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SOPHOS

[Pedophile Blackmailed Underage Girls via Webcam Spyware](#)

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The Canadian and UK authorities have collaborated in order to bring to justice a 36 year old British pedophile that used webcam spyware to retrieve sensitive information from the victims' machines. Adrian Ringland, from Ilkeston, Derbyshire, then used the data to blackmail underage schoolgirls, forcing them to provide him with sexually explicit images. Following his apprehension, the man pleaded guilty to two counts of indecency with a child, four counts of blackmail, 10 counts of producing indecent photos and five counts of unauthorized modification of computers. His modus operandi was to pose as a teenager named "Ant Jones" in chat rooms in order to initiate contact and to infect the victims PCs with malware. "Pedophiles are able to use the Internet in a variety of ways when hunting for children to abuse. That they are also using modern technology such as webcams to spy and take photos and movies of their victims will be a worry for any parent whose children have computers in their bedroom," said Graham Cluley, senior technology consultant for Sophos. "Childrens' PCs must be protected by the latest anti-virus software, security patches and firewalls. Young people also need to be given guidance as to how to behave safely online, to reduce the chances of falling being exploited by sick hackers." Four 14 year old girls, one Canadian and three British, and another 13 year old British girl fell victims to the pedophile; while additional charges are pending in the case of another three underage girls. Ringland's sentence will be announced at a later date. "The Canadian and British authorities should be congratulated for bringing this case to a conclusion, especially as initially Ringland tried to blame his partner's teenage son," added Cluley. "Sadly this isn't the first time we have heard of internet voyeurs taking over innocent peoples' webcams for their own perverted ends, and it's unlikely to be the last."