



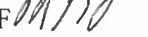
GREGORY D. TOTTE
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NEWS RELEASE

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El Monte Resident Receives 8-year Sentence for “Hard Drive Shucking” Scam

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Gregory D. Totten announced today that on January 17, 2020, Judge David Hirsch of the Ventura County Superior Court imposed an eight-year felony jail sentence on defendant Peter Cuong Chi Nhan (DOB 05/22/77), of El Monte. Nhan was sentenced after he pled guilty on November 22, 2019, to 12 felony counts of conspiracy, organized retail theft, and receiving stolen property. The successful prosecution of Nhan resulted from an investigation conducted by the Simi Valley Police Department (SVPD).

In June 2019, a fraud investigator working for Target reported to SVPD that unknown perpetrators were engaged in a pattern of purchasing new computer hard drives, then returning them for a refund after removing the hard drives from a protective case and replacing them with an old and worthless hard drive. This criminal practice is known in the retail electronics industry as “hard drive shucking.” SVPD identified Nhan as a suspect and tracked him over several weeks as he purchased new hard drives and returned shucked drives throughout Southern and Central California. SVPD determined Nhan stole hard drives in this fashion from Target, Walmart, Best Buy, and Fry’s. During their investigation, SVPD obtained records proving Nhan received more than \$580,000 selling the hard drives he stole in his “shucking” scheme. As part of his sentence, Nhan was ordered to pay restitution to the victim stores and to disgorge all profits made from selling the stolen property.

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The Ventura County District Attorney’s Office is the public prosecutor for the county’s 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and other professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.

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