Beat: News

California man behind revenge porn; website arrested

-, 12.12.2013, 22:00 Time

USPA News - A California man behind a so-called `revenge porn` website was arrested Tuesday after he allegedly posted thousands of sexually explicit photos in order to extort victims for up to $350 each to remove the content, prosecutors said on Wednesday. Kevin Christopher Bollaert, 27, of San Diego, was arrested on Tuesday by California Department of Justice agents and is being held in San Diego County jail on $50,000 bail.

He has been charged with 28 felony counts of identity theft, two felony counts of extortion, and one count of conspiracy, according to court documents. Bollaert allegedly created the website ugotposted.com in December 2012 and allowed visitors to anonymously post sexually explicit photos without the subject`s permission. Unlike many other revenge porn websites where the identity of the subject of the photos is not revealed, ugotposted.com required that the posting included the victim`s full name, location, age and Facebook profile. Revenge porn refers to sexually explicit photos or videos that is publicly shared online without the consent of the pictured individual, usually for the purpose of humiliation. The photos are typically posted by former lovers after a relationship falls apart, but the content may also have been stolen or obtained through hacking. "This website published intimate photos of unsuspecting victims and turned their public humiliation and betrayal into a commodity with the potential to devastate lives," said California Attorney General Kamala Harris. "Online predators that profit from the extortion of private photos will be investigated and prosecuted for this reprehensible and illegal internet activity." According to court documents, Bollaert also created a second website - changemyreputation.com - through which he contacted individuals who previously requested ugotposted.com to remove their photographs from the website. Bollaert would allegedly extort the victims by offering to remove the content for a fee ranging from $299.99 to $350, which could be paid through PayPal or Amazon gift cards. Bollaert told investigators that he made approximately $800 to $900 a month from advertising on the website and records obtained from the PayPal account associated with changemyreputation.com showed he received payments totaling tens of thousands of dollars. The exact amount was not specified in the court documents. When interviewed by investigators, Bollaert admitted that he and his friend Eric Chanson had started the website, but that Chanson had not been involved since December 2012. "At the beginning, it was fun and entertaining, but now it`s just like ruining my life," he said during the interview, adding that he was receiving about 100 emails a day with requests for posted images to be removed. Bollaert said he "voluntarily" shut down the website shortly before the interview, and said he felt bad about his actions. "I realize like this is not a good situation. I feel bad about the whole thing and like I just don`t want to do it anymore. I mean, I know a lot of people are getting screwed over like on the site. Like their lives are getting ruined," he said, as quoted in court documents.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-1633/california-man-behind-revenge-porn-website-arrested.html

Editorial office and responsibility:
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement):

Exemption from liability:
The publisher shall assume no liability for the accuracy or completeness of the published report and is merely providing space for the submission of and access to third-party content. Liability for the content of a report lies solely with the author of such report.

Editorial program service of General News Agency:
UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes

UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619