

Yahoo! awarded \$610 million in spammer case

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A visitor stands next to a laptop near the logo of Yahoo at a trade fair in Germany 2007. Yahoo! on Wednesday said that a judge ordered spammers to pay \$610 million for running a larcenous lottery scheme using the Internet pioneer's name.

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The default judgment, which meant no one showed up to defend against the accusations, was declared on Monday by a federal district judge in New York, according to Yahoo!.

It was left to Yahoo! to find the culprits and collect the money.

"In the scheme, email messages were unlawfully sent to Internet users with the intent of deceiving them into believing they had a lottery prize offered by Yahoo!," the California firm said in a release.

The scam was designed to trick people into revealing valuable personal information such as passwords and [credit card numbers](#), according to Yahoo!.

Valuable secrets gleaned from people were reportedly used for nefarious activities such as looting bank accounts or stealing identities.

Some supposed lottery winners were duped into sending [scammers](#) money for non-existent processing or mailing charges for prizes that never arrived.

The court order was the culmination of a lawsuit filed in 2008.

The award included \$27 million for [trademark infringement](#) and a \$583 million penalty for violating the US CAN-SPAM Act.

The struggling Internet firm could use the cash, which promised to be nearly impossible to collect.

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