

United States District Court
District of New Jersey

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA : Hon. Michael A. Hammer
 :
 v. : Magistrate No. 13-4175
 :
 MARIUS VINTILA, : **CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**
 a/k/a "Dan Girneata" :

I, Jeffrey Dant, being duly sworn, state the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief:

SEE ATTACHMENT A

I further state that I am a Special Agent with the United States Secret Service, and that this complaint is based on the following facts:

SEE ATTACHMENT B

Continued on the attached pages and made a part hereof.


Jeffrey Dant
Special Agent
United States Secret Service

Sworn to before me, and
subscribed in my presence

September 30, 2013 at
Newark, New Jersey


HONORABLE MICHAEL A. HAMMER
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the above and
foregoing is a true and correct copy of
the original on file in my office.

ATTEST
WILLIAM T. WALSH, Clerk
United States District Court
District of New Jersey

By: 
Deputy Clerk

9/30/13

ATTACHMENT A

Count One
(Conspiracy to Commit Bank Fraud)

From in or about June 2012 through in or about July 2013, in Bergen, Essex, Union, Passaic, Morris, Monmouth, Middlesex, and Ocean Counties, in the District of New Jersey and elsewhere, defendant

MARIUS VINTILA,
a/k/a "Dan Girneata,

did knowingly and intentionally conspire with others to execute a scheme and artifice to defraud financial institutions, as defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 20, namely Wells Fargo, Citibank, and TD Bank, whose deposits were insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and to obtain money, funds, assets, and other property owned by and under the custody and control thereof, by means of materially false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises, contrary to Title 18, United States Code, Section 1344, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1349.

Count Two
(Aggravated Identity Theft)

Between in or about June 2012 and in or about June 2013, in the District of New Jersey and elsewhere, defendant

MARIUS VINTILA,
a/k/a "Dan Girneata,

did knowingly transfer, possess, and use, without lawful authority, a means of identification of a New Jersey resident, namely an ATM card number of a financial institution customer during and in relation to a felony violation of a provision contained in chapter 63, United States Code, that is, conspiracy to commit bank fraud, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1349, charged in Count One of this Complaint, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1028A(a)(1) and 2.

Count Three

(Conspiracy to Possess Fifteen or More Counterfeit Access Devices)

From in or about June 2012 through in or about June 2013, in the District of New Jersey and elsewhere, defendant

MARIUS VINTILA,
a/k/a "Dan Girneata,

did knowingly conspire and agree with others to possess, with intent to defraud, at least fifteen counterfeit and unauthorized access devices, namely counterfeit ATM cards, in a manner affecting interstate and foreign commerce, contrary to Title 18, United States Code, Section 1029(a)(3), in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1029(b)(2).

Count Four

(Possession of Fifteen or More Counterfeit Access Devices)

Between in or about June 2012 and in or about June 2013, in the District of New Jersey and elsewhere, defendant

MARIUS VINTILA,
a/k/a "Dan Girneata,

did knowingly and with intent to defraud, possess at least fifteen counterfeit and unauthorized access devices, namely counterfeit ATM cards, in and affecting interstate commerce, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1029(a)(3) and (c)(1)(A)(i).

Count Five

(Conspiracy to Possess Access Device-Making Equipment)

From in or about June 2012 through in or about June 2013, in the District of New Jersey and elsewhere, defendant

MARIUS VINTILA,
a/k/a "Dan Girneata,

did knowingly conspire and agree with others to produce, traffic in, have custody and control of, and possess device-making equipment, in a manner affecting interstate and foreign commerce, contrary to Title 18, United States Code, Section 1029(a)(4), in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1029(b)(2).

Count Six
(Possession of Access Device-Making Equipment)

Between in or about June 2012 and in or about June 2013, in the District of New Jersey and elsewhere, defendant

MARIUS VINTILA,
a/k/a "Dan Girneata,

did knowingly and with intent to defraud, produce, traffic in, have custody and control of, and possess device-making equipment, affecting interstate and foreign commerce, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1029(a)(4) and (c)(1)(A)(ii).

ATTACHMENT B

I, Jeffrey Dant, am a Special Agent with the United States Secret Service. I have knowledge about the facts set forth below from my involvement in the investigation, my review of reports, documents, pictures, videos, witness interviews, and discussions with other law enforcement officials. This affidavit is submitted for a limited purpose, and I have not set forth each and every fact that I know concerning this investigation. All statements described herein are relayed in substance and in part.

