

## Internet Related Crimes

The Internet provides individuals with a vast resource of knowledge and the means to communicate easily with family, friends, and associates. It also provides individuals with a venue for meeting new people and making new friends. While there are many advantages associated with the internet, it is very important to understand that the internet can also be a dangerous place. Many individuals separate their real lives from how they act on the internet. Because the internet provides a certain amount of anonymity, some individuals believe that what they do or say on the internet carries no consequences in the real world. This mindset can lead normally good and law-abiding individuals into doing or saying something that would not do outside of the anonymous world of the Internet. Fortunately, the spread of access to Internet and the increase in dependence on the Internet has led to most in society agreeing upon the establishment of rules and guidelines in order to protect innocent individuals from the dangers of the Internet. In response, a number of government agencies and law enforcement groups have sprung up to monitor the Internet for dangerous individuals and content.

The following are some examples of common Internet crimes and their legal consequences:

- **Phishing/spoofing:** This crime involves unlawfully accessing a computer with authorization and sending multiple emails, resending multiple commercial email messages with the intent to deceive recipients, or falsifying header information in multiple email messages. Phishing is punishable by up to five years in prison.
- **Blackmail/extortion:** blackmail, as a crime, is defined as using the Internet to threaten to cause damage with the intent to extort from any person any money or other thing of value. This crime is punishable by up to five years in prison.
- **Accessing stored communications:** intentionally accessing, without authorization, a facility through which an electronic communication service is provided is a crime punishable with a maximum sentence of one year.
- **Child pornography:** the transmission of child pornography using the Internet is punishable, under federal law, by a minimum of five years and a maximum of twenty years in prison.
- **Identity theft:** identity theft occurs when someone uses another's personally identifying information, like their name, credit card number, or identifying number, without their permission, to commit fraud or other crimes. This crime can be charged as either a felony or a misdemeanor depending on the defendant's criminal history and the specific facts of the case.

These are just a couple of examples of Internet crimes that experienced criminal defense attorneys Sanford and Christy Horowitz are ready to defend against.