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>>> BY NIC CORBETT

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>>> FOR THE STAR-LEDGER

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>>> In January 2008, it took an army of online hackers to take down the Church of Scientology's websites. *crash?*

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>>> In the end, only one person, 19-year-old Dmitriy Guzner of Verona, was charged in connection with the cyber assault. On Wednesday, three days before his 20th birthday, he's expected to stand before

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Judge Joseph A. Greenaway Jr. in U.S. District Court in Newark and take his lumps. *Plea deal?* He's facing up to two and half years in prison and nearly \$119,000 in fines. *This is the story of...?*

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Date first Guzner and an undisclosed number of cohorts. *It started w/ Cruise, mention healing powers*

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who called themselves "Anonymous" launched a distributed denial of service attack, or DDoS for short, against the religious organization's Web presence starting Jan. 17, prosecutors say. *↑* [The

church's attempted censorship of a leaked promotional video featuring actor and Scientologist

Tom Cruise was apparently the trigger that provoked Anonymous to act. *By hijacking?*

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>>> Using the now-defunct Web site

Gigaload.com, which is supposed to be used by

meant for

companies measuring their online traffic, the group sent so many hits to the Scientology Web sites that

the church's overwhelmed servers shut down, making the Web sites temporarily inaccessible to legitimate users. ¶

internal or external sites?

how long?

Anonymous - with members around the globe, kept it up for days
An analyst of DDoS attacks --- Jose Nazario of

what's on then?

Arbor Networks --- measured 488 attacks on the third day, Jan. 19, the longest of which lasted almost two hours. [He said the participants probably didn't think they would get caught. ¶

What is SCartology?

»» "I think they were relying on a very simple premise, that the number of people arrested and convicted of these kind of attacks is very low,"

Nazario said. ¶

more on video?

»» Guzner was arrested after a YouTube video he posted caught the attention of federal authorities. In court, Guzner has denied being a member of Anonymous but admitted he participated in the first day of the attacks. He declined to comment for this article until after the sentencing hearing, and his lawyer, New York-based Edward McQuat, wouldn't discuss Guzner either, saying he has to respect his client's wishes. ¶

more about Guzner?

»» Prosecutors have not detailed at any length Guzner's exact role in the cyber attack. Still, an examination of internet message boards, online forums and Guzner's various social networking profiles and class Web projects show he's deeply

involved in the underground online culture of 4chan.org from which the Anonymous movement arose.¶

»»» According to online posts by members of Anonymous, those who participated in the cyber attack considered it to be a virtual protest, akin to blocking streets or access to a building. Anonymous members see the church as a dangerous cult and hope to expose it for fraud and other abuses. (The Church of Scientology was founded by science-fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard. what do they believe? who are they? why are they controversial? ¶

In the wake of the war,
»»» The church, meanwhile, has labeled Anonymous a hate group. ¶

»»» "This group Anonymous, sir, they're not nice people," Kendrick Moxon, a lawyer for the Church of Scientology, told Greenaway at a court hearing last month. "They're haters." ¶

»»» Moxon carried with him a 42-page glossy magazine about Anonymous published by an arm of the church, which describes the group's members as "cyber bullies." Referring to the January 2008 cyber attack, Moxon said: "That was the first such incident. From that point on, things got out of control." ¶

»»» Moxon said the group commits random acts of

hatred, and not just against the Scientology church:

"There doesn't seem to be any rhyme or reason." All they care about, he said, is the "LULZ," a variation of the net-speak acronym "LOL," for "laughing out loud." ¶ ~~which we don't know what~~ *How Guzner got caught*

»» Two days after the cyber attack started, a video posted on YouTube showed four individuals ---

wearing the Guy Fawkes masks from the movie "V. is for Vendetta" --- should we say who Guy Fawkes

is? as they plastered anti-Scientology flyers on signs outside the church's New York City location. *anyone? HQ?*

The protesters were only identified by their online handles. One of them called himself "Aendy." ¶

attribute »» The FBI and U.S. Secret Service, as part of the Electronic Crimes Task Force in Los Angeles, worked together to identify Aendy as Guzner, a pale, slender, dark-haired teenager with glasses whose family recently moved to Verona from Brooklyn.

