



UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

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“Operation Cardkeeper” Defendant Sentenced to 94 Months in Prison

(Richmond, Virginia) – Steven Lance Roberts, age 45, formerly a resident of San Diego, California, was sentenced today to 94 months in federal prison for conspiracy to commit bank fraud, access device fraud, and aggravated identity theft. Chuck Rosenberg, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, and Charles J. Cunningham, Special Agent-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Richmond Resident Office, made the announcement after sentencing by United States District Judge Henry E. Hudson.

Roberts pled guilty to the above charges on November 9, 2006, following his arrest in July 2006. The case is part of “Operation Cardkeeper,” an ongoing investigation conducted by the FBI, targeting individuals involved in a variety of activities related to the Internet-based theft and exploitation of credit and debit account numbers. These activities, generally known as “carding,” include computer intrusions, phishing schemes, wire and Internet auction fraud, and identity theft.

According to court documents, Roberts, who went by the Internet nickname “John Dillinger,” was a long-time cashier of stolen credit card numbers. He regularly received e-mails or Internet instant messages containing hundreds of stolen credit card numbers, usually obtained through phishing schemes or network intrusions, from individuals, known as “vendors,” located in Russia and Romania. Roberts would then electronically encode these numbers to plastic bank cards, make ATM withdrawals, and return an agreed-upon portion to the vendors. A forensic examination of Robert’s home computers following his arrest in San Diego revealed evidence of over 4,000 account numbers, and the full identities (including name, address, date of birth and social security number) for over 1,600 individual victims.

In the past year, “Operation Cardkeeper” has resulted in the arrests of 13 individuals in Poland and 8 in the United States, including individuals charged in Virginia, George, California and Ohio. Additionally, 16 search warrants have been executed during the course of the investigation, including 3 search warrants executed in Romania by cyber investigators with the

Romanian National Police, and 12 executed by the FBI in New York, Nebraska, Tennessee, California, Texas, Georgia and Ohio.

United States Attorney Rosenberg stated, "Identity thieves can strike in an instant, but it may take years for victims to restore their good names. Law enforcement will continue to work hard to bring individuals who think technology can hide their illegal actions to justice."

"The Richmond office of the FBI has taken an aggressive approach utilizing all available technology including sophisticated investigative techniques to penetrate the veil of anonymity used by cyber criminals against other individuals, businesses, and entities," said Special Agent-in-Charge Cunningham.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation investigated this case. Assistant United States Attorney Brian R. Hood prosecuted the case for the United States.

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