

Alleged Russian cybercriminal charged in New York court

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The Justice Department announced indictments against two Russians Tuesday for allegedly hacking into computers of US financial institutions to steal credit card numbers and stock information before running up bills.

The accused hackers, Vladimir Zdrovenin and his son, Kirill Zdrovenin, were charged in federal court in New York City with eight counts of fraud and one count of conspiracy.

"From far away, with the click of a mouse, the cybercriminal can victimize millions of people in the US," said US Attorney Preet Bharara in a statement. "As alleged, Vladimir Zdrovenin and his son did exactly that. They engaged in serial cybercrimes in Russia that targeted Americans and wrought havoc with their personal and financial information, using it to make phony purchases and to manipulate [stock prices](#)."

Vladimir Zdrovenin made a first appearance before a judge Tuesday after being extradited from Switzerland. His son remains at large.

The [computer hacking](#) into bank and brokerage accounts was done through a variety of schemes in 2004 and 2005, according to the Justice Department. Though the Zdrovenins were indicted in 2007, the indictments were unsealed for the first time Tuesday as Vladimir Zdrovenin, 54, made his court appearance.

He faces a possible maximum sentence of 142 years in prison.

The indictment says the Zdrovenins operated multiple phony Web sites and bank accounts in Russia and Latvia where they directed the money they stole.

They would use computer programs secretly installed on victims' computers that recorded personal financial information, such as credit card and brokerage account numbers. They also purchased stolen credit card numbers, the Justice Department reported.

Afterwards, they would make what appeared to be legitimate purchases from Internet businesses they ran using the stolen [credit card numbers](#), which deceived banks into sending them money, the indictment says.

They also are accused of buying and selling thousands of shares of company stock using stolen brokerage account numbers to manipulate [company stock](#) values, then profiting from the fluctuating value of shares through their own brokerage account, which operated under the name of Rim Investment Management, Ltd.

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