

Nevada man pleads guilty to sending spam to Facebook users

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A Nevada man pleaded guilty Monday to sending more than 27 million spam messages to Facebook users, federal officials said.

U.S. Attorney Melinda Haag said Sanford Wallace, of Las Vegas admitted in federal court in San Jose, California, to accessing about 500,000 Facebook accounts and sending unsolicited ads disguised as friend posts over a three-month span.

Wallace collected Facebook user account information by sending "phishing" messages that tricked users of the social networking site into providing their passwords, prosecutors said.

He then used that information to log into their accounts and post spam messages on their friends' Facebook walls, according to the indictment. Those who clicked on the link, thinking it came from a friend, were redirected to websites that paid Wallace for the Internet traffic.

In 2009, Palo Alto-based Facebook sued Wallace under federal anti-spam laws known as CAN-SPAM, prompting a judge to issue a temporary restraining order banning him from using the website.

Wallace, 47, acknowledged accessing Facebook's computer network in order to send the [spam messages](#) on three occasions between November 2008 and February 2009.

Wallace also admitted that he violated a court order not to access

Facebook's computer network. He was charged with fraud and criminal contempt, Haag said.

Wallace is free on bond and scheduled to be sentenced in December. He faces a \$250,000 fine and up to three years in prison.

Wallace's lawyer could not immediately be reached for comment.

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