

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

***United States Attorney
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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - April 10, 2009

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that Robert Wasson was sentenced today in federal court in San Diego by United States District Court Judge Michael M. Anello to serve 70 months in custody, followed by five years of supervised release, based upon his conviction for possession of child pornography, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2252(a)(4)(B). Judge Anello also required Wasson to register as a sex offender. Wasson tendered his guilty plea on January 6, 2009.

According to the court records, Wasson admitted that on or about April 23, 2008, he possessed a computer and computer media which he knew contained over 600 images of minors, including images of minors as young as eight years old engaged in sexual conduct.

During the sentencing hearing, Judge Anello noted that Wasson was twice convicted of Lewd or Lascivious Acts with a Child Under 14, in violation of California Penal Code, Section 288(a) in 1972 and 1983. At the time of his arrest by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents, Wasson was a co-owner of B&C Luggage and Sunglasses store located in downtown San Diego. He is currently awaiting sentencing

for failing to register as a sex offender in violation of California Penal Code, Section 290 before the San Diego County Superior Court.

This case stems from a nationwide investigation by Immigration and Customs Enforcement and assisted by the San Diego Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, whose members include the Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the San Diego Police Department, the San Diego County Sheriff's Department, the Chula Vista Police Department, the United States Attorney's Office, the San Diego District Attorney's Office, the United States Postal Inspection Service, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, the United States Marshals Service, the Regional Computer Forensics Laboratory, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, and the El Cajon Police Department.

This case is being brought as part of the Department of Justice Project Safe Childhood (PSC) and ICE's Operation Predator. Both are nationwide initiatives designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. For more information about PSC, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov, and for additional information on Operation Predator, please visit www.ice.gov

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 08cr4363-MMA

ROBERT LAWRENCE WASSON

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 18, United States Code, Section 2252(a)(4)(B) (Possession of Child Pornography)

AGENCY

Immigration and Customs Enforcement