

Computrace led to the arrest of a career computer thief

VANCOUVER, Nov 01, 2007 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- Absolute Software Corporation (CA:ABT: news, chart, profile) ("Absolute", or the "Company"), the leading provider of firmware-based, patented Computrace(R) Computer Theft Recovery, Data Protection and Secure Asset Tracking(TM) today announced that it has recovered a number of laptop computers allegedly stolen from the Tampa headquarters of OSI Restaurant Partners LLC (parent company of Outback Steakhouse). Information collected by Absolute's Recovery Team also led to the arrest of a career computer thief. The alleged thief, nicknamed "the Khaki Bandit" by investigators, had eluded police in connection with a spree of high-profile corporate laptop thefts from coast to coast until his recent arrest.

In a brazen daylight theft, a career laptop thief allegedly followed an employee through the office security of the Tampa, Florida headquarters of OSI Restaurant Partners waited for staff to leave and walked out with 11 corporate laptops. Fortunately, nine of the stolen computers were protected by Absolute's Computrace computer theft recovery product. OSI staff reported the theft to Tampa police and then alerted the Absolute Recovery Team.

Using information transmitted from the stolen laptops, the Recovery Team was able to determine that the thief had sold the computers to a number of unsuspecting eBay shoppers across five US states and also Taiwan. Fortunately, tracking reports indicated that one of the computers was still located in Miami Beach, Florida. With location information supplied by Absolute, Tampa police collaborated with their Miami colleagues to trace the thief to a residence in Miami Beach - where the suspect was taken into custody. The laptop has since been traced by Absolute to a buyer in Sacramento, California.

Upon further investigation, police officials were able to link the alleged thief to a spree of high-profile corporate laptop thefts committed by a villain that Milwaukee police officials had nicknamed the "Khaki Bandit." The alleged thief earned the name for his strategy of dressing in business casual clothes and blending into corporate head offices to steal laptop computers during regular business hours. The thief would then sell the computers under various aliases on eBay.

When apprehended by the joint Tampa/Miami Beach police team, witnesses report the alleged thief said "How the hell did you track me down? I did this in California too." The thief is now being held without bond in the state of Florida and subject to a nationwide returnable warrant which will return him to California.

Using information supplied by Absolute, police officials are now in the process of recovering the stolen computers.

According to John Livingston, Chairman and CEO of Absolute Software, "In the process of recovering an average of 50 lost or stolen computers each week, we often lead police to sophisticated criminals and a wide variety of related crimes. This is the kind of story that really makes my day and is a great example of preparedness on the part of OSI Restaurant Partners."

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