



Department of Justice

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DEFENDANTS SENTENCED FOR ROLE IN SALE OF \$2.5 MILLION WORTH OF COUNTERFEIT SOFTWARE

WASHINGTON - Three defendants were sentenced to prison today for their roles in an online copyright infringement scheme involving the sale of counterfeit software worth \$2.5 million, Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew Friedrich of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton for the Western District of Texas announced. The case is part of the Justice Department's ongoing initiative to combat the commercial distribution of pirated and counterfeit goods through online auction sites and other Web sites.

Thomas C. Rushing III, 24, of Wichita Falls, Texas; Brian C. Rue, 29, of Denton, Texas; and William Lance Partridge, 24, of Royse City, Texas, were sentenced by U.S. District Judge Sam Sparks in Austin, Texas, for selling counterfeit computer software over the Internet in violation of criminal copyright laws.

Rushing was sentenced to three years in prison, three years of supervised release and a \$10,000 fine. In addition to the prison term, Rushing also was ordered by Judge Sparks to forfeit his 2006 Porsche Cayenne purchased with illegal proceeds and approximately \$40,000 seized from bank accounts controlled by Rushing. Rue and Partridge were each sentenced to 12 months and one day in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$3,600. In addition to the prison terms, Rue was ordered by the court to forfeit approximately \$17,000 seized from a bank account he controlled and Partridge was ordered to forfeit a 46" HDTV purchased with illicit funds.

The court also ordered the forfeiture of the Web site domain names - "valuesoftwaresales.com," "allsoftwaredownload.com," "esoftwarevalue.com" and "priceslashsoftware.com" - used in the sale of pirated software.

Documents filed with the court indicate that from early 2006 through September 2007, Rushing, Rue and Partridge operated Web sites that sold a large volume of downloadable counterfeit software without authorization from the copyright owners. The defendants also promoted their illicit scheme by purchasing advertising for their Web sites from major Internet search engines. During the course of the scheme, the defendants processed more than \$1.2 million in orders through credit card merchant accounts under their control. Rushing, Rue and Partridge each pleaded guilty in Austin on Aug. 22, 2008, to criminal copyright infringement for selling pirated software through the Internet.

The case is part of the Department of Justice's ongoing initiative to combat the sale of pirated software and counterfeit goods through commercial Web sites and online auction sites such as eBay. Including these cases, the initiative has obtained 33 felony convictions. The Department's initiative to combat commercial online piracy is just one of several steps being undertaken to address the losses caused by intellectual property theft and hold responsible those engaged in criminal copyright infringement.

The cases were prosecuted by Trial Attorney Marc Miller of the Criminal Division's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew B. Devlin of the Western District of Texas. The cases were investigated by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Cyber Crimes Center, the National Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Coordination Center and ICE field offices in Austin and San Antonio, Texas.

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