

# First Fake Games Consoles Seized In UK Raid

*Husband and wife team investigated for selling counterfeit games consoles and games on eBay*

**Wednesday 21 January 2009/...** A raid to investigate an illegal counterfeiting operation on eBay, the online auction site, led to a husband and wife team in Kent and the seizure of 40 counterfeit Nintendo DS™ consoles – the first instance of its kind in the UK.

The raid on Tuesday January 21 2009 by investigators from Bromley Trading Standards Department and the local police resulted in the seizure of 40 counterfeit Nintendo DS™ consoles packaged with potentially dangerous power units as well as game copying devices. In addition, 150 counterfeit games for the DS and Game Boy Advance systems as well as two laptops and a PC tower were seized at the home of the couple.

Invoices revealed that the couple had traded online over a two-year period using different identities. The early stages of financial investigation suggest a profit of more than £50,000 may have been made by the couple in December 2008 alone.

Further to a test purchase made on eBay this year, illegally copied Nintendo DS™ games were purchased for £40. This is the first instance of counterfeit games consoles being found for sale within the UK.

Michael Rawlinson, managing director of ELSPA, said: “The replication of video games software and hardware is illegal and has a negative impact on both local and national businesses. ELSPA would like to thank the thorough and professional investigation by Bromley Trading Standards department and local Police whose work with our investigators has stopped the illegal activities of yet another internet pirate.”

Colin Bloom, Bromley’s Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Community Safety added:”This authority will tackle any traders operating in the informal economy in order to protect honest local businesses as well as consumers.”

A POCA (Proceeds Of Crime Act) investigation has already begun to estimate the criminal gain from the offender’s illegal activities.



Ends.

## **EDITORS NOTES**

About ELSPA - <http://www.elspa.com>

ELSPA (The Entertainment & Leisure Software Publishers Association) was founded in 1989 to establish a specific and collective identity for the computer and video games industry. Membership includes almost all companies concerned with the publishing and distribution of interactive leisure software in the UK.

ELSPA's activities include: Official Chart and Industry Reports, Anti-Piracy UK and EU, PR and Communication, Events. More information on all these activities can be found at <http://www.elspa.com>.

### **About Software Piracy and its negative impact on both consumers and industry.**

ELSPA estimates criminal gain through computer and video games piracy sits at approximately £600 million.

Piracy/counterfeiting is illegal and punishable by fines and jail sentences.

The illegal copying of software poses the very real threat of criminal prosecution and a criminal record, as well as the risk of massive personal financial loss under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

Consumers have no recourse under law for faulty pirated games, which can damage hardware. Local and national jobs are lost as result of pirate operations.

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