

## Sprint Nextel settles with fired ex-manager

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A **Sprint Nextel** manager who contended she was fired after she engaged rapper Ludacris for a company party has settled her lawsuit against the company.

Elizabeth Henry had alleged that she was terminated by her supervisor for insubordination because she contracted with the rap star without securing the supervisor's permission.

Terms of the settlement were not disclosed. But Henry's attorney, Brendan J. Donelon of **Donelon P.C.** and Sprint spokesman Matt Sullivan said the matter had been resolved "to the satisfaction of the parties."

Henry helped put together a sales contest for Sprint's call center employees. In her lawsuit, which was filed last December in federal court in Kansas City, Kan., she said that she surveyed the employees to determine what kind of entertainment they wanted at their award programs.

The majority, she said, "stated a desire to change past practices and have a minority entertainer."

In May 2006, Henry organized a bonus trip to Las Vegas for top employees and sought to engage the services of LL Cool J, another rapper, or Ludacris. Her supervisor allegedly approved the hiring of either rap star.

In mid-July 2006, promotional materials sent to the call center employees announced that Ludacris had been engaged. A few weeks later, after Henry's supervisor allegedly expressed concern about his hiring, Henry said she assured her that Ludacris would perform "to the PG-13 standards" specified in the contract.

The supervisor then told Henry that "any black performer would be controversial," according to the lawsuit. Henry, who is white, said she told the supervisor that her comment was "discriminatory" and that "she had an issue with black people."

About a week after that, Henry alleged, she was interrogated in a secure room "for close to five hours" by Sprint security officers. Ten days later, after reiterating to her supervisor that the employees wanted a minority entertainer, she was fired.

Ludacris never performed at the event. Instead, Sprint contracted with the Blue Man Group. Meanwhile, Henry found work at **Cerner Corp.**, but at a third the salary she made at Sprint.

In her lawsuit, Henry claimed that Sprint retaliated against her for "exercising her rights under federal anti-discrimination laws" and opposing "discriminatory comments and practices" at Sprint. The lawsuit sought unspecified damages.