



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, AUGUST 22, 2008
WWW.USDOJ.GOV

CRM
(202) 514-2007
TDD (202) 514-1888

THREE DEFENDANTS PLEAD GUILTY FOR ONLINE COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION OF PIRATED SOFTWARE

Defendants Used Multiple Web Sites To Sell Counterfeit Software Worth \$2.5 Million

WASHINGTON — Three defendants pleaded guilty today to selling counterfeit computer software on the Internet in violation of criminal copyright infringement laws, Acting Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division Matthew Friedrich, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas Johnny Sutton and U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Special Agent-in-Charge in San Antonio Jerry Robinette announced.

Thomas C. Rushing III, 24, of Wichita Falls, Texas, and Brian C. Rue, 29, of Denton, Texas, pleaded guilty to one count each of criminal copyright infringement before U.S. District Court Judge Sam Sparks in Austin, Texas. William Lance Partridge, 24, of Royse City, Texas, pleaded guilty to one count of criminal copyright infringement before U.S. Magistrate Judge Andrew W. Austin, in Austin. Rushing, Rue and Partridge each face a maximum penalty of five years in prison, a fine of \$250,000 and three years of supervised release. Sentencing for all three defendants is scheduled for Dec. 19, 2008.

Documents filed with the court indicate that between early 2006 and September 2007, Rushing, Rue and Partridge operated several Web sites that sold a large volume of counterfeit software. The software sold by the defendants had a combined retail value of \$2,500,000. The defendants admitted using Web sites identified as valuesoftwaresales.com, allsoftwaredownload.com, esoftwarevalue.com and priceslashsoftware.com to sell downloadable counterfeit software without authorization from the copyright owners. The defendants also admitted promoting their scheme by purchasing advertising for their Web sites from major Internet search engines.

This case is part of the Department of Justice's ongoing initiative to combat the sale of pirated software and counterfeit goods via commercial Web sites and online auction sites such as eBay. Including the three pleas secured today, this initiative has obtained 32 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 Rushing, Rue and Partridge cases are being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Marc Miller of the Criminal Division's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section and

Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas Matthew B. Devlin. The cases were investigated by the ICE Cyber Crimes Center, the Office of the Special Agent-in-Charge in San Antonio and the Office of the Resident Agent-in-Charge in Austin.

###

08-744