



*United States Attorney
District of New Jersey*



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**TWO ADMIT ROLES IN MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR INTERNATIONAL
CYBERCRIME SCHEME**

***Defendants Worked as ‘Cashers’ for Organization that Allegedly Capitalized on
Information Hacked From Customers of More Than a Dozen Global Financial Institutions***

TRENTON, N.J. – Two members of an alleged international cybercrime, identity theft and credit card fraud conspiracy today admitted their roles in a scheme to use information hacked from customer accounts at more than a dozen banks, brokerage firms, payroll processing companies and government agencies to attempt to steal \$15 million from customers, U.S. Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Richard Gundersen, 47, of Brooklyn, N.Y., pleaded guilty to an indictment charging him with one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, access device fraud and identity theft. Lamar Taylor, 38, of Salem, Mass., pleaded guilty to an information charging him with one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, access device fraud and identity theft. Both defendants entered their guilty pleas before U.S. District Judge Peter G. Sheridan in Trenton federal court.

According to documents filed in the case and statements made in court:

Both Gundersen and Taylor were asked by other members of the conspiracy to participate in a scheme to “cash out” bank accounts and pre-paid debit cards opened in the names of others. Oleksiy Sharapka, 34, of Kiev, Ukraine, allegedly directed the conspiracy with the help of Leonid Yanovitsky, 39, also of Kiev. Oleg Pidtergerya, 50, who previously pleaded guilty to his role in the conspiracy, managed a cash-out crew in New York for Sharapka and Yanovitsky, and Robert Dubuc, 41, who has also pleaded guilty to his role in the conspiracy, controlled a cash-out crew in Massachusetts. Gundersen worked as “cashier” under Pidtergerya, while Taylor performed a similar role under Dubuc.

Hackers first gained unauthorized access to the bank accounts of customers of more than a dozen global financial institutions and businesses, including: Aon Hewitt; Automatic Data Processing Inc.; Citibank N.A.; E-Trade; Electronic Payments Inc.; Fundtech Holdings LLC, iPayment Inc.; JP Morgan Chase Bank N.A.; Nordstrom Bank; PayPal; TD Ameritrade; U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Finance and Accounting Service; TIAA-CREF; USAA; and Veracity Payment Solutions Inc.

After obtaining unauthorized access to the bank accounts, Sharapka and Yanovitsky diverted money from them to bank accounts and pre-paid debit cards they controlled. They then implemented a sophisticated cash-out operation, employing crews of individuals, including Gundersen and Taylor, to withdraw the stolen funds by making ATM withdrawals and fraudulent purchases in New York, Massachusetts, Illinois, Georgia and elsewhere. Both Sharapka and Yanovitsky are under indictment in the United States and remain at large.

Gundersen and Taylor admitted they were aware fraudulent accounts and cards were created without the consent of the individuals in whose names they were opened. They admitted that they opened bank accounts in the names of identity theft victims and that those accounts were funded with money stolen by other conspirators. They also admitted conducting ATM and bank withdrawals of the stolen funds and providing the proceeds of the fraud, less their own fees, to their immediate higher-ups in the organization – Pidtergerya and Dubuc, who, in turn, sent a portion of the proceeds to Sharapka and Yanovitsky in Ukraine.

The government's ongoing investigation into the organization has so far identified attempts to defraud the victim companies and their customers of more than \$15 million.

The conspiracy to commit wire fraud, access device fraud and identity theft count carries a maximum potential penalty of five years in prison and a maximum \$250,000 fine, or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense. Gundersen and Taylor's sentencings are scheduled for Sept. 3, 2014.

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited the special agents of the U.S. Secret Service, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge James Mottola; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Andrew M. McLees; Department of Defense, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Jeffery D. Thorpe, Cyber Field Office; and IRS-Criminal Investigation, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Jonathan D. Larsen, with the investigation leading to today's guilty pleas. He also thanked the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection for assistance with the Yarmolitsky arrest.

The government is represented by Economic Crimes Unit Chief Gurbir S. Grewal of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Newark.

The charges and allegations concerning the remaining conspirators are merely allegations and they are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

This case was brought in coordination with President Barack Obama's Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force. The task force was established to wage an aggressive, coordinated and proactive effort to investigate and prosecute financial crimes. With more than 20 federal agencies, 94 U.S. Attorneys' offices and state and local partners, it's the broadest coalition of law enforcement, investigatory and regulatory agencies ever assembled to combat fraud. Since its formation, the task force has made great strides in facilitating increased investigation and prosecution of financial crimes; enhancing coordination and cooperation among federal, state and local authorities; addressing discrimination in the lending and financial markets and conducting outreach to the public, victims, financial institutions and other organizations. Over the past three fiscal years, the Justice Department has filed nearly 10,000 financial fraud cases

against nearly 15,000 defendants including more than 2,900 mortgage fraud defendants. For more information on the task force, please visit www.stopfraud.gov.

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Defense counsel:

Gundersen: Cynthia Hardaway Esq., Newark

Taylor: Bruce Rosen Esq., Florham Park, N.J.