



Breaking Barriers

The Critical Role of Public-Private Partnerships in
Combating the Cybercrime Pandemic

Michael Roberts - 7 November 2024



About Me....

1986 to 2024



Co-founder: **Stingbase/Stingforce**
Public-Private Crimefighting Initiative (2024)



Investigator
with the **Australian
telecommunications**
commission
(1986-1988)



Founder:
Xellex Contract IT
Training
(1997-2000)



Founder:
Mile2.com Cyber
Security Training &
Certification (2000 -
2008)



Founder:
Rexxfield Cyber
Investigation
Services (2008-
Now)



PICDO.org
Public International
Cybercrime
Disruption
Organization (2019-
Now)

Setting the Record Straight

Private Investigators that Give other Private Investigators a Bad Name



Interpol Centennial Conference · 2023

The Vienna Declaration- Secretary General Jürgen Stock.

The Vienna Declaration sets our five priority actions:

1. Tackling transnational organised crime must become a global national security priority
2. Building greater cooperation to tackle criminal activity
3. Increased information sharing
4. Empowering frontline police
5. Greater investment in innovation and technology



Interpol Centennial Conference · 2023

The Vienna Declaration- Secretary General Jürgen Stock.

“What is a local police officer meant to do about a criminal who is 7,000 miles away? In fact, what is the most well-resourced police service meant to do about a criminal operating anonymously on a different continent? No single law enforcement body, no regional grouping, no one can tackle this explosion of organised crime on their own.

International organised crime groups are exploiting difficult relationships between countries, they are exploiting conflicts and they are exploiting the fact that law enforcement’s investment in technology has been significantly outpaced by the criminals.

In a splintered world, a message of greater global unity is challenging ...”





Case Studies

Where multiple, international law enforcement agents worked with us for 1st Response Crime Resolution.

Resolving High-Volume Low Loss Crimes At Scale



Paedophile Stalking Teenage Girls

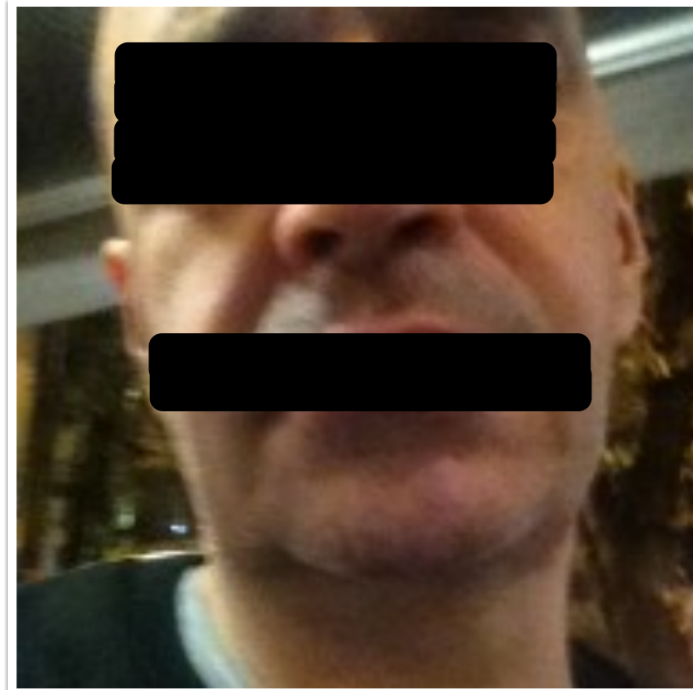
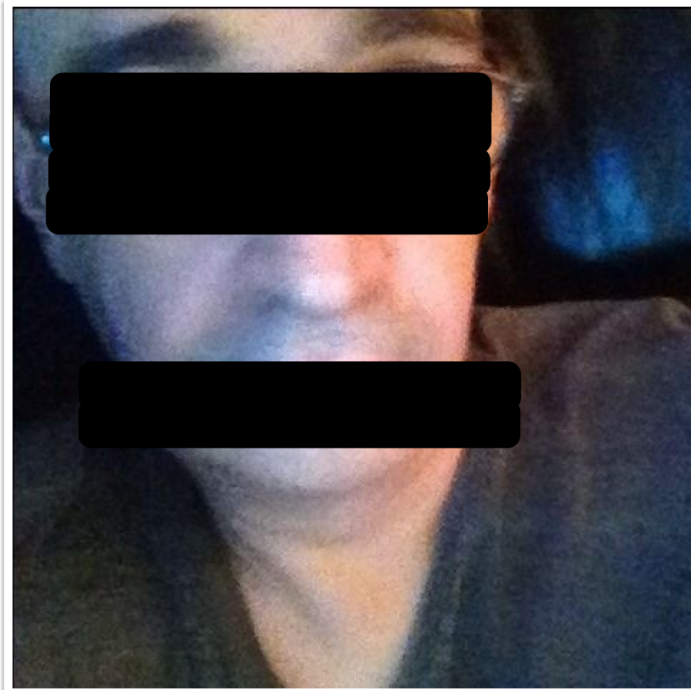
FBI & LAPD · Cold Case for 4 Years

We were able to:

1. Identify the perpetrator in the South of France **in just 4 minutes.**
2. Additional 10 hours work in proving up the case.
3. Hand-off to DHS-HSI Child Exploitation Unit & French Police.
4. Arrest is pending.

