

Profiling Hackers: real data, real experiences, wrong myths and the Hackers Profiling Project (HPP)

Presentation by Raoul Chiesa
Senior Advisor, Strategic Alliances & Cybercrime Issues
Human Traficking and Emerging Crimes Unit
United Nations - Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)



Virus Bulletin Conference 2009 Geneva, Switzerland September 24th, 2009 Corporate Track





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Agenda

- ✓ UNICRI & ISECOM
- √ Cybercrime
- ✓ Profiling the enemy
- √ Hackers...
- √ The Hackers Profiling Project
- ✓ Correlation of the profiles
- √ Some stats (hackpies)
- √ Conclusions
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What is UNICRI?

United Nations Interregional Crime & Justice Research Institute

A United Nations entity established in 1968 to support countries worldwide in crime prevention and criminal justice

UNICRI carries out applied research, training, technical cooperation and documentation / information activities

UNICRI disseminates information and maintains contacts with professionals and experts worldwide

Counter Human Trafficking and Emerging Crimes Unit: cyber crimes, counterfeiting, environmental crimes, trafficking in stolen works of art...





What is ISECOM?



Institute for Security and Open Methodologies (Est. 2002)



A registered Non-Profit Organization



Headquarters in Barcelona (Spain) and New York (U.S.A.)



An Open Source Community Registered OSI, using Open and Peer Review process to assure quality and develop a Chain of Trust



A Certification Authority grounded in trust and backed by Academic Institutions (La Salle University network)





Overview of ISECOM Projects

- ☐ OSSTMM The Open Source Security Testing Methodology Manual
- □ RAVs The Security Metrics
- BIT Business Integrity Testing Methodology Manual
- □ OPRP Open Protocol Resource Project
- □ SIPES Security Incident Policy Enforcement System
- □ SPSMM The Secure Programming Standards Methodology Manual
- □ STICK Software Testing Checklist
- ☐ ISM 3.0 Information Security Maturity Model
- ☐ HHS Hacker High School
- □ HPP Hacker's Profiling Project New!









Hacker Highschool

hackerhighschool.org



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Crime->Yesterday

"Every new technology, opens the door to new criminal approaches".

- The relationship between technologies and criminality has always been since the very beginning characterized by a kind of "competition" by the good and the bad guys, just like cats and mice.
- As an example, at the beginning of 1900, when **cars** appeared, the "bad guys" started **stealing them (!)**
-the police, in order to contrast the phenomenon, defined the **mandatory** use of car plates...
-and the thieves began **stealing the car plates** from the cars (and/or falsifying them).



Crime->Today:Cybercrime

Cars have been substituted by information.

You got the information, you got the power...

(at least, in politics, in the business world, in our personal relationships...)

- Very simply, this happens because the "information" is at once transformable in "something else":
- ✓ Competitive advantage
- ✓ Sensible/critical information
- ✓ Money
- ... that's why all of us we want to "be secure".
- It's not by chance that it's named "IS": Information Security ©



Cybercrime

In recent years we have observed a series of "worrying" developments:

A dramatic decrease in the so-called "window of exposure"

Dangerous synergies between technologically advanced personalities, classic criminality and terrorism

Increase of the *dependence between* homeland security, telecommunications, fundamental services and ICT Security issues

Nevertheless, often the cyber crime phenomenon is analysed in a wrong manner.



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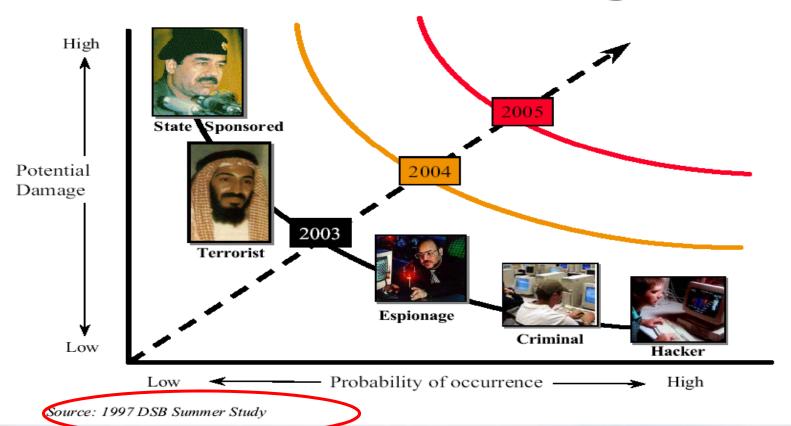
Profiling the Enemy: current issues

- Classic criminal profiling methodologies and approaches often can not be applied to the "cyberspace" (e.g. "geographical profiling").
- We do also have different issues, involving technical, ethical and legal aspects.
- Last but not least, the above must be applied to an unknown enemy, that evolves very quickly, since it's a dynamic threat, not a static threat!
- Giving what I have showed you until now, this is why the profiles of those "classic actors" can't always be applied to the cybercrime world.
- Also, profiles likely very different each other started to talk (what do you think about this...?), exchanging information (I'm going to tell you about X, and you will tell me about Y), black market (0-day), engagements (hacking on-demand).



