



Department of Justice

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OXFORD, GEORGIA MAN SENTENCED FOR TRAFFICKING ILLCIT COMPUTER SOFTWARE LABELS

First Sentencing Under New Federal Statute Protecting Consumers from Illicit Certificates of Authenticity

ATLANTA, GA - JUSTIN E. HARRISON, 26, of Oxford, Georgia, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Orinda D. Evans on charges of trafficking in illicit certificates of authenticity intended to accompany copyrighted computer software.

“This case illustrates the illicit trade in intellectual property that is unfortunately becoming rampant worldwide and in our own community,” United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said. “This is the first prosecution under a new federal statute that criminalizes trafficking in illicit labels. It provides another valuable tool to protect the intellectual property of our nation’s businesses, which has become one of our country’s most valuable resources. This case serves notice to those who would traffic in illicit labels intended to vouch for pirated software that they face federal prosecution and federal prison.”

HARRISON was sentenced to 3 years, 10 months in prison to be followed by 3 years of supervised release, and was ordered to pay a fine of \$25,000. HARRISON was convicted of these charges on May 18, 2007.

According to United States Attorney Nahmias and information presented in court: HARRISON pleaded guilty to dealing in unauthorized computer software and distributing “Certificates of Authenticity” intended to vouch for that software’s authenticity. HARRISON admitted to trafficking in illicit Certificates of Authenticity intended to be used with “Microsoft Windows XP Professional” and “Windows 2000 Professional” operating system software. Such Certificates of Authenticity are commonly found within software packages or affixed to computers containing authorized licensed software. By trafficking in illicit labels, HARRISON was able to pass off sales of unauthorized software as if fully licensed and supported by the manufacturer. HARRISON sold thousands of illicit software labels to customers who were often unable to register their software with the manufacturer. Unless they contacted the manufacturer, the end users of

the software would be unaware that the software they were using was unlicensed, and that their label was a “black market” label not intended to accompany that user’s copy of the software.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Assistant United States Attorney Lawrence R. Sommerfeld prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.