Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona

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TUCSON MAN SENTENCED TO OVER 5 YEARS IN PRISON FOR AGGRAVATED IDENTITY THEFT

TUCSON, Ariz. – Robbin Shea Brown, 27, of Tucson, was sentenced yesterday by United States District Judge David C. Bury to 66 months in prison for his role in a criminal conspiracy, the object of which was the theft and use of credit and debit card numbers and their associated personal identification numbers. Brown pleaded guilty on November 5, 2007, to two felony offenses, Conspiracy to Commit Offenses Against the U.S. and Aggravated Identity Theft. In addition to the 66 month prison sentence, Brown was ordered to make restitution to the victim banks, forfeit property which represented the proceeds of his offenses, and serve a three year term of supervised release.

On October 26, 2005, a federal grand jury returned a nine-count indictment against Brown and 16 other individuals from the Tucson area. The charges included Conspiracy to Commit Offenses Against the United States, Fraud in Connection with Access Devices; Fraud in Connection With Identification Documents, Authentication Features, and Information; Aggravated Identity Theft; Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering, and aiding and abetting these offenses.

The charges in the indictment involved a conspiracy to fraudulently withdraw money from automated teller machines (ATM's)and automated cashier machines (ACM's) in and around Tucson using stolen credit and debit card numbers. Brown and his co-conspirators solicited and were supplied with stolen credit and debit card account information of U.S. banking customers from individuals located in foreign countries, including Vietnam, Pakistan, Jordan, Egypt, Philippines, Macedonia, Romania, Estonia, Kosovo, Canada, Russia, United Kingdom, Panama, Morocco, Lebanon, Mexico, Australia, Lithuania, and France ("the suppliers.") Brown and his co-conspirators obtained the credit and debit card account information by visiting Internet Relay Chat rooms and forums run by the suppliers, as well as by private electronic messaging with these suppliers. In these chat rooms, the suppliers advertised the sale and cashing of credit and debit card information that they had obtained by means of phishing, pharming, and spamming unsuspecting victims.

The information provided by the suppliers to Brown included credit and debit card account numbers, associated personal identification numbers (PIN's), algorithms, and proprietary information relating to the customer's account, including the card verification value, expiration dates, passwords, and social security numbers. This information is required in order to produce a workable format to be encoded onto counterfeit credit cards.

Brown used software to format and encode the credit card information onto plastic cards with magnetic strips. He and his co-conspirators then used the plastic cards containing the stolen credit and debit card numbers to withdraw money from ATM's and ACM's in Tucson. Then Brown and his co-defendants would wire transfer approximately 50 percent of the money fraudulently withdrawn from the ATM's and ACM's back to the overseas suppliers of the stolen credit and

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debitcard information. During the conspiracy, the defendants possessed more than 4,500 illegally obtained credit and debit card account numbers and PIN's and wire transferred more than $300,000 of the proceeds of the fraudulent credit and debit card transactions to the overseas suppliers of this credit and debit card account information.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the U.S. Secret Service with assistance from the U.S. Marshals Service, Pima County Sheriff's Department and the Tucson Police Department. The prosecution is being handled by Eric Markovich, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson.

CASE NUMBERS: CR-05-2039-TUC-DCB
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