New actors, new links ⊗

The Threat is Increasing





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Hackers

The term hacker has been heavily misused since the 80's; since the 90's, the mainstream have used it to justify every kind of "IT crime", from low-skill attacks to massive DDoS

"Lamers", script-kiddies, industrial spies, hobby hackers....for the mass, they are all the same. YOU do not belong to "the mass", since you belong to IS

From a business point of view, companies don't clearly know who they should be afraid of. To them they're all just "hackers"



Attacker's macro typologies

- ☐ Low-level hackers: "script-kiddies" hunting for known security flaws
- √ (kind of "NEW") Phishing, Remote low-level Social Engineering Attacks
- ✓ Insiders (user/supervisor/admin)
- ✓ Disgruntled Employees
- ☐ High-level, sophisticated hackers, Organized Crime: middle and high level attacks
- ✓ Hobbyist hackers
- ✓ Unethical "security guys" (Telecom Italia and Vodafone Greece scandals)
- ✓ Unstructured attackers (SCAMs, medium & high-level hi-tech frauds, VISHING ...)
- ✓ Structured attackers ("the italian job", targeted attacks)

□ Industrial Espionage, Terrorism

- ✓ Foreign Espionage
- ✓ Hacktivist (unfunded groups)
- √ Terrorist groups (funded groups)
- ✓ State sponsored attacks



Hackers: a blurred image

Yesterday: hacking was an emerging phenomenon – unknown to people & ignored by researchers

Today: research carried out in "mono":

→ one type of hacker: ugly (thin, myopic),
bad (malicious, destructive, criminal
purposes) and "dirty" (asocial, without
ethics, anarchic)

Tomorrow (HPP is the future): interdisciplinary studies that merge criminology and information security → different *typologies* of hackers



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HPP purposes

Analyse the hacking phenomenon in its several aspects (technological, social, economic) through technical and criminological approaches

Understand the different motivations and identify the actors involved

Observe those *true* criminal actions "on the field"

Apply the profiling methodology to collected data (4W: who, where, when, why)

Acquire and worldwide disseminate knowledge





Project phases – starting: September 2004

1 – Theoretical collection:

Questionnaires (10 languages)

2 - Observation:

Participation in IT underground security events, worldwide

3 - Filing:

Database for elaboration/classification of data gathered from phases 1 and 4

4 - Live collection:

Highly customised, next generation Honeynet systems

5 - Gap analysis:

of data gathered from questionnaire, NG honeynets, existing literature

6 - HPP "live" assessment

of profiles and correlation of modus operandi through data from phase 4

7 – Final profiling:

Redefinition/fine-tuning of hackers profiles used as "de-facto" standard

8 - Diffusion of the model:

elaboration of results, publication of the methodology, raising awareness





Project phases - detail

PHASE	CARRIED OUT		DURATION	NOTES
1 – Theoretical collection	YES	ON-GOING	16 months	Distribution on more levels
2 – Observation	YES	ON-GOING	24 months	From different points of view
3 – Filing	ON-GOING		21 months	The hardest phase
4 – "Live" collection	TO BE COMMENCED		21 months	The funniest phase ☺
5 – Gap & Correlation Analysis	YET TO COME		18 months	The Next Thing
6 – "Live" Assessment	PENDING		16 months	The biggest part of the Project
7 – Final Profiling	PENDING		12 months	"Satisfaction"
8 – Diffusion of the model	PENDING		GNU/FDL ;)	Methodology's public release



HPP next steps

Goals

- ✓ Database delivery
- ✓ Honeynet systems delivery

What we need

- ✓ Contributors and volunteers
- √ Sponsors and donors

Challenges

- ✓ Identification/evaluation of techniques/attack-tools
- ✓ Data-correlation and identification of patterns
- √ Public release of the HPP v1.0 methodology



