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Last week, Microsoft Corp. made headlines when it scored an unconventional if not unprecedented legal victory: Convincing a U.S. court to let it seize control of a Chinese Internet service provider's network as part of a crackdown on piracy.

I caught up with Microsoft's chief legal strategist shortly after that order was executed, in a bid to better understand what they were seeing after seizing control over more than 70,000 domains that were closely associated with distributing hundreds of strains of malware. Microsoft said that within hours of the takeover order being granted, it saw more than 35 million unique Internet addresses phoning home those 70,000 malicious domains.

Microsoft said Thursday that it convinced a U.S. federal court to grant it control over a botnet believed to be closely linked to counterfeit versions Windows that were sold in various computer stores across China. The legal victory also highlights a Chinese Internet service that experts say has long been associated with targeted, espionage attacks against U.S. and European corporations.

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