"And he's like man if I can get my stuff back I'm happy with it. With to me translates to if he can get reimbursed for that, he'll be happy with it... That ways you don't have to worry about a charge sitting on your head... What we are trying to do is avoid the two parties to meet at all. You are done with him. He is done with you. You send us a check. We'll give it to him. You guys are done... There will be no prosecution or anything like that...

- Detective Imran Khan
Tuesday, August 20th 2013 at 2:18pm CST
"When you come in Monday with the cashier's check, I will have the computer here at the PD. I need you to unlock the PC with your password, and then either remove the True Crypt software, or change the password to another password that we decide so the owner can have access to the PC..."

— Detective Imran Khan
Wednesday, August 21st 2013 at 8:35am CST

"
As far as the other computer, he doesn't want you to touch it... so we will leave that. He don't want to do it that way... He didn't agree to that part... I was trying a mediator... He doesn't want to go that route... Basically you know, that is what he saying..."

— Detective Imran Khan
Monday, August 26th 2013 at 11:56am CST
Dear Detective I. Khan,

In the spirit of showing good faith, I propose the following alternative options of resolution:

* Next Monday when I bring the check to your office, I provide him (via you) a fully boxed, unopened and legitimate/genuine DVD disk copy of Windows 7 Professional with the latest service packs. This alone in my mind should be an equitable and fair compromise. He can use the disc to put a legit version of Windows on that computer and wipe away that pirated one that he probably downloaded from piratebay.

* In addition to the $905, I am willing to offer him an additional $43.00 (2X$21.50) which should cover for the two hours of time/labor needed to reinstall Windows OS on the computer to bypass the encryption scheme.

* I am willing to unlock the computer at the police station, if you so desire, and prove to you that I am not hiding any illegal or incriminating evidence. But I have strong reservations in sharing my password with anyone, including yourself. Given the computer at the police station, I will unlock it without hesitation, but no one but me needs to know what the password actually is.

* If the owner believes, contrary to my statements, that there are information on that computer that is vital to his business interests and business needs and that said information was developed or produced by me on his company time, he is welcome to copy the data once it is unlocked at the police station.

I am open to any other ideas or alternative means of resolution of this matter in a fair and equitable manner. Thank you very much for your time...

Sincerely,

Bo Chen

Tue 8/20/2013 5:00 PM
Setting up phone networks at my previous IT job, working hard no matter where I go...

The “about-face” “mediator detective”

When did this become a crime? Answer: Never.

The presumption of innocence never dissipates...
I was an independent contractor and not a full time employee. No employer-employee relationship existed. Federal labor laws afforded me the right to choose when to work, where to work, how to work and what work I was to produce.

The only contract that I signed was that I would work as a W-9 Independent Contractor for 40 hours a week at a rate of $21.50 USD per hour. There were no other
work-for-hire contracts or specific performance contracts signed and I did not sign any NDA (Non-disclosure agreements) agreements. Therefore, based on my understanding of the Federal labor laws and the notion of working as an independent contractor, it was not unreasonable for me to assume that the intellectual property that I developed while under contract belonged to me.

Owner allowed me to mix personal programs and data with business programs and data, and the owner directly profited from the use of my personal programs and data to assist with his business objectives. I used personal software (which the owner did not have a license of such in his possession) on my personal laptop to produce corporate work and transferred that over to him for his gain, profit and benefit. It would not have been unreasonable for me to assume that we had a reciprocity relationship, however implicit, and that I was not acting unreasonably when accessing personal data on my work computer.

Furthermore, owner knew and had reason to know that I was mixing work with personal information, including the fact that I had attached my personal dropbox and email accounts to the work computer. He never once objected. Owner voluntarily set me up as a local administrator with full rights on that PC, and informed me that I could install any software that I wanted on the machine. I was never asked to sign or click to agree to any company "acceptable use policy" nor asked to sign any other legally binding documents. I never breached nor circumvented any access when installing TrueCrypt on the computer. There were also no "computer usage" disclaimers that forbid installing of software or usage of encryption.

