Hackers Earn $16M

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Police have detained a group of hackers who made 500 million rubles ($16.1 million) in a year by infecting tens of thousands of computers with a virus, Interfax reported Tuesday, citing a law enforcement source.

The virus blocked the users' computers and demanded a sum from 300 to 1,000 rubles ($10 to $30) to be paid via SMS to restore access, the source said. Trying to remove the virus resulted in the contents of the hard drives being wiped out. The hackers targeted computers in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova and the Baltic states.

Ten suspects were arrested in the case, the source said, without elaborating. They face up to 17 years in prison on fraud and hacking charges.

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