

Beat: News

Arrested 65 members of an international organization of scammers

They were obtained half a million euros

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USPA NEWS - Spanish Police have arrested 65 members of an organization that had ripped through phishing half a million euros to foreign victims. The group, consisting of Romanian and Spanish, obtained data bank of accounts located in foreign countries to do after other open illicit transfers in Spain.

Once the money was transferred to Spain was removed by "mules" to later move to Romania, either personally or through companies sending cash. Although its activity in Spain was concentrated in Barcelona, also operating in the provinces of Jaén, Alicante, Valencia and Castellon. Among those arrested was the leader of the organization in Spain that perceived 30% of the benefits obtained with this criminal activity. At present, we identified 171 victims of different nationalities.

The investigation began in March 2013 following a complaint lodged by a bank that alerted the use of counterfeit cards in your company to make fraudulent payments in shops in the province of Barcelona. From this information, the agents identified as suspects several citizens of Spanish and Romanian. On the other hand, the Police of CornellÀ de Llobregat told investigators the existence of a group of offenders who, to perish, were dedicated to the cloning of credit cards and ATM withdrawal of cash from illicit transfers . Observed the relationship between the two reports, a joint research team was established between the two Police services.

Subsequently, the officers noted the participation in these events 74 people operating from Spain; were part of a well organized framework in which the leaders, Romanian citizens, operating from their country of origin and distributed profits by 50% with the Spanish branch of the organization. By phishing, those arrested were made with the bank details of citizens from various European countries: Germany, France, Finland, Great Britain, Holland, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg and Sweden, USA and Australia.

Once these data obtained fraudulently by phishers, who were in Romania, conducted illicit transfers from these accounts to other open in Spain by other members of the organization. These, known in slang as "mules", extracting cash at ATMs or transferred directly into bank branches and then move it personally or through money transfer companies to Romania.

The researchers were able to confirm that the phishing as their main criminal activity. They carried out in two ways: the first and most popular was to impersonate the bank of the victim and, through internet, ask for passwords to operate online under the pretense of making any verification. The second method consisted in handling email for real estate agencies, activity in renting villas in Spain, that after the first contact between the victim and other communication estate was compromised. Thus the transfer of funds to the legitimate company actually made a criminal organization.

During the investigations were arrested 45 individuals. Other 27 people are pending arrest for being in Romania. So far the amount defrauded by this organization exceeds 490,000 euros, although researchers believed the amount could be around one million euros, given the large numbers affected. It has so far identified 171 victims, though it is possible that the number is higher.

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