Arizona man charged in Sony hacking case

GREG RISLING - Associated Press - Associated Press

An Arizona man was arrested and charged Thursday in connection with the breach of computers at Sony Pictures Entertainment early this summer where more than 37,000 users had their information stolen.

Cody Kretsinger, 23, of Tempe, Ariz., was arrested and expected to make a court appearance later Thursday in a Phoenix courtroom. An indictment unsealed in Los Angeles charged Kretsinger with one count each of conspiracy and unauthorized impairment of a protected computer.

It wasn't immediately known if Kretsinger had retained an attorney.

Sony Pictures computers were compromised in late May and early June by a group known as Lulz Security, whose members anonymously claimed responsibility. The organization had bragged of accessing more than 1 million accounts, but Sony, whose offices are located in Culver City, Calif., later said about 37,500 users had personally identifiable information stolen.

Kretsinger is believed to be a current or former member of LulzSec, which has been linked to other hacking scandals involving various government and business entities, authorities said.

Kretsinger, known by the moniker "recursion," grabbed confidential information from Sony, passed it along to other members of LulzSec who posted the stolen material on its website, according to the indictment.

Additional charges may be forthcoming because the indictment notes Kretsinger was aided by other known and unknown co-conspirators. The investigation is ongoing, said FBI spokeswoman Laura Eimiller.

Parent company Sony Corp. has been dogged by personal data loss problems, including separate hacks that compromised the personal information of more than 100 million users earlier this year.

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