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BROTHERS SENTENCED FOR SELLING MORE THAN \$6 MILLION IN PIRATED SOFTWARE

WASHINGTON - Two brothers were sentenced today in federal court to 30 months and three years in prison for selling massive amounts of pirated computer software, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia Chuck Rosenberg announced today.

At the federal court in Alexandria, Va., U.S. District Court Judge Claude M. Hilton sentenced Maurice A. Robberson, 48, to three years in prison and ordered him to pay \$855,917 in restitution while his brother Thomas K. Robberson, 55, was sentenced to 30 months in prison and ordered to pay \$151,488 in restitution. On Nov. 7, 2007, Maurice Robberson pled guilty to conspiracy and felony copyright infringement, while his brother Thomas Robberson pled guilty to a single count of felony copyright infringement.

Thomas Robberson grossed more than \$150,000 selling software with a retail value of nearly \$1 million by operating the websites www.Bestvalueshoppe.com and www.TheDealDepot.net. Maurice Robberson grossed more than \$855,000 selling software with a retail value of nearly \$5.6 million through his operation of the websites www.CDsalesUSA.com and www.AmericanSoftwareSales.com. Both the Robbersons have agreed to forfeit all their proceeds from these illegal businesses.

“People who steal the intellectual property of others for their personal financial gain, while defrauding consumers who think they are buying legitimate products will be punished for their crimes, as today’s sentences prove,” said Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher. “The prosecution of these and other defendants related to this multi-year investigation of Internet piracy software operations would not have been possible without the combined efforts of the Department of Justice, the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Virginia, and the FBI.”

“Rampant software piracy on the Internet is a problem that law enforcement must address. These cases show that federal investigators and prosecutors can and will bring intellectual property thieves to justice,” said U.S. Attorney Chuck Rosenberg.

Two other individuals who conspired with Maurice Robberson to commit copyright infringement have previously been sentenced. Danny Ferrer, 39, was sentenced to 72 months in prison by U.S. District Court Judge T.S. Ellis III on Aug. 25, 2006, for selling more than \$4 million in pirated software with a retail value of nearly \$20 million on the website www.BUYSUSA.com. Alton Lee Grooms, 56, who helped initiate some of the illegal businesses and profited more than \$150,000 from them, was sentenced on Jan. 18, 2008, by Judge Hilton to one year and one day in prison, after he cooperated with the government’s investigation.

From late 2002 through October 2005, these individuals ran businesses that sold counterfeit software from companies such as Adobe Systems Inc., Autodesk Inc., and Macromedia Inc., at discount prices. These counterfeit items were manufactured by members of the conspiracy and included labels that featured trademarks and service marks of the legitimate software companies.

After receiving complaints from software copyright holders about www.BUYSUSA.com, an undercover FBI agent made a number of purchases of business and utility software. After further investigation, an array of related websites was discovered.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys for the Eastern District of Virginia Jay V. Prabhu and Edmund P. Power and Trial Attorney Tyler G. Newby of the Criminal Division's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section. The investigation was conducted by agents from the FBI's Washington field office.

The Business Software Alliance, a trade association which represents leading computer software companies, provided significant assistance to the investigation. Additional investigative support was provided by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Florida, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the FBI's Tampa Field Office.

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