Paedophile Stalking Teenage Girls

FBI & LAPD · Cold Case for 4 Years



Suicide Averted Extortion

FBI Taskforce &
Boston Jurisdiction -
Ghana Arrest



Rexxfield. **WE HUNT... MONSTERS!**

Successful Lure Operation with
Ghana's Cyber Security Authority

**SEXTORTIONIST
ARRESTED**

We bypassed frustrating delays with USA law enforcement and rescued a traumatized single mother from a heartless, manipulative, Nigerian romance scammer's abuse.

**If convicted he faces
10 to 25 years prison**

This was a joint public-private operation between
Ghana's Cyber Security Authority (CSA) and
Rexxfield Cyber Investigation Services

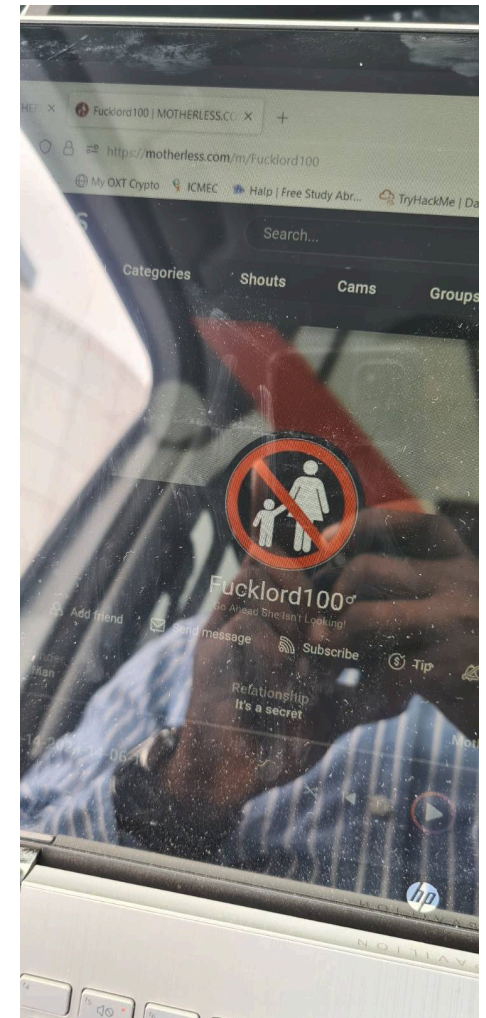


Suicide Averted Extortion

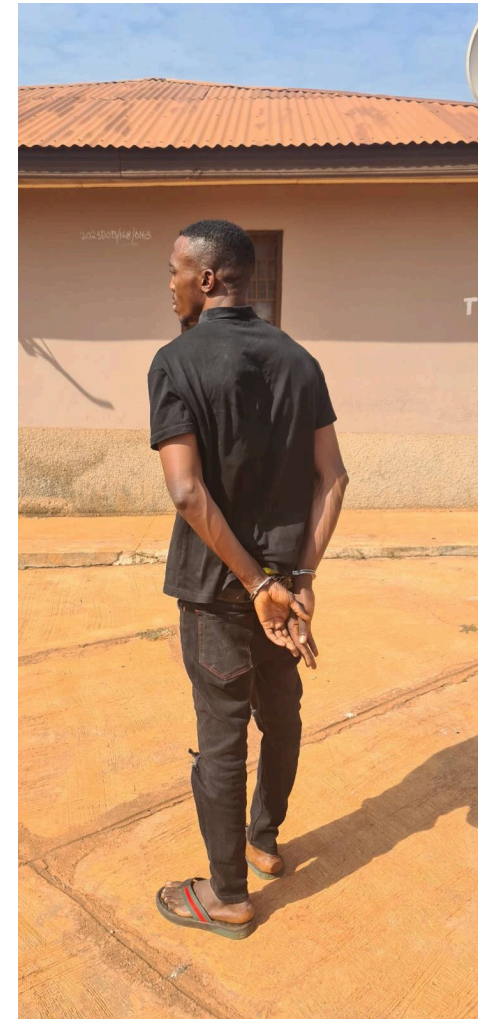
FBI Taskforce & Boston Jurisdiction - Ghana Arrest

We were able to:

1. Identify the perpetrator in Ghana **in just 17 minutes**.
2. Coordinate a Lure Operation with Ghana Cybersecurity Authority Agent.
3. Arrest the Perpetrator on Christmas Eve 2023.
4. Sentencing is pending (Minimum 10-Years without Parole).



