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## LOCAL BARTER FRANCHISE WINS SIX AWARDS AT NATIONAL CONVENTION

West Michigan Barter Company, Inc., the local franchise for ITEX Trade Exchange, garnered several awards at the 35th Annual ITEX National Convention and has become one of the top-ten franchises in the U.S. and Canada . The four-day event was hosted in Scottsdale August 27-30.

ITEX is a national barter company--the largest in the country--whose members buy and sell goods and services without using cash. Instead, the members use a virtual currency called ITEX Trade Dollars. There are 20,000 members throughout the ITEX network offering more than 100,000 products or services within the ITEX Marketplace. Local ITEX members include retail businesses, attorneys, dentists, optometrists, printing companies, advertising mediums, restaurants, sports teams, electricians, painters, and non-profit organizations to name a few. The local franchise operates in Grand Rapids, Muskegon, Grand Haven and Holland. Currently, there are 200 ITEX members in Michigan.

"Locally, we had a 95% increase in trading over last year," states David Turner, president of West Michigan Barter Company. "Our members traded in excess of \$1.3 million dollars, which means that's how much CASH our members retained when purchasing products and services with ITEX Trade Dollars instead of cash."

The barter company won awards for percentage increases over the previous year for trade dollar value transacted. It also ranked 4th in the nation in new members added. "The biggest award we received was the Circle of Excellence Award," adds Julie Pontarelli, Trade Director for the local ITEX franchise, "inclusion in that group means we're in the top 10% of all the ITEX franchisees throughout North America."

ITEX operates in more than 130 cities nationally through a network of 90+ franchisees. For more information about ITEX Trade Exchange and West Michigan Barter Company, go to [www.WestMichiganBarter.com](http://www.WestMichiganBarter.com) or [www.ITEX.com](http://www.ITEX.com); the local office can be reached by calling 616-844-1567.

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