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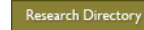
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SOFTWARE / SERVICES   Sep 22, 2011 8:40 pm

Alleged LulzSec Sony Hacker Arrested

By Robert McMillan, IDG News

The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation has arrested a Phoenix student, claiming that he is one of the LulzSec hackers responsible for a database attack on Sony Pictures computers that claimed more than 1 million victims.

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Cody Kretsinger, 23, was arrested Thursday morning on hacking and conspiracy charges. Prosecutors say he was "Recursion," an LulzSec hacker who used a database attack technique called SQL injection to break into Sony Pictures systems. Kretsinger allegedly provided data that was used in a mammoth June 2, 2011, data dump by LulzSec that included coupon codes along with email addresses and passwords belonging to Sony customers.

At the time that LulzSec posted its data, Sony was already recovering from a devastating break-in to its PlayStation Network. That intrusion knocked the service offline for more than two months and cost the company an estimated ¥ 14 billion (US$183 million) to clean up.

"The extent of damage caused by the compromise at Sony Pictures is under investigation," the FBI said Thursday in a statement.

Sony's heavy-handed response to the release of "jailbreak" code for its PS3 console, which could be used to run unauthorized software on the device, had made the company the enemy of hackers everywhere, and the LulzSec hackers were not the only ones to go after the company's computer systems.

LulzSec had a brief run of Internet mayhem earlier this year, breaking into websites belonging to corporations and law enforcement agencies and then posting the data publicly with gleeful disregard to any consequences.

Since then, the group seems to have been largely rounded up by law enforcement in a series of arrests in the U.S. and U.K.

Kretsinger allegedly covered his tracks by using the Hidemyass.com proxy service and wiping his computer hard drive after the attack. He faces 15 years in prison if convicted.

Separately, the FBI also announced the arrest of two alleged members of the Peoples Liberation Front, a group that claimed credit for a 30-minute long 2010 distributed denial of service attack against Santa Cruz County, California. Like LulzSec, Peoples Liberation has affiliated itself with the Anonymous hacking movement.

Christopher Doyon and Joshua Covelli are both facing hacking charges in the case. Covelli had previously been charged in connection with an Anonymous-sponsored December 2010 attack on

Paypal.com.

Robert McMillan covers computer security and general technology breaking news for The IDG News Service. Follow Robert on Twitter at @bobmcmillan. Robert's e-mail address is robert_mcmillan@idg.com

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nonseq posted Thu Sep 22 20:27:39 PDT 2011

Good. The wheels of justice grind slowly but they grind exceedingly fine. If guilty, Cody needs to take responsibility and make restitution. Soon folks will realize that nothing in Lulz is free.

GradyPhilpott posted Thu Sep 22 20:41:52 PDT 2011

20 years at hard labor would suffice.

He'll never make enough money to make restitution, anyway.

And no cushy jobs with computer security companies, either.

In fact, no more computers, ever, for this smart***

TheOldTopkick posted Fri Sep 23 08:56:45 PDT 2011

While most of us are anxious to see this nerd pay for his play, keep in mind that it is you and I who will probably pay the steepest price. If he is found guilty we will pay for his room and board or in high, if not higher, prices for service. Somehow this does not seem right. Who gets punished here?

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