Suicide Averted Extortion



Crypto scam recovery · 10BTC

USA + Nigeria



Successful Stolen Crypto Recovery

- ✓ On-Site Investigation in Nigeria
- ✓ Nigerian Arrests and Pursuit
- ✓ US Law Enforcement Involvement
- ✓ Crypto Courtesy Freeze & Recovery



Crypto scam recovery · 10BTC

USA + Nigeria

We were able to:

1. Freeze the crypto when it moved from non-custodial wallet **in just 24 minutes.**
2. Identify three Nigerian Perpetrators.
3. Work with Nigerian EFCC, Utah Dept. Criminal Investigation to return 9.15 BTC to elderly victim.
4. **Doubled the victim's BTC value!!!**

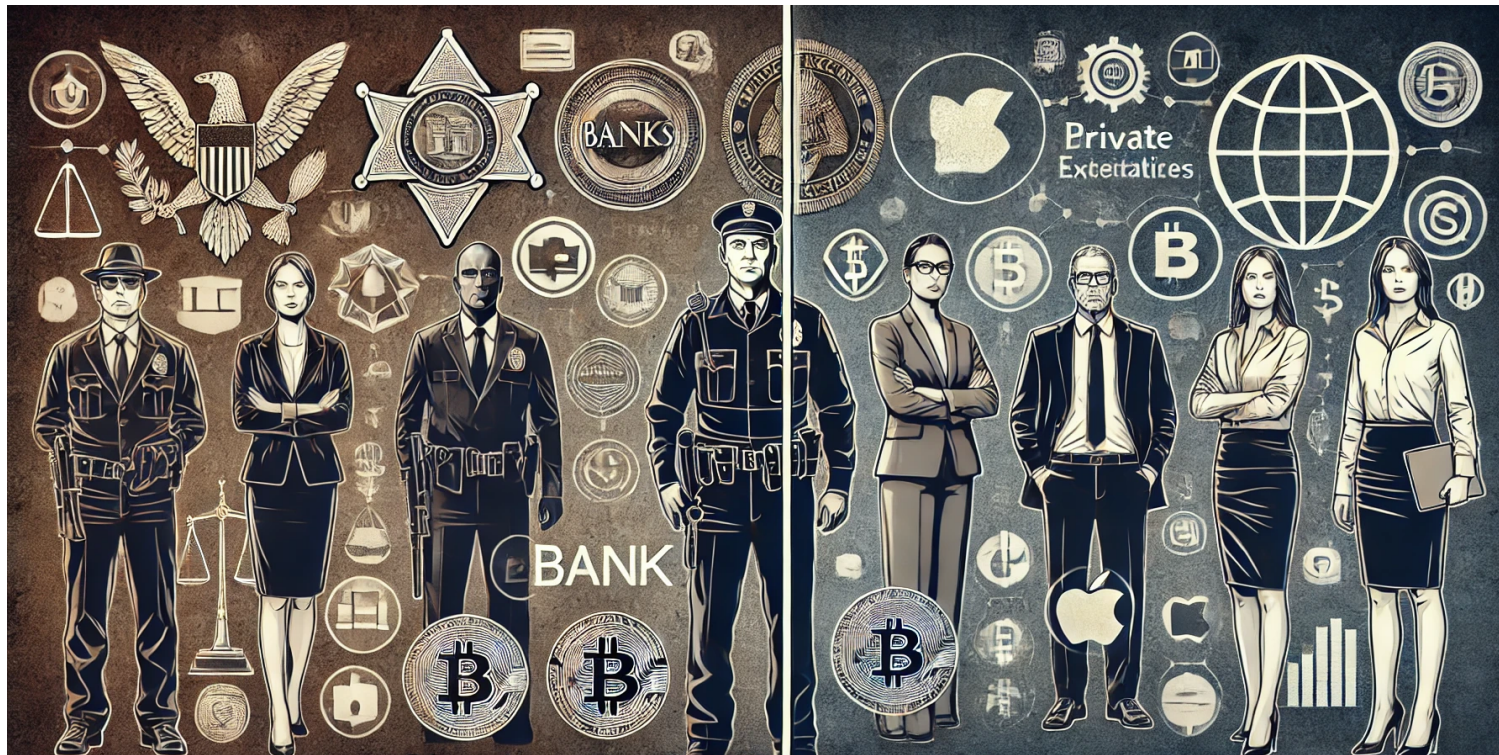
Crypto scam recovery · 10BTC

USA + Nigeria



Why These Cases Succeeded

Breaking the Glass Wall Between Law Enforcement & Private Partners



Breaking the Glass Wall...

