

In pursuit of Michael Cassini, "the king of con"

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Michael Cassini used forged documents to pretend that he was a Microsoft millionaire and managed to con people out of over \$4.5 million before he was finally caught.

Cassini claimed a net worth of \$12.3 million, an annual income of \$700,000; \$8 million on account at Barclays Bank, and more. It was all right there on paper. And it was a complete lie, numbers plucked from the air, court records show.

(Wow, \$700,000, putting him in the nearly same range as Bill Gates, Steve Ballmer, and Jim Allchin, who in 2003 each earned approximately \$850,000 in combined salary and bonuses.) The *Seattle Times* has [the story](#) as well as a [chart of his loans and big-ticket purchases](#) and a *Smoking Gun*-style collection of legal documents, including [a copy of the plea agreement \[PDF\]](#). (A chronicle of events starts on page 10.) Maybe the family that took him in is still in shock, but you know you're in trouble when even the judge tells you to wake up and smell the coffee. I was particularly taken with this statement: "Nobody was hurt other than Michael ... I hate to say except banks, but it's bank-application fraud." Apparently, when banks and insurance companies lose money to fraud, nobody gets hurt.

(In unrelated news, check out Seattle Times columnist [Ron Judd's take on the Olympic ice dancing competition](#). And [Slate](#) explains [why they fall down so much](#).)

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