Background

1. The United States Secret Service and the United States Department of Homeland Security have been investigating the theft of banking and credit card information through the use of equipment affixed to Automated Teller Machines ("ATMs") and ATM vestibules that records unwitting customers' banking data. This type of illegal conduct is often referred to as ATM skimming. Individuals engaged in ATM skimming typically install electronic devices, either on ATMs themselves or on the card readers located next to ATM vestibule doors, which are capable of recording bank customer information encoded on credit and debit cards ("Skimming Devices"). In addition to installing Skimming Devices, individuals engaged in ATM skimming regularly install pinhole cameras on or around bank ATMs in order to record the keystrokes of bank customers as the customers enter their Personal Identification Numbers ("PINs") during ATM transactions. Once they obtain the stolen card data, individuals engaged in ATM skimming transfer the stolen card data to counterfeit bank cards and use those counterfeit bank cards and the associated customer PINs to withdraw money from customer bank accounts.

2. Sometimes the same individuals perform all of the tasks in the ATM skimming scheme. Other times, as with the scheme charged in this Complaint, the ATM skimming scheme involves multiple groups of individuals, each charged with a different task. In this case, one group of individuals steals customer card data by installing and subsequently removing Skimming Devices and pinhole cameras; another individual or group of individuals transfers the stolen card data to counterfeit bank cards; and a third group of individuals uses the counterfeit bank cards to steal money from ATMs.

ATM Skimming Scheme

3. Between in or about June 2012 and in or about July 2013, defendant MARIUS VINTILA, a/k/a "Dan Girneata," B.R. M.C., C.G., D.G., I.L., C.P., E.R, and others ("co-conspirators") executed an extensive ATM skimming scheme to defraud Wells Fargo, Citibank, and TD Bank and other financial institutions out of millions of dollars. The co-conspirators used fake identities, fraudulent drivers licenses, prepaid phones, rental vehicles, self-storage units, and post office boxes to avoid detection by law enforcement.

4. VINTILA was the leader of the scheme. VINTILA created the Skimming Devices and pinhole cameras, and he taught other co-conspirators how to install them. VINTILA then recruited individuals, such as E.R. and C.P., to install the Skimming Devices and pinhole cameras on bank ATMs. After customers' bank information and customers' PIN numbers had been obtained, VINTILA utilized the stolen information to create false and fraudulent ATM cards. VINTILA then recruited other individuals, such as M.C., C.G., D.G., I.L., and others to use the fraudulent ATM cards to withdraw millions of dollars from customers' bank accounts. During the course of the conspiracy, VINTILA produced and transferred hundreds of fraudulent ATM cards to his co-conspirators.

5. VINTILA used the alias "Dan Girneata" to conduct banking and other transactions in the United States. Law enforcement agents executed search warrants at multiple self-storage units registered to VINTILA using his "Dan Girneata" alias and uncovered an entire ATM skimming operation, including Skimming Devices, pinhole cameras, super glue, tape, batteries, SD cards, computers, molds, fraudulent ATM cards, and approximately \$110,000 in cash proceeds. The storage units contained approximately fifty-five counterfeit ATM cards corresponding to TD Bank customers. The storage units also contained SD cards with pinhole camera videos of customers entering their PIN numbers at bank locations in New Jersey. And the storage units contained one thumb drive with customer bank account numbers of New Jersey residents, skimmed from ATM locations throughout New Jersey.

6. B.R. worked alongside VINTILA to design and create the Skimming Devices and pinhole cameras. B.R. also taught co-conspirators how to install them. B.R. sent profits from the scheme as well as Skimming Devices to co-conspirators overseas. For example, on or about April 16, 2013, law enforcement agents intercepted a DHL package sent by B.R., using a fake name, to an individual in Spain. The package contained approximately \$4,000 in cash, a debit card, and several parts used to making Skimming Devices, all hidden inside a hollowed-out DVD player. VINTILA paid B.R. a fee for each Skimming Device that he created for VINTILA.

7. Prior to producing the Skimming Devices and pinhole cameras, VINTILA measured and test-fitted them on bank ATMs. For example, in or about May 2013, bank surveillance video captured VINTILA and another individual test-fitting a Skimming Device onto a bank ATM in Florida.

8. M.C., C.G., D.G., I.L., E.R., and C.P., and others, were captured by bank surveillance video installing Skimming Devices and pinhole cameras on bank ATMs and/or using fraudulent ATM cards to withdraw hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash from customers' bank accounts at ATMs located throughout Florida, New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. M.C., C.G., D.G., I.L., E.R., C.P., and others, used hats, jackets, scarves, and sunglasses to disguise themselves. The co-conspirators gave the stolen cash proceeds to VINTILA, and they were paid a percentage of the profits.

9. During the course of the conspiracy, the co-conspirators stole approximately \$3 million from Wells Fargo, approximately \$1 million from Citibank, and approximately \$1 million from TD Bank.

10. At all times relevant to this Complaint, Citibank, TD Bank, and Wells Fargo were federally insured financial institutions, as that term is defined by 18 U.S.C. § 20.