

US Internet 'Spam King' arrested

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US prosecutors said they captured on Wednesday a nefarious Internet marketer responsible so much junk e-mail they called him "Spam King."

Robert Soloway, 27, was arrested in Seattle, Washington, a week after being indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of identity theft, money laundering, and mail, wire, and e-mail fraud.

"Spam is a scourge of the Internet, and Robert Soloway is one of its most prolific practitioners," said US Attorney for the Western District of Washington Jeffrey Sullivan.

"Our investigators dubbed him the 'Spam King' because he is responsible for millions of spam emails."

Between November of 2003 and May of 2007 Soloway "spammed" tens of millions of e-mail messages to promote websites at which his company, Newport Internet Marketing, sold products and services, according to prosecutors.

Soloway routinely moved his website to different Internet addresses to dodge detection and began registering them through Chinese Internet service providers in 2006 in an apparent ploy to mask his involvement.

Spam messages sent by Soloway used misleading "header" information to dupe people into opening them, according to Sullivan.

Soloway is accused of using "botnets," networks of computers, to disguise where e-mail originated and of forging return addresses of real people or businesses that wound up blamed for unwanted mailings.

If convicted as charged, Soloway will face a maximum sentence of more than 65 years in prison and a fine of 250,000 dollars.

Prosecutors want to seize approximately 773,000 dollars they say Soloway made from his spamming-related activities.

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