# Investigation & International Cooperation on Trade Secrets Theft



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# Primary Issues in Trade Secrets Investigations and Prosecutions

- Industry Referrals
- Insider or Outsider
- Physical or Electronic
- Mental state
- Alternative charges
- Valuation
- Industry support
- International Cooperation





**Industry Referrals** 

Victim is business or company

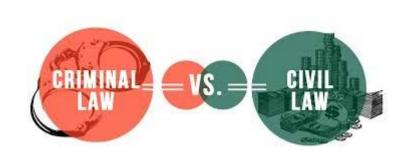
 Victim wants justice, but not publicity

Industry POC critical

Criminal or civil?







#### Insider v. Outsider

- Departing employee takes confidential work product
- Outsider actor penetrates company security
- Determines focus of investigation





## **Physical or Electronic?**

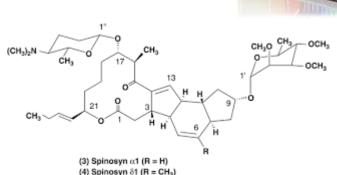
 Physical: files; prototypes; photos; biological materials; seeds





 E-files; flash drives; emails

Shapes investigative methods



## **Proving the Required Mental State**

- Biggest challenge of trade secrets cases
- Trade secrets theft = knowledge of injury & intent to benefit another
- E-communications critical
- Contracts w new employer
- Cover-up = guilty conscience









## **Alternate Charges**

- Safety net + assets + impact
  - Stolen property
  - Fraud
  - Inchoate crimes, e.g., attempt or conspiracy
  - Smuggling
  - Money laundering
  - Racketeering





#### **Valuation**

Lack of actual sales data

Pre-commercialization

 Using R&D costs can produce unrealistic value

 Trade secret owners reluctant to share inside data





#### **Industry Support**

Industry = IPR victim and expert

 Industry identifies and refers to law enforcement biggest offenders



 Industry support critical for criminal investigation and prosecution



#### **International Cooperation**

- Most corporate espionage and trade secrets theft cases transnational
- Most involve electronic evidence on servers elsewhere
- Many involve transfers of IP overseas
- Critical need to preserve evidence
  - G-7 24/7 High Tech Crime Network
  - Budapest Convention on Cybercrime
- Mutual legal assistance v. joint investigations







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