar days before asking you to sign a purchase contract or make any payments.

**For more information about business opportunities in general:** Visit the FTC's website at [www.ftc.gov/bizopps](http://www.ftc.gov/bizopps) or call 1-877-FTC-HELP (877-382-4357). You can also contact your state's Attorney General.

## APPENDIX B to PART 437

**DIVULGACIÓN DE INFORMACIÓN IMPORTANTE SOBRE OPORTUNIDAD DE NEGOCIO**

Formulario requerido por la Comisión Federal de Comercio (FTC)  
Regla 16 de la Parte 437 del Código de Regulaciones Federales

Nombre del Vendedor: \_\_\_\_\_ Domicilio: \_\_\_\_\_  
Teléfono: \_\_\_\_\_ Representante de Ventas: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

[Nombre del Vendedor] completó el presente formulario y en el mismo le suministra información importante sobre la oportunidad de negocio que le está ofreciendo. La Comisión Federal de Comercio (*Federal Trade Commission*, FTC), una agencia del gobierno federal, le requiere a la compañía [Nombre del Vendedor] que complete el presente formulario y que se lo entregue a usted. Pero la FTC no ha visto este formulario completado por la compañía ni ha verificado que la información indicada sea veraz. **Asegúrese de que la información contenida en el presente formulario coincida con lo que le dijo el representante de ventas respecto de esta oportunidad.**

**ACCIONES LEGALES:** ¿La compañía [Nombre del Vendedor] o alguno de los principales miembros de su personal ha sido sujeto de una acción civil o penal, que involucre falsedad, fraude, infracción de las leyes de títulos y valores, o prácticas desleales o engañosas, incluyendo infracciones de las Reglas o Normas de la FTC, dentro de los 10 últimos años?

**SÍ** → Si la respuesta es afirmativa, [Nombre del Vendedor] debe adjuntar al formulario una lista completa de dichas acciones legales.

**NO**

**POLÍTICA DE CANCELACIÓN O REINTEGRO:** ¿Ofrece [Nombre del Vendedor] una política de cancelación o reintegro?

**SÍ** → Si la respuesta es afirmativa, [Nombre del Vendedor] debe adjuntar al formulario una declaración con la descripción de dicha política.

**NO**

**INGRESOS:** ¿La compañía [Nombre del Vendedor] o alguno de sus representantes de ventas ha manifestado la cantidad de dinero que pueden ganar o que han ganado los compradores de esta oportunidad de negocio? ¿Dicho en otras palabras, han expresado de manera explícita o implícita que los compradores pueden alcanzar un nivel específico de ventas, o ganar un nivel específico de ingresos?

**SÍ** → Si la respuesta es afirmativa, [Nombre del Vendedor] debe adjuntar a este formulario una Declaración de los Ingresos Proclamados. Lea esta declaración atentamente. Puede que desee analizar esta información con un asesor o contador.

**NO**

**REFERENCIAS:** En esta sección del formulario, [Nombre del Vendedor] debe listar la información de contacto de por lo menos 10 personas que le hayan comprado una oportunidad de negocio. Si le suministran los datos de menos de 10 personas, es porque ésa es la lista completa de todos los compradores. **Puede que desee comunicarse con las personas listadas a continuación para comparar sus respectivas experiencias con lo que le dijo [Nombre del Vendedor] sobre la oportunidad de negocio que le está ofreciendo.**

Nota: Si usted compra una oportunidad de negocio de [Nombre del Vendedor], podrá divulgarse su información de contacto a otros posibles compradores.

	Nombre	Estado	Número de Teléfono		Nombre	Estado	Número de Teléfono
1.				6.			
2.				7.			
3.				8.			
4.				9.			
5.				10.			

Firma: \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

Por medio de su firma, usted acusa recibo del presente formulario. Esto no es un contrato de compra. La Comisión Federal de Comercio (FTC) establece que con el fin de concederle el tiempo necesario para que usted investigue esta oportunidad, [Nombre del Vendedor] debe esperar un mínimo de siete días naturales o corridos a partir de la fecha en que le entregue este formulario antes de pedirle que firme un contrato de compra o que efectúe un pago.

**Para más información sobre oportunidades de negocio en general:** Visite el sitio Web de la FTC [www.ftc.gov/bizopp](http://www.ftc.gov/bizopp) o llame al 1-877-FTC-HELP (877-382-4357). Usted también puede establecer contacto con el Fiscal General de su estado de residencia.

**PART 444—CREDIT PRACTICES**

Sec.  
444.1 Definitions.

444.2 Unfair credit practices.  
444.3 Unfair or deceptive cosigner practices.  
444.4 Late charges.  
444.5 State exemptions.