

Bethenny Frankel Sued by Ex-Manager for \$100 Million (Exclusive)

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Reality star's ex-manager wants \$12 million share of her \$120 mil Skinnygirl cocktail deal and \$100 million in punitive damages.



Eugene Golovursky/Getty Images for Hilton

Reality star turned liquor mogul **Bethenny Frankel** has been sued by her ex-managers, who claim they helped broker her pairing with the lucrative Skinnygirl cocktail brand and were cut out of the rich deal that followed.

Los Angeles-based **Raw Talent** sued the *Real Housewives of New York* and *Bethenny Ever After* star today in L.A. Superior Court. Raw co-president **Doug Wald** alleges he met Frankel in May 2008, as she was appearing on *Real Housewives*, and she expressed interest in launching her own unscripted series. He says he then helped introduce her to some agents at APA that specialize in repping reality stars.

According to the complaint, Frankel signed with APA on August 7, 2008, and also agreed orally that day to retain Wald as her personal manager and pay Raw 10 percent of her earnings (she allegedly confirmed the relationship in an e-mail sent the next day).

Wald says Frankel specifically sought out his advice because she thought the Skinnygirl cocktail was underexploited and he could help her make some money from it.

"She expressly represented that any agreement relating to the exploitation of the Skinnygirl Cocktail Brand would be commissionable under their management agreement," the complaint says.

Wald says he then helped Frankel hook up with liquor industry veteran **David Kanbar**, who put together a business plan for a company that would buy the brand, use Frankel's celebrity to help market it and sell it in two years for a hefty profit.

But Raw Talent says Frankel fired Wald in November 2008, days before signing her deal to develop and market Skinnygirl.

The brand has become a huge success. Seventeen months after Frankel and Kanbar went into business together, they sold the company in March in what *The Hollywood Reporter* called a **\$120 million deal**.

Raw Talent now says it's owed 10 percent of that deal, or an estimated \$12 million. Plus, the company wants \$100 million in punitive damages to make an example out of Frankel.

"Notwithstanding her clear and unambiguous agreement and obligation to pay Raw Talent its 10% commission, Frankel now refuses," the lawsuit says.

We've reached out to Frankel's rep for comment and will update with a response.

The suit, filed by well-known showbiz litigator **Bryan Freedman** and **Joshua Blum**, alleges causes of action for fraud, breach of oral contract and other counts.

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