

Drunken-driving arrest turns up fugitive in \$100 million fraud case

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Body

LAS VEGAS - A fingerprint match in a Las Vegas area **drunken-driving case** led U.S. authorities to a German **fugitive** in a **\$100 million** international **fraud** scheme who had been on the run for five years, authorities said Friday.

U.S. marshals recently learned that a fingerprint from a 51-year-old man **arrested** in February 2011 belonged to Ulrich Felix Anton Engler, and they joined with Las Vegas police financial crimes detectives to find and **arrest** him late Wednesday, said Bill Cassell, a Las Vegas police officer.

Engler was being held by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement on an immigration violation, pending his transfer to Germany.

He is accused of using a marketing firm called Private Commercial Office in Cape Coral, Fla., to build an Internet pyramid scheme. From June 2003 to December 2004, it collected almost \$101 **million** from 3,500 investors in Germany, Switzerland and Austria, authorities said. Once the money reached the United States, investors lost access to it.

FBI agents and local police on Friday began tracing Engler's steps in southern Nevada, finding more than 1,000 pieces of artwork at a storage facility he rented in Boulder City, about 25 miles east of Las Vegas.

FBI agent Patrick Turner in Las Vegas said the warrant search at the storage facility was an effort to recover proceeds on behalf of alleged **fraud** victims.

A local court in Mannheim, Germany, issued a warrant in December 2007 accusing Engler of multiple criminal **fraud** charges, according to an ICE statement. If convicted, he faces **up** to 20 years in prison.

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