HPP questionnaire – the delivery

2 questionnaire typologies:

Level 1: Full version

Full parts of Modules A, B and C

Level 2: Compact version

Some parts of Modules A, B and C

3 delivery levels:

Verified sources – on-line questionnaire (full version) – QoQ extremely high

Underground world in general – on-line questionnaire (compact version) - QoQ medium

Specialized magazines – hard-copy and on-line questionnaire (compact version) – QoQ low



HPP questionnaire – the modules

Module A

Personal data (gender, age, social status, family context, study/work)

Module B

Relational data (relationship with: the Authorities, teachers/employers, friends/colleagues, other hackers)

Module C

Technical and criminological data (targets, techniques/tools, motivations, ethics, perception of the illegality of their own activity, crimes committed, deterrence)



All questions allow

anonymous



HPP questionnaire - excerpts

a) Sex:

Male

Female

b) Age:

e1) Title of study (please, indicate the last):

Elementary school leaving-certificate

Primary school leaving-certificate

Secondary school leaving-certificate

University degree

Beyond (master, PhD, specialization, etc.)

c1) Country and place of residence:

c2) You live in a:

city (more than 500.000 inhabitants) town (less than 500.000 inhabitants)

village

d1) Do (or Did) you practise:

Hacking Phreaking Both a1) Among your acquaintances, who is (or was) aware of your hacking/phreaking activity?

teachers

members of the underground world

partner

employer(s)

friends

colleagues

schoolmates

Other (Specify)

- e) Kinds of data nets, technologies and operative systems targeted and tools used:
- 1) On what kind of data nets and technologies do (or did) you practise hacking/phreaking? For example: Internet, X.25, PSTN/ISDN, PBX, Wireless, "mobile" nets (GSM/GPRS/EDGE/UMTS), VoIP.



HPP questionnaire – examples of answers

Q: Do (or Did) you obey to the hacker's ethics? Why?

A: I obey my ethics and my rules, not ethics in general. The reason for this is that I don't like to follow what other people are doing. Ethics are like rules and laws, other people are writing them for you and even if sometimes they sound fair and correct, always behind the sweet and hypnotic words there is a trap restricting personal freedom. I am not a sheep who follows ethical or legal rules in general.

Q: How do you perceive your hacking/phreaking activity: legal or illegal?

A: I don't accept the terms legal and illegal. Accepting these terms means that I have the same point of view as people who have nothing common with me.

Ok, I'll try to be more specific to help you with this questionnaire. To me, my activities are legal, to others, they are illegal.



Total received questionnaires: #1200

Full questionnaires filled out - #500*

Compact questionnaires filled out - #573*

*since September 2006

Mainly from:

USA Italy

UK

Canada

Lithuania

Australia

Malaysia

Germany

Brazil

Romania

China







The questionnaires: some comments

Regarding the elaboration and the delivery of a profiling methodology, HPP <u>is not exclusively based</u> on questionnaires from phase 1

Some profiles have been elaborated on the basis of (many) personal meetings with hackers belonging to specific categories

HPP phases 1 and 2 are kind of a requirement for the next project phases

The grand total of questionnaires received is 1200 * Suggestions and advice given are really impressive

(* Updated August 2009)

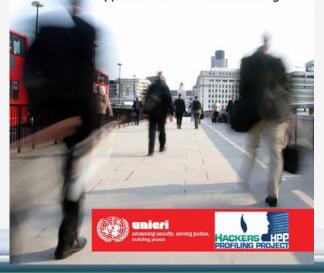


Profiling Hackers – the book/1

RAOUL CHIESA • STEFANIA DUCCI • SILVIO CIAPPI

PROFILING HACKERS

The Science of Criminal Profiling as Applied to the World of Hacking



Content

- Introduction to criminal profiling and cyber-crime
- To be, to think and to live like a hacker
- The Hacker's Profiling Project (HPP)
- Who are hackers? (Part I-II)

Who is it for?

Professionals involved in the networking activity, police detectives, university professors and students of law interested in criminal psychology as well as primary school and high school teachers dealing with potential hacker students. More in general, this book is designed for anyone interested in understanding the mechanisms behind cyber crimes and criminal psychology.





