



For Immediate Release

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MADIGAN SUES SECOND COMPANY THAT SELLS CELL PHONE RECORDS

CUSTOMER COMMENTS CLEARLY SHOW VICTIMS ARE KEPT IN DARK

Chicago – Attorney General Lisa Madigan today filed a lawsuit against a Florida company that allegedly obtained and sold the phone records of individuals without their knowledge or consent.

Madigan's suit, filed today in Sangamon County Court, names as defendants DATA TRACE USA INC d/b/a PDT RESEARCH GROUP, and d/b/a datatraceusa.com; Ilia S. Nicholas a/k/a Ilia Scott Nikoleau Jr., individually and as former president and secretary of DATA TRACE USA INC d/b/a PDT RESEARCH GROUP, and d/b/a datatraceusa.com; and Lina Vargas, individually and as registered agent of PDT RESEARCH GROUP, and d/b/a datatraceusa.com. The defendants all allegedly are located in Florida.

The company is not licensed to do business in Illinois.

Madigan's complaint alleges that DATA TRACE agents falsely represented themselves as cell phone account holders or as agents or employees of a cell phone company. Additionally, they allegedly tried to gain unauthorized computer access to records.

The company's Web site informs anyone browsing the Web that for a fee, a person can receive the call records of any telephone number by simply providing DATA TRACE with a number. The ad proclaims, "You provide working cell phone number, name and address (SSN if you have it) We will provide you all incoming & outgoing calls from the most recent billing cycles available. RESULTS IN 1 BUSINESS DAY VIA E-MAIL."

Madigan said comments from potential buyers underscored that the account holders didn't consent to their records being given out and in fact, were totally in the dark.

For example, in transactions dated January 30, 2006, and February 10, 2006, purchasers ordered detailed records along with messages that stated, "Confidential Please!" and "please e-mail the file to me, needs to be kept confidential."

On February 2, 2006, a purchase was made from DATA TRACE with a note saying that “I would like to make sure that the individual that is being traced is not contacted in any way, i.e. phone, letter, fax. If there is any policy that would include informing the individual that this inquiry is taking place, please disregard. This is EXTREAMLY *[sic]* sensitive matter and the individual is NOT to be notified. If the individual has access to finding out that this transaction has taken place, please cancel it and I will be willing to pay a transaction cancellation fee if necessary. Thanx *[sic]* you for your your *[sic]* professionalism.”

“Comments such as these clearly show that the victims of this practice have no idea that their private records are being accessed,” Madigan said. “These companies don’t care if giving out this information jeopardizes a person’s security. They are just looking to make a profit from invading individuals’ privacy.”

Madigan’s complaint seeks to prohibit the defendants from operating in Illinois and seeks civil penalties of up to \$50,000 per violation of the Illinois Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act.

On January 20, Madigan filed a lawsuit against another Florida company that allegedly uses illegal means to access an individual’s cell phone or land line records.

The case filed today is being handled by Springfield Consumer Bureau Chief Elizabeth Blackston and Assistant Attorney General Philip Heimlich.

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