

Federal Judge Issues \$780,000 Damage Award and Permanent Injunction Against Cyber-Pirate

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. – Dec. 6 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – Cyber-Pirates beware: This week, SearchSystems.net, a highly regarded site for researching public records around the world, obtained a judgment of \$780,000 in U.S. District Court (case C07-01918) against convicted Cyber-Pirate Mark Musselman and his website, www.courtsonline.org, it was announced today by Novo Law Group, P.C.

Musselman was sentenced earlier this year to 12 years in prison and over \$4.6 million in criminal fines and penalties on a 47 count cyber-fraud conviction in Montgomery County, Ohio Common Pleas Court. Subsequently, he was declared liable under a ten count complaint for Internet consumer fraud by the Miami County, Ohio Common Pleas Court, under a similar set of facts as those presented to the Federal District Court in San Francisco, which entered this week's Judgment and Permanent Injunction.

U.S. District Court Judge Maxine Chesney signed an order of Civil Judgment for \$780,000 against Musselman for stealing website content from www.searchsystems.net, the #1 ranked public records website. The consumer confusion created by Musselman's web site, www.courtsonline.org, resulted in thousands of complaints to SearchSystems.net while Musselman collected millions in diverted subscription fees.

In addition to the Civil Judgment handed down in San Francisco, Musselman and his associates are forever barred from operating any website business relating to public records access. This Federal Civil Judgment and Permanent Injunction are only the latest in a set of judgments against Musselman. In addition to the September 2007 judgment for consumer fraud in favor of the Ohio Attorney General and the 47 count criminal conviction for cyber-fraud June 2007 in Ohio, Musselman also has several similar prior convictions for forgery and copyright piracy. In June 2003, a Federal District Court in New York entered a Civil Judgment and Permanent Injunction against Musselman on several counts of copyright piracy for illegally distributing/selling over the Internet "pirated" versions of recently released movies officially distributed by major studios such as Disney and Warner Bros.

In issuing the Judgment and Permanent Injunction against Musselman, Judge Chesney also declared the validity of Search Systems' copyrights, trademarks, and unique trade dress, i.e. website appearance, which were all fully protected under Federal civil and criminal statutes from encroachment, unauthorized access and unauthorized duplication.

"This is a great victory for legitimate website owners whose businesses are mostly family owned. These cyber-pirates have been pillaging our content and the content of others, while defrauding consumers out of hundreds of millions of dollars," declared Pacific Information Resources, Inc.'s President/CEO Tim

Koster, whose Thousand Oaks, California company operates www.searchsystems.net and was the successful plaintiff in this civil action against Musselman.

Koster's company, Pacific Information Resources, Inc. has already obtained multiple injunctions against various bogus sites that claim to offer "access" to public records but who in fact have stolen their content from Pacific's SearchSystems.net site. The stolen website content is offered to unsuspecting consumers, who think they are actually accessing the SearchSystems.net website.

"Hundreds of thousands of consumers have discovered, in purchasing their 'public records access subscriptions' from websites such as courtsonline.org, websherlock.com, detectivechoice.com, webinvestigator.org, restrictedonly.com, cisworldwide.com and datahounddetective.com, that eventually their subscription does not 'work.' Their access to the full data base is ultimately denied," Koster explained. "These confused consumers do not realize that they purchased their subscriptions from a website that had no authorization to sell access to Search Systems' content." In response to the flood of e-mails from angry and confused consumers, SearchSystems.net initiated a series of lawsuits against these alleged cyber-pirates.

"Today's conviction and injunction against Mark Musselman and courtsonline.org is one of a series of injunctions and victories we have obtained against over 15 different defendants in our struggle to protect a business we have built up over the past 20 years," Koster stated.

"Our website pioneered the concept of providing easy access to online public records," Koster continued. "We work hard daily to add to our database and keep our information current. Not only does cyber-piracy damage us and defraud consumers, but the presence of such a large number of these sites creates a public perception that all public records web sites are 'scams'."

The SearchSystems.net website has garnered more than its share of awards and accolades: Yahoo! Internet Life magazine named the WEBSITE in July, 2002 as one of the Internet's "50 most incredibly useful sites;" PC World named the WEBSITE in February, 2003 as one of "the most useful sites ever;" the Wall Street Journal on September 15, 2003 called the WEBSITE "one of the best." Search Systems is also a favorite research resource for private investigators, businesses, financial institutions, and law enforcement, including many of the 81 Federal Agencies that train at the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Georgia.

All trademarks acknowledged.

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