Profiling Hackers – the book/2

Contents

Introduction to Criminal Profiling

Brief History of Criminal Profiling Serial Crimes and Criminal Profiling: How to Interpret Them Criminal Profiling: Applying it to Study Hackers

Introducing "Cybercrime"

Information Technology and Digital Crimes 1980, 1990, 2000: Three Ways of Looking at Cybercrime Mr. Smith, Hackers and Digital Crimes in the IT Society Digital Crimes vs. Hacking: Terminology and Definitions Conclusions

To Be, Think, and Live as a Hacker

Evolution of the Term The Artifacts of the Hacker Culture One Ethics or More? Understanding Hackers: How Far Have We Gone? What are the Motives Behind Hacking? The Colours of the Underground Commonly Recognized Hacker Categories

The HPP Project

The Planning Phase The Questionnaires First Level Analysis Second Level Analysis

Who are Hackers? Part 1

What are We Trying to Understand? Gender and Age Group Background and Place of Residence How Hackers View Themselves Family Background Socio-Economic Background Social Relationships Leisure Activities Education Professional Environment

Psychological Traits To Be or to Appear: the Level of Self-Esteem Presence of Multiple Personalities Psychophysical Conditions Alcohol & Drug Abuse and Dependencies

Definition or Self-Definition: What is a Real Hacker? Relationship Data

Who are Hackers? Part 2

Handle and Nickname

Starting Age Learning and Training Modalities The Mentor's Role Technical Capacities (Know-How) Hacking, Phreaking or Carding: the Reasons Behind the Choice Networks, Technologies and Operating Systems

Techniques Used to Penetrate a System Individual and Group Attacks

The Art of War: Examples of Attack Techniques

Operating Inside a Target System

The Hacker's Signature

Relationships with the System Administrators

Motivations The Power Trip Lone Hackers Hacker Groups

Favourite Targets and Reasons

Specializations

Principles of the Hacker Ethics

Acceptance or Refusal of the Hacker Ethics

Crashed Systems

Hacking/Phreaking Addiction

Perception of the Illegality of Their Actions Offences Perpetrated with the Aid of IT Devices

Offences Perpetrated without the Use of IT Devices

Fear of Discovery, Arrest and Conviction

The Law as Deterrent Effect of Convictions Leaving the Hacker Scene Beyond Hacking

Conclusions

Appendices



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Evaluation and correlation standards

Modus Operandi (MO)

Lone hacker or as a member of a group

Motivations

Selected targets

Relationship between motivations and targets

Hacking career

Principles of the hacker's ethics

Crashed or damaged systems

Perception of the illegality of their own activity

Effect of laws, convictions and technical difficulties as a deterrent



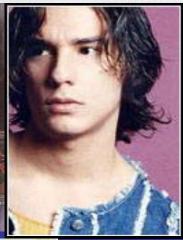
Detailed analysis and correlation of profiles – table #1

PROFILE	RANK	IMPACT LEVEL		TARGET	
Wanna Be Lamer		NULL		End-User	
Script Kiddie	Amateur	Low		SME	Specific security flaws
Cracker		MEDIUM	нісн	Business company	
Ethical Hacker	Hobbiest	MEDIUM		Vendor	Technology
Quiet, Paranoid Skilled Hacker		MEDIUM	HIGH	On necessity	
Cyber-Warrior		нісн		"Symbol" business company	End-User
Industrial Spy		нисн		Business company	Corporation
Government agent	Professional	нісн		Government	Suspected Terrorist
				Strategic Company	Individual
Military Hacker		нісн		Government	Strategic Company

























Detailed analysis and correlation of profiles – table #2

	OFFENDER ID	LONE / GROUP HACKER	TARGET	MOTIVATIONS / PURPOSES
Wanna Be Lamer	9-16 years "I would like to be a hacker, but I can't"	GROUP	End-User	For fashion, It's "cool" => to boast and brag
Script Kiddie	10-18 years The script boy	GROUP: but they act alone	SME / Specific security flaws	To give vent of their anger / attract mass-media attention
Cracker	17-30 years The destructor, burned ground	LONE	Business company	To demonstrate their power / attract mass-media attention
Ethical Hacker	15-50 years The "ethical" hacker's world	LONE / GROUP (only for fun)	Vendor / Technology	For curiosity (to learn) and altruistic purposes
Quiet, Paranoid, Skilled Hacker	16-40 years The very specialized and paranoid attacker	LONE	On necessity	For curiosity (to learn) => egoistic purposes
Cyber-Warrior	18-50 years The soldier, hacking for money	LONE	"Symbol" business company / End-User	For profit
Industrial Spy	22-45 years Industrial espionage	LONE	Business company / Corporation	For profit
Government Agent	25-45 years CIA, Mossad, FBI, etc.	LONE / GROUP	Government / Suspected Terrorist/ Strategic company/ Individual	Espionage/ Counter-espionage Vulnerability test Activity-monitoring
Military Hacker	25-45 years	LONE / GROUP	Government / Strategic company	Monitoring / controlling / crashing systems





