

Cybercrime networks impacted 1M computer users

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(AP) -- Law enforcement officers in the U.S. and seven other nations have seized dozens of computers, servers and bank accounts in an international probe of cybercrime rings responsible for \$74 million in losses to more than 1 million computer users, the FBI said Wednesday.

Operation Trident Tribunal targeted criminal networks preying on computer users through the sale of fraudulent computer security software known as scareware, the FBI said.

The [malicious software](#) appears to be legitimate [computer security software](#) designed to detect threats. It doesn't go away until users supply their [credit card numbers](#) for worthless software.

Other countries involved in the operation were Britain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Latvia and Lithuania.

An indictment unsealed in federal court in Minneapolis charged two operators with wire fraud, conspiracy and [computer fraud](#). The two defendants, Peteris Sahurovs, 22, and Marina Maslobojeva, 23, were arrested in Rezekne, Latvia.

The two allegedly created a phony advertising agency and claimed they represented a hotel chain that wanted to buy online ad space on the Minneapolis Star Tribune's news website.

The FBI said that when the ad began running on the website, the

defendants changed the computer code in the ad so that the computers of visitors to the Star Tribune website were infected with a software program that launched the scareware.

Another criminal group infected hundreds of thousands of computers with scareware and sold tens of millions of dollars of the antivirus product in three years.

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