

Identity Theft Expert Points to Organized Crime and Warns that Identity Thieves Target All Demographics

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(BOSTON, Mass. - Aug. 24, 2007 - IDTheftSecurity.com) According to various reports, last week authorities arrested members of an identity theft ring that was targeting members of the Forbes 400 list. Robert Siciliano, a widely televised and quoted personal security and identity theft expert, said the superrich aren't the only targets of identity theft, often the work of organized criminals.

"Organized crime rings, both international and domestic, have shown an affinity for identity theft," said Siciliano. "This is nothing new. It's also why a robust, flexible federal policy to counter identity theft is so important."

CEO of IDTheftSecurity.com and a member of the Bank Fraud & IT Security Report's editorial board, Siciliano leads Fortune 500 companies and their clients in workshops that explore consumer education solutions for security issues. A longtime identity theft speaker and author of "The Safety Minute: 01," he has discussed data security and consumer protection on CNBC, on NBC's "Today Show," FOX News, and elsewhere.

On Aug. 16, Reuters and others reported that U.S. authorities had "crack[ed] an identity theft ring...whose targets included billionaires from the Forbes magazine ranking of the richest 400 Americans." Research has established that identity thieves target not only high-income bracket earners (i.e., those whose annual earnings exceed \$75,000), but also households headed by people ages 18 to 24, regardless of income. U.S. Bureau of Justice statistics from 2004 revealed that these two demographic groups were the most likely to experience identity theft.

The ringleader behind the theft of financial information from those listed on Forbes 400 reportedly gained access to the data via his Internet connection overseas. According to Siciliano, the group's methods and hierarchy resembled organized crime's telltale modus operandi. He further noted that Nigerian criminals were found to be behind the socially engineered breach of data at ChoicePoint Inc. over two years ago, and that reports have documented organized crime's suspected involvement in data security breaches since.

"Anyone, at any income level, is a potential target of identity thieves," said Siciliano, "In fact, often an identity thief or identity theft ring will steal literally thousands of people's identifying information to fake several identities, engaging in subsequently fraudulent activities under many names, an approach that can frustrate law enforcement's efforts and may be easier to pull off under the auspices of organized frameworks involving many criminals, not just one."

Readers may view YouTube video of Siciliano on MSNBC discussing an elaborate, organized crime ring that involved restaurant workers using card-skimming devices to commit systematic fraud with patrons' credit card numbers:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPg-vyBHgPs

Readers may learn how to protect themselves against identity theft, a major concern for anyone whose electronic communication devices have been hacked, by viewing video of Siciliano at VideoJug:

www.videojug.com/search?keywords=siciliano

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The media are encouraged to get in touch with Siciliano directly:

Robert Siciliano
Personal Security Expert
CEO of IDTheftSecurity.com
PHONE: 888-SICILIANO (742-4542)
FAX: 877-2-FAX-NOW (232-9669)
Robert@IDTheftSecurity.com
www.idtheftsecurity.com

The media may also contact:

Brent W. Skinner
President & CEO of STETrevisions
PHONE: 617-875-4859
FAX: 866-663-6557
BrentSkinner@STETrevisions.biz
www.STETrevisions.biz

About IDTheftSecurity.com

Identity theft affects us all. Robert Siciliano, CEO of IDTheftSecurity.com and member of the Bank Fraud & IT Security Report's editorial board, makes it his mission to provide consumer education solutions on identity theft to Fortune 500 companies and their clients.

A leader of personal safety and security seminars nationwide, Siciliano has been featured on "The Today Show," CNN, MSNBC, CNBC, "FOX News," "The Suze Orman Show," "The Montel Williams Show," "Maury Povich," "Sally Jesse Raphael," "The Howard Stern Show," and "Inside Edition." The Privacy Learning Institute features him on its Website. Numerous magazines, print news outlets, and wire services have turned to him, as well, for expert commentary on personal security and identity theft. These include Forbes, USA Today, Entrepreneur, Woman's Day, Good Housekeeping, The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Washington Times, The Washington Post, Chicago Tribune, United Press International, Reuters, and others.

Visit Siciliano's Web site, www.IDTheftSecurity.com; blog, www.realtysecurity.com/blog; and YouTube page, www.youtube.com/stungundotcom.

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