Detailed analysis and correlation of profiles – table #3

	OBEDIENCE TO THE "HACKER ETHICS"	CRASHED / DAMAGED SYSTEMS	PERCEPTION OF THE ILLEGALITY OF THEIR OWN ACTIVITY
Wanna Be Lamer	NO: they don't know "Hacker Ethics" principles	YES: voluntarily or not (inexperience, lack of technical skills)	YES: but they think they will never be caught
Script Kiddie	NO: they create their own ethics	NO: but they delete / modify data	YES: but they justify their actions
Cracker	NO: for them the "Hacker Ethics" doesn't exist	YES: always voluntarily	YES but: MORAL DISCHARGE
Ethical Hacker	YES: they defend it	NEVER: it could happen only incidentally	YES: but they consider their activity morally acceptable
Quiet, Paranoid, Skilled Hacker	NO: they have their own personal ethics, often similar to the "Hacker Ethics"	NO	YES: they feel guilty for the upset caused to SysAdmins and victims
Cyber-Warrior	NO	YES: they also delete/modify/steal and sell data	YES: but they are without scruple
Industrial Spy	NO: but they follow some unwritten "professional" rules	NO: they only steal and sell data	YES: but they are without scruple
Government Agent	NO: they betray the "Hacker Ethics"	YES (including deleting/modifying/stealing — data) / NO (in stealth attacks)	
Military Hacker	NO: they betray the "Hacker Ethics"	YES (including deleting/modifying/stealing data) / NO (in stealth attacks)	





Detailed analysis and correlation of profiles – table #4

DETERRENCE EFFECT OF:	LAWS	CONVICTIONS SUFFERED BY OTHER HACKERS	CONVICTIONS SUFFERED BY THEM	TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES
Wanna Be Lamer	NULL	NULL	ALMOST NULL	HIGH
Script Kiddie	NULL	NULL	HIGH: they stop after the 1st conviction	HIGH
Cracker	NULL	NULL	NULL	MEDIUM
Ethical Hacker	NULL	NULL	HIGH: they stop after the 1st conviction	NULL
Quiet, Paranoid, Skilled Hacker	NULL	NULL	NULL	NULL
Cyber-Warrior	NULL	NULL	NULL	NULL: they do it as a job
Industrial Spy	NULL	NULL	NULL	NULL: they do it as a job

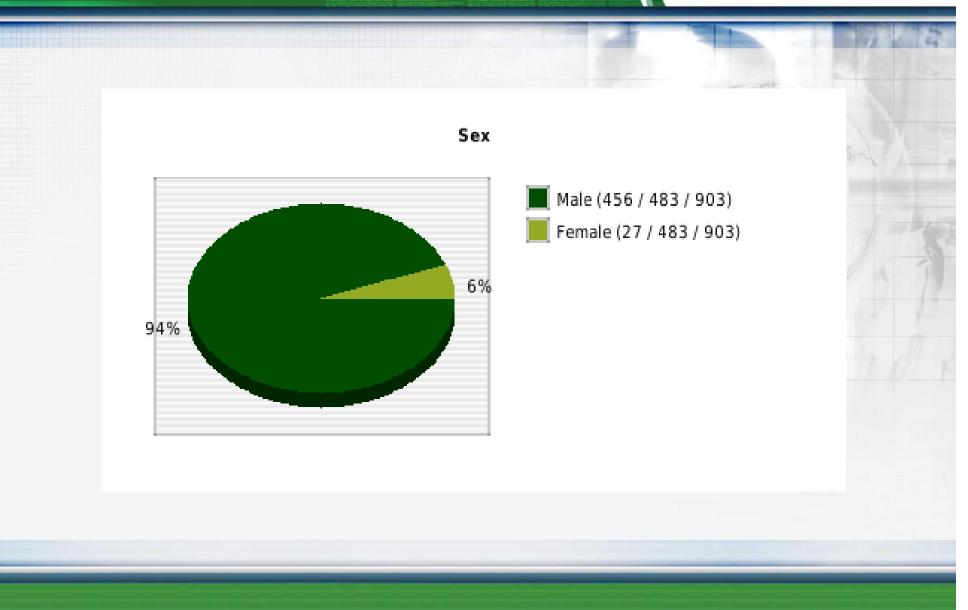


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