

California man indicted in 'botnet' case

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A California man was indicted Friday for allegedly creating a "botnet" that used university computer systems and disrupted information technology at a Seattle hospital.

Christopher Maxwell, 20, of Vacaville, Calif., was charged by a federal grand jury in Seattle with one count each of conspiracy to commit computer fraud and conspiracy to damage a protected computer.

The botnet allegedly overwhelmed and disrupted computer service at Seattle's Northwest Hospital, the U.S. Attorney's office said at a news conference.

The charges stem from a January 2005 computer infection that allegedly netted Maxwell and his co-conspirators \$100,000 paid by companies that had their adware secretly installed on personal computers.

The alleged conspiracy involved compromising the security of high-powered computers at the University of Michigan, Cal State Northridge and UCLA.

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