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Roman Vega (Boa)

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Roman Vega, Boa and RioRita. How CarderPlanet worked, why it was compared to a marketplace, and why Vega was sentenced to 18 years in the US.



Source: the DokuFunk radio archive. A small-sized archive screenshot is available.

Status: The suspect

Other names: Roman Vega; Boa; RioRita; Roman Stepanenko; Randy Riolta

Status in the case files. Convicted in the US. A federal court sentenced him to 18 years' imprisonment in 2013.

About the editorial tag. 'Suspect' is the editorial label for this series. The procedural status and outcomes of the cases are indicated separately.

Relevance to the topic. CarderPlanet, co-founder.

From Boa Factory to CarderPlanet

In the late 1990s, Vega launched Boa Factory, a platform for trading stolen payment details. In the early 2000s, he became a co-founder of CarderPlanet and one of its administrators. In US Department of Justice documents, he appears under the aliases Boa, RioRita, Roman Stepanenko and Randy Riolta. Different names corresponded to different roles on the website. Under the alias

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Boa, Vega was listed as a second-tier manager, whilst under RioRita he acted as an adviser. [1] [2]

How the platform addressed the issue of trust

For a forum featuring anonymous sellers, the main commodity was data, the value of which was difficult for buyers to assess in advance. According to the prosecution's description, Vega was involved in creating a pre-screening system. This allowed the organisers to filter out unsuitable offers and maintain the sellers' reputations. The prosecution estimated the number of participants at its peak to be more than six thousand. In addition to listings for payment details, related services were also offered on the platform. [1] [2]

Arrest and two phases in the US

In February 2003, Vega was arrested in Cyprus. He was extradited to the US, where the case was initially heard in the Northern District of California. In 2007, he was transferred to the Eastern District of New York to face new charges. The US Department of Justice reported that, at the time of his arrest, Vega was in possession of more than half a million stolen card numbers. This figure relates to the data found in his possession and does not, in itself, reflect the number of unauthorised transactions or the extent of the financial loss. [1] [2]

The sentence and the significance of the case

In 2009, Vega pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy to commit money laundering and fraud involving account access credentials. In December 2013, a federal court in Brooklyn sentenced him to 18 years' imprisonment. The case documents describe his personal role and his guilty plea. Separate documents are required to attribute the remaining accounts and participants. [1] [2]

The amateur radio archive and his middle name

The DokuFunk radio archive publishes material on Romeo Stepanenko, known by the call sign 3W3RR. This biographical collection contains photographs, material on radio expeditions and his own account of his time in prison. The US Department of Justice specifically lists 'Roman Stepanenko' amongst the aliases used by Vega. Amateur radio materials help to identify the person in an archive photograph. Information regarding his role in CarderPlanet and his sentence is taken from the court proceedings as described by the US prosecution. [3] [1]

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If you have any documents or further details regarding this case, Please write to the editor.

Sources

1. US Department of Justice — Roman Vega’s sentence and his role in CarderPlanet
   https://www.justice.gov/usao-edny/pr/ukrainian-national-who-co-founded-cybercrime-marketplace-sentenced-18-years-prison

2. Ars Technica — the story of CarderPlanet and Roman Vega’s 18-year sentence
   https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2013/12/ukranian-fraudster-and-carderplanet-don-finally-sentenced-to-18-years/

3. The DokuFunk documentary radio archive — photo by Romeo Stepanenko
   https://www.dokufunk.org/amateur_radio/personalities/index.php?CID=1175&ID=11422&lang=EN

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