They searched his home *where?* and turned up one of the *G. Fawkes* tell-tale masks. Assistant U.S. Attorney Erez Liebermann wouldn't say what else they found or how they linked the online attack to him. ¶

↑ »» Another YouTube video by Anonymous --- not connected to Guzner --- surfaced shortly after the attacks featuring a robotic voice that warned the church of the group's plan to systematically

dismantle the religious organization "for the good of your followers, for the good of mankind and for our own enjoyment." The declaration of war was followed by prank calls, juvenile stunts, death threats, vandalism of churches and organized protests across the country. ¶

10 months after the war,
»» On Oct. 17, 2008 --- the day before another planned global protest against the church by Anonymous --- the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California posted a press release announcing that the New Jersey teen had been charged for his role in the cyber crime and that he faced up to 10 years in prison. ¶

»» Anonymous members who staged real-life protests outside Scientology centers the next day posted on message boards that Scientology representatives of the church had printed the press release and were handing copies out to protesters. On the Web site whyweprotest.net, the Anons decried this as a scare tactic and wondered if Guzner was being made to take the fall. ¶

»» "Still seems a bit overkill, I mean he didn't exactly compromise the Pentagon and start world war 3 did he?" wrote username "Basil" this past May on a thread about Guzner's potential sentence. ¶

»» Some questioned whether Guzner even existed, since they had never heard of his real name.

¶

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»»» "I'm still wondering if DG is a real person or if this is some weird, complex smokescreen" devised by the Church of Scientology and federal officials, a poster named "Optimisticate" ^{wrote} said. ¶

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»»» But Guzner is indeed a real person. He pleaded guilty in May to one count of unauthorized impairment of a protected computer as part of a plea deal. Out on \$50,000 bail, he's a junior studying interactive digital design at the Hamden, Conn.-based Quinnipiac University. ¶ ^{attribute}

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»»» In spite of his arrest and looming jail sentence, he's carried on his life as a regular college student. Since September, he's hosted a ^{weekly} radio show on a Quinnipiac University radio station. On [↑] social-networking sites, he indicates his hometown is Moscow and that he's trilingual --- a speaker of Russian, French and English. ¶

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»»» The church has asked that the ^{federal} Newark judge ^{in Newark} demand Guzner pay nearly \$119,000 --- ^{future?} the cost incurred to divert the DDoS attacks and pay for protective services from Prolexic Technologies. But ^{name necessary?} Guzner's lawyer pointed out that just \$37,500, a portion of the contract, was agreed upon in the plea deal. ¶ ^{in which Guzner admitted what?}

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»»» Guzner's recommended federal prison.

sentence is between 12 and 18 months with no chance of parole, followed by two to three years of probation, but if the judge demands more restitution from Guzner, his prison sentence could be 24 to 30 months long, the assistant U.S. attorney said. With good behavior, he would only have to serve 85 percent of the term. ¶ ~~not have no parole for feds~~ ?

02_TEXT_... ¶ >>> Today, on Guzner's YouTube channel --- username "Aendvy" ^{CO} he has posted videos of his 3D design projects for his Adobe After Effects class at Quinnipiac; a 5-minute video of a pet cat chewing on the handle of a shopping bag; a 10-minute video of possibly the same cat sitting on a turntable as it's spinning and the song "You Spin Me Round (Like A Record)" by Dead or Alive is playing; and a video of himself showing how to turn a plastic fork into "metal" --- as in the hand sign for heavy-metal music. ¶

02_TEXT_... >>> Guzner's taken care not to post any anti-Scientology or Anonymous-related content on that account, but under another username "D-Tree" (read aloud, it sounds like Dmitriy) he posted a link in March 2008 on an online gaming message board to a site he created for his Web design class. Instead of using filler text for one sample page, he includes a narrative that spoofs the video of Tom Cruise, in which the actor said Scientists are the only ones

who can help in a car crash...¶

»»» The actor is depicted rescuing a woman from a four-car pileup on the freeway: "Stand back, emergency workers," Cruise says in the story whose author is unknown. "Put down your jaws-of-life and crowbars. I am a Scientologist."¶

widely posted on many websites

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