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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Northern District of Georgia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Owner of Sharebeast.com sentenced for copyright infringement**

ATLANTA - Artur Sargsyan has been sentenced for the crime of criminal copyright infringement for private financial gain while operating a massive file-sharing infrastructure that distributed approximately 1 billion copies of copyrighted musical works through Internet downloads. Sargsyan's file-sharing websites, which contained numerous pop-up advertisements, generated significant profit for him when visitors accessed the websites to illegally download copyrighted works.

"Sargsyan operated one of the most successful illegal music sharing websites on the Internet," said U.S. Attorney Byung J. "BJay" Pak. "His reproduction of copyrighted musical works were made available only to generate undeserved profits for himself. The incredible work done by our law enforcement partners and prosecutors in light of the complexity of Sargsyan's operation demonstrates that we will employ all of our resources to stop this kind of theft."

"Mr. Sargsyan was warned several times that he was violating the law by illegally sharing copyrighted works, but chose to ignore those warnings," said David J. LaValley, Special Agent in Charge of FBI Atlanta. "His sentence sends a message that no matter how complex the operation, the FBI, its federal partners and law enforcement partners around the globe will go to every length to protect the property of hard working artists and the companies that produce their art."

According to U.S. Attorney Pak, the charges and other information presented in court: Artur Sargsyan owned and operated a number of websites including Sharebeast.com, Newjams.net, and Albumjams.com. From at least 2012 through 2015, Sargsyan illegally distributed and reproduced copyrighted works through Sharebeast.com. Using a network of websites that he owned and operated, including Newjams.net and Albumjams.com, Sargsyan created links to a wide swath of copyright-protected music that was stored on Sharebeast.com. Sharebeast illegally stored and distributed works from scores of artists, including Bruno Mars, Linkin Park, Pitbull, Pharrell Williams, Gwen Stefani, Maroon

5, Ariana Grande, Destiny's Child, Ciara, Katy Perry, Beyonce, Jennifer Hudson, Kanye West, and Justin Bieber. Meanwhile, Sargsyan profited from the distribution of the copies of these copyrighted works.

According to the Recording Industry Association of America ("RIAA"), Sharebeast.com was the largest online file-sharing website specializing in the reproduction and distribution of infringing copies of copyrighted music operating out of the United States. From 2012 to 2015, the RIAA sent Sargsyan over 100 e-mails notifying him that Sharebeast.com was illegally hosting and sharing copyright-infringing works. Sargsyan continued, however, to make the copyright-infringing files available for download, disregarding the many warnings that he received. The RIAA conservatively estimated the total monetary loss to its member companies at \$6.3 billion.

Artur Sargsyan, 30, of Glendale, California, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Timothy C. Batten, Sr., to five years in prison to be followed by three years of supervised release, and ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$458,200. He was also ordered to forfeit \$184,768.87. Sargsyan was convicted on these charges on September 1, 2017, after he pleaded guilty.

This case was investigated by the FBI.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Samir Kaushal and Kamal Ghali prosecuted the case. John Zacharia, formerly the Deputy Chief for Litigation for the Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section, previously prosecuted the case. The prosecution reflects a coordinated effort by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia, the Department of Justice Criminal Division's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section (CCIPS), the Office of International Affairs, the FBI's field offices in Atlanta, Denver, Chicago, and Los Angeles, and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California. Substantial assistance was provided by the United Kingdom's National Crime Agency and the Ministry of Security and Justice in the Netherlands.

For further information please contact the U.S. Attorney's Public Affairs Office at [USAGAN.PressEmails@usdoj.gov](mailto:USAGAN.PressEmails@usdoj.gov) or (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is <http://www.justice.gov/usao-ndga>.

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