

**VINDICATED – Scambusters was reporting the following several years ago about Sandy Grey. We got it right the first time.**

## **Revealed: The man behind the Crimeshare website**

BY [NICK SOMMERLAD](#) ON NOV 13, 08 12:33 PM IN [TIMESHARE & HOLIDAYS](#)

The shadowy mastermind of the Crimeshare website has been unmasked.

Step forward Sandy Grey, of the Timeshare Consumers Association.

The High Court last week found him to be the publisher of Crimeshare, during a preliminary hearing of a libel case brought by timeshare boss Bob Trotta of Resort Properties, himself no stranger to our [column](#).

This forum, which was online from around 2000 up until last November, provided a fascinating insight into the activities of the Timeshare industry based, for the most part, in southern Spain.

Largely unmoderated, it provided a colourful, if sometimes unreliable, guide to the pitfalls of timeshare and holiday clubs.

Needless to say, not everyone was happy. Trotta called Crimeshare the "the main source of false and scaremongering allegations" against the timeshare industry.

Trotta, said the Judge Mr Justice Eady, expended a "huge amount of time and money" proving that Grey was responsible for the website. He showed that the sites were run using the BT line installed at Grey's home. He lives alone.

Trotta added that "over the years, Sandy Grey has gone to great lengths to hide his involvement with the 'crimeshare' website."

Grey told me: "Of course I did. I denied it to everyone. At it's peak, it had 800 to 900 unique visitors every day. It saved a lot of people a lot of money."

But Trotta's press release announcing the news claimed:

This activity was, apparently, in an effort to create a negative connotation to the word 'timeshare' and to create a demand for his own services as an 'industry expert'.

Mr Grey said in the litigation that the TCA is funded by consumer donations and by income through a premium rate telephone line for out-of-hours advice.

Mr Grey is also thought to be making commission on re-sales from companies that he 'recommends' to consumers, presumably in exchange for not being named on his "crimeshare blacklist" of conmen and fraudsters to watch out for.

I asked Trotta's PR Jo Rosenblatt whether we could attribute the above quote to either Trotta himself or his lawyer Mishcon de Reya.

I was told "no".

What was the evidence for the allegation?

"There's a lot of internet speculation," said Jo, "but there's no cold hard evidence."

But surely such "unsubstantiated rumours on the Internet" are exactly what Trotta is complaining about?

Grey describes the allegation that he is getting backhanders from his friends in the timeshare industry as "that old chestnut" and completely denies the charge.

He says that there are just three timeshare resale companies left that he can recommend because they are the only ones left that adhere to the TCA's code of conduct, which mainly objects to charging owners large upfront fees. He insists he does not get a penny from any of them.

Grey says that the revenue from the TCA's 60p-a-minute 24 hour helpline amount to around £700-800 a year. Together with donations, the TCA earns around £2,000 to £2,500

a year, which pays for postage and other office costs and his travel expenses to various conferences. Grey is 71 years old and says he lives off his pension.

He has been ordered by Mr Justice Eady to pay £25,000, to cover Trotta's costs, but says his biggest disappointment is that Trotta has dropped his libel action against him.

We can't go into the detail of the allegations that Grey made against Trotta, but they were summed up by the Judge, Mr Justice Eady, as: "Allegations on the Claimant's [Trotta's] part of fraud, what is referred to as 'grand larceny', and dishonesty of various kinds. There are also descriptions of him [Trotta] to the effect that he is a liar a crook and a fraudster.

Trotta says the allegations made against him are "false and without foundation" and added: "Having now proved Grey guilty of publication I have made the principled decision to discontinue my libel action against him, thereby denying him the publicity it was clear he craved through the action."