



Department of Justice

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COLUMBUS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO POSSESSING MORE THAN 2,000 IMAGES AND 200 MOVIES OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

COLUMBUS – Gary R. Hodge, 48, of Columbus, pleaded guilty in United States District Court here today to one count of receipt of child pornography for possessing approximately 2,000 digital images and 200 digital movies containing child pornography that he had purchased and downloaded from the Internet.

Carter M. Stewart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio and Brian Moskowitz, special agent-in-charge for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Office of Investigations in Detroit, announced the plea entered today before Senior United States District Judge John D. Holschuh.

According to a statement of facts read at Hodge's hearing, ICE agents in Massachusetts investigating a Russian-based Website that sold child pornography identified Hodge as a subscriber to the Website. ICE agents searched Hodge's north Columbus home in August 2009 and seized a computer where the images were stored. Forensic analysis of the computer's hard drive recovered the images.

Hodge faces a mandatory minimum five years imprisonment and up to 20 years in prison for receipt of child pornography. He will be required to be under court supervision for at least five years after he serves any prison time. Federal law will also require him to register as a sex offender.

Judge Holschuh will set a date for Hodge's sentencing.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafchildhood.gov.

Stewart commended the investigation by ICE agents and Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Hunter, who is prosecuting the case.

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