...Between Law Enforcement & Private Partners

Law Enforcement: Authority & Reach

- Power within jurisdiction to enforce laws, conduct arrests, secure warrants, issue subpoenas
- Access to national and international intelligence networks
- MLAT & Budapest 24/7 Network
- Ability to coordinate large-scale, multi-agency investigations

Private Investigators & Fraud Analysts: Efficacy & Agility

- Specialized in targeted fields with unique skill sets (cybercrime, fraud, forensics)
- Ability to act quickly without bureaucratic delay, cross border cooperation, responding to emerging leads in real time
- Often bring deep, niche expertise (e.g., cryptocurrency tracing, social engineering)

Conclusion: Breaking this “glass wall” allows each sector to leverage the other’s strengths for more effective outcomes.

Force Multipliers

The Impact of Private Specialists on Law Enforcement Productivity

Private Specialists as Force Multipliers:

- Law enforcement officers, often generalists, can benefit from private experts' deep specialisation.
- Many law enforcement specialists are under-resourced and overwhelmed with caseloads.

Boost in Efficiency:

- Private specialists, especially when funded by victims, act as “**first responders**” by conducting thorough, preliminary investigations.

Parallel Reconstruction Benefits:

- Private investigators do the “heavy lifting” and deliver nearly complete cases to law enforcement.
- Law enforcement's role becomes streamlined: verify, perform final checks, testify if needed.

Outcome: Cases handled with **as little as 10%** of the usual investigative load, enabling faster resolutions without compromising prosecutorial standards.

Private to Public Parallel Reconstruction

A Proven Strategy for Prompt Case Resolution

How It Works:

- Private investigators uncover extensive evidence and develop a well-structured case report.
- Law enforcement conducts a “parallel reconstruction” – validating the work and taking legal action.
- Saves valuable law enforcement time, which is then redirected to high-priority actions like arrests.
- Court Compliance: Courts require law enforcement testimony; they are indifferent to the full investigative history as long as facts are sound.

Results: Faster case closures, better use of resources, and stronger deterrence.



Challenges in Current Law Enforcement-Private Sector Dynamics

The choke-points

1st Response Laundering Freezes:

Private could... but can't. Public could... but doesn't.

Limited Feedback:

Little to no updates on progress or outcomes from law enforcement

Hyper-Vigilance in Information Sharing:

Reluctance to share actionable intelligence

Frustration Among Trusted Private Sources:

High-quality intelligence not fully utilised

Impacts:

Slower case resolution, diminished trust, and missed opportunities for deeper investigations

Benefits of Open Collaboration and Parallel Reconstruction

“Justice at Scale®”

Enhanced Crime Resolution:

- Improved insights when private sources are informed
- Increased ability for private investigators to provide supplementary intelligence

Force Multiplication Effect:

- Cases are handled more efficiently, enabling law enforcement to address higher caseloads.
- Law enforcement resources are used for critical actions, while private sources handle preliminary investigations.

Real-Time Feedback Loop:

- Ability to adapt investigative approaches quickly
- Facilitates more informed decision-making and prioritisation

Proposal: A Trusted Partner Network for Law Enforcement

Sorting the wheat from the chaff...

Identify & Vet Trusted Partners:

- Criteria for private investigators, financial analysts, telco providers, and social platforms
- Emphasis on proven track records and trust through referrals and experience

Establish Clear Communication Channels:

- Set expectations for regular updates or case status checkpoints
- Define secure channels for sharing intelligence and developments
- Benefits: Faster, more holistic responses to complex crimes

Supporting Points from the Vienna Declaration

A Change of Mindset

Global Cooperation Starts at Home and builds from there:

- Acknowledge INTERPOL's call for greater cross-border information sharing
- Align your organisation's 1st Response Policies with the Declaration's emphasis on removing barriers to effective communication

Empowerment of Field Officers and Partners:

- Reinforce the idea that frontline agents and private partners need the right tools
- Advocating for timely information flow to improve on-the-ground responses

Moving Forward

Recommendations for Policy and Practice

Develop Policies for Private Source Integration:

- Outline protocols for law enforcement on engaging with vetted private partners

Encourage Transparency in Case Status Updates:

- Regular, **non-sensitive progress updates to keep private sources engaged and valued.**

Invest in Secure Information-Sharing Technology:

- Leverage advanced platforms to ensure secure and efficient collaboration

Long-Term Goal:

- Create an ecosystem where law enforcement and private sectors work as seamless partners

Conclusion

A Call to Action- React to the urgency:

Face the Facts:

- As cybercrime escalates, public-private partnerships are critical
- Acknowledge law enforcement's challenges but highlight the value of collaboration

Final message:

- A united approach will empower all stakeholders in the fight against organised cybercrime
- This will bring justice and relief to victims and potential victims;
AT SCALE