



UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

ALEXANDRIA NEWPORT NEWS NORFOLK RICHMOND

UNITED STATES ATTORNEY CHUCK ROSENBERG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 19, 2008

Jim Rybicki
Public Information Officer
Phone: (703) 842-4050 Fax: (703) 549-5202
E-Mail: usavae.press@usdoj.gov
Website: www.usdoj.gov/usao/vae

Member of Music Piracy Group Sentenced to 18 Months in Prison

(Alexandria, VA) - Barry E. Gitarts, 25, of Brooklyn, New York, was sentenced today to 18 months in federal prison after his conviction on May 22, 2008, for conspiracy to commit criminal copyright infringement. Chuck Rosenberg, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, and Joseph Persichini, Jr., Assistant Director in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington Field Office, made the announcement after Gitarts was sentenced by United States District Judge Liam O'Grady. Gitarts was also sentenced to a term of two years of supervised release and was ordered to pay a \$2,500 fine.

According to the testimony and evidence presented at trial, Gitarts was a significant member of the Internet music piracy group Apocalypse Production Crew (APC) from at least June 2003 through April 2004. Records and testimony introduced at trial showed that Gitarts, using the alias "Dextro," paid for and administered a computer server located in Texas that APC group members used to upload and download hundreds of thousands of copies of pirated music, movies, software and video games. Evidence also showed that Gitarts received payment from the leader of APC.

Testimony showed that APC acted as a "first-provider" or "release group" of pirated content on to the Internet. Release groups are the original sources for a majority of the pirated works distributed and downloaded via the Internet. Once a group prepares a stolen work for distribution, the material is distributed in minutes to secure computer servers throughout the world.

The case was part of an ongoing federal crackdown against the organized piracy groups responsible for most of the illegal distribution of copyrighted movies, software, games and music on the Internet. To date, there have been 15 criminal convictions of APC members and 56 convictions in Operation FastLink, a massive international enforcement

action against organizations involved in the illegal online distribution of copyrighted material.

To date, Operation FastLink has resulted in more than 200 search warrants executed in 15 countries; the confiscation of hundreds of computers and illegal online distribution hubs; and the removal of more than 100 million dollars worth of illegally-copied copyrighted software, games, movies and music from illicit distribution channels. Operation FastLink is the culmination of multiple FBI investigations, including an investigation into prerelease music groups led by FBI agents from the Washington Field Office.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jay V. Prabhu, and Trial Attorneys Josh Goldfoot and Tyler G. Newby of the Department of Justice Criminal Division's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia at <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/vae>. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia at <http://www.vaed.uscourts.gov> or on <http://pacer.uspci.uscourts.gov>.

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