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**APPLE STORE EMPLOYEE CHARGED WITH USING BOGUS CREDIT CARDS
TO BUY NEARLY \$1.0 MILLION IN APPLE GIFT CARDS**

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a 24-year-old Queens man has been charged with grand larceny and other crimes for allegedly re-coding credit and debit cards while working at the Apple store in the Queens Center Mall during a three-month period this year and then using them to buy legitimate Apple gift cards totaling nearly \$1.0 million.

District Attorney Brown said, "The defendant is accused of using his tech skills to rig the values on both American Express and Visa gift cards and then using them to purchase gift cards from his employer - The Apple Store. The young man, a trusted employee who worked both as a salesperson and tech support, is accused of breaking that trust as well as the law."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Ruben Profit, 24, of 210th Street in the Cambria Heights section of Queens. Profit was arraigned late Friday, October 16, 2015, before Queens Criminal Court Judge Toko Serita on charges of second-degree grand larceny, first-degree criminal possession of a forged instrument and third-degree criminal possession of stolen property. Profit, who faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted, was ordered held on \$20,000 bail and to return to court on November 10, 2015.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the criminal complaint, Profit began employment with Apple Inc. in December 2013 and then transferred to the Apple retail store at Queens Center Mall in Elmhurst when it opened in July 2015. It is alleged that while working at the Queens Apple store, Profit purchased numerous Apple gift cards using a Visa and/or American Express gift, debit or pre-paid card between August 2, 2015, and October 15, 2015. The total value of the Apple gift cards was approximately \$997,700.

In October 2015, it is alleged that Apple began getting notifications of charge-backs on the Apple gift cards that Profit purchased. Charge-backs are purchases made on credit or debit cards that are not paid by the credit or debit card companies because they are deemed to be fraudulent.

At the time of his arrest, Profit was allegedly in possession of 51 Visa and/or American Express gift cards with magnetic strips that had been fraudulently re-encoded with credit card information. Profit allegedly stated to police that he was paid \$200 for each \$2,000 Apple gift card he provided to another individual. The defendant is alleged to have also been in possession of 7 Apple gift cards valued at \$2,000 each.

The investigation was conducted by Apple Inc., and the New York City Police Department's Financial Task Force Detective Vanessa Carpenter, under the supervision of Lieutenant Ruperto Aguilar and Captain Christopher Flanagan, and under the overall supervision of Deputy Inspector Kenneth Gray and Inspector Joseph Dowling of the Grand Larceny Division.

Assistant District Attorney Charissa Ilardi, of the District Attorney's Economic and Environmental Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Christina Hanophy and Kristen A. Kane, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and Gregory C. Pavlides, Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Peter A. Crusco and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Linda M. Cantoni.

It should be noted that a complaint is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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