

New Online Marketplace for Illegal Drugs Opens Despite Recent Silk Road Shutdown

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A new online marketplace that sells illegal drugs opened Wednesday, Reuters reports.

It is called Silk Road, the same name as the Internet marketplace for illegal drugs that was shut down last month by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The new website looks the same as the shuttered Silk Road. It lists hundreds of ads for drugs including marijuana, cocaine and Ecstasy, and uses bitcoins, the anonymous digital currency used by the old site.

According to court papers unsealed last month, federal agents seized a total of \$35 million in profits from Silk Road. They seized bitcoins worth \$29 million on computer hardware that allegedly belonged to Silk Road creator Ross Ulbricht, who was arrested October 1. They also seized bitcoins worth \$5.8 million from the site's buyers and sellers. The court papers stated Silk Road had almost one million customers and \$1.2 billion in sales.

The new site says it includes measures to keep users from losing bitcoins if the site shuts down, the article notes. Like the old site, the new Silk Road can only be accessed by using encryption software called Tor, which shields computers' IP addresses, allowing people to make purchases anonymously.