During my week of employment at H2Global, any and all work company produced in that period were stored remotely and not locally. My computer's "desktop" and "documents" folders were "re-directed" onto the Windows Server, as the owner had set up a policy in Active Directory of using "roaming profiles", whereby all the work data produced automatically saved to the network shares on the network drives and redundantly backed up nightly. Therefore there is nothing of value and no information or data produced while under his employ that he could even remotely claim he was deprived or denied access of; as he already has a server copy of all my documents and files. The only data that was not backed up to the server was my own private and personal data, but the owner has no legal claim to it and thus no reason to request access to my information. It is my belief owner intended to pressure police to coerce me into granting him access to my personal and private data through threat of incrimination just so owner can then turn around and use that information against me in a civil lawsuit.

By terminating me so abruptly and asking that I not come back, the owner was the one who deprived me the chance to clear out my personal items and clean my personal data from the computer before departing. I did not quit on him, he was the one who terminated me without cause. It is one thing to deprive me the chance to clean out my private and personal data, but something else nefarious altogether to allege that I committed a crime simply because I had the intention of protecting my private data from falling into the wrong hands. I had offered to unlock the computer at a neutral place such as the police station, the detective even instructed me to unlock it; but once again it was the owner that breached our agreement and deprived me of the chance to prove my innocence. He knew that if I unlocked the computer I would prove he was using a pirated version of Windows operating system, and that he was breaking the law; so instead he retaliated by refusing to allow me to unlock the machine just so he can coerce the police into charging me with a bogus fictional crime. The detective also notified me that the owner was in the mindset of proceeding with litigation, and as the owner has proven to be vindictive time and again starting with falsely accusing me of theft even after I had proactively apologized for losing the items and offered to make it up to him monetarily at my first opportunity... Any reasonable mind would have under those circumstances taken a more hesitant and precautious approach; especially if there was a pending lawsuit and the owner wanted to gain access to my personal and private files and data in order to use anything and everything against me, and achieving such unscrupulous goals through the trickery of the police to over-criminalize something that is at most a civil matter, and compelling them in doing the dirty work for him at my and the tax payers expense. Considering the totality of the circumstances, I am not only not guilty, but in fact innocent beyond a reasonable doubt. I have shown and will continue to show that there is not even a reasonable doubt that I could be guilty of anything. Every step of the way I bent over backwards to prove my innocence, including treating the owner in a far more equitable manner than he has ever shown me, demonstrating nothing but the best and most innocent of intentions, and over-communicating with the detective when I did not need to shoulder any burden of proof. I am 100% completely and absolutely innocent and the facts and the truth are my defense.
My UNT professor of IT and Security who has a top-secret clearance deems that refusing to decrypt a work computer is not a crime.

Bo,

The individual from the U.S. Secret Service has retired. However, if you contact the U.S. Secret Service office in Dallas, and ask for the representative for the NTSEC (North Texas Electronic Crimes Taskforce) you will get his replacement.

If the computer is in fact a work computer then you have made two mistakes: 1) the company owns all the data on that computer, you should NEVER place personal data on a company computer. 2) you did not have company permission to encrypt the computer (it is not yours to encrypt) and therefore you have denied access of the owner to company resources.

While I cannot believe that this is a criminal offense, I cannot believe you will have an easy time winning a civil suit.

I can serve as an expert witness but, you better be sure of what I will say before continuing the discussion.

John Windsor

[Email and phone number redacted]

My former employer and owner of Awntech also can't believe I could possibly be charged with anything.
Hi Bo.,
Let it go until you hear otherwise bud.
Would you be able to help me with some programming if I ever need it? Yes, you will be paid. Nothing on my mind right now but was thinking. My nephew helps me with a lot of stuff who is in India. Just wondering.

Regards,

I used to be a volunteer moderator on a large penpal social-networking site, the owner writes back saying he understands my hesitations against sharing any passwords...
Re: Hi

Hey Bo,

Sorry to hear about these problems; I took a look at the page you set up. It seems to me that you're a very good job of advocating for yourself so far. I'm sure everything will turn out fine.

As far as advice goes, I don't have much legal expertise. However, I can definitely understand your reluctance to provide passwords and personal information. It sounds like you have an attorney, though, so that's definitely a good start.

Best of luck and let me know how things turn out -- hoping for the best.

antonio was last online 29 minutes ago.

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