

Online Cannabis Dealers Jailed

By *srlinuxx*

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Three members of a drug dealing ring who used the internet to sell cannabis to addresses across the UK were sent to prison last week.

The hi-tech dealers plied their illicit trade from a website known as budmonkey that was set up by Sean Jackson, a former heroin addict. Regular customers used the site to order their drugs online. The dealers - the UK's first online drug ring - then shipped the cannabis to their clients using hermetically-sealed bags to hide the smell of the drugs.

The scam was so successful that the gang was netting more than £500,000 a year and Jackson, its inventor, later sold the idea of his computer database as a franchise to other dealers.

The court was told how Jackson and Harris had set up the web site on behalf of an individual from Eastern Europe still being sought by police. The gang used state of the art encryption techniques to scramble the names of their clients and bought at least four houses from the proceeds of their crimes, according to police.

Sean Jackson, 37, of Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, Mark Harris, 41, of Lockhart Street, London and Dominic Bolongaro, 32, of Fairfax Road, Haringay, London, were sentenced at Hove Crown Court on Friday, 29 April to five years, three-and-a-half years and 18 months respectively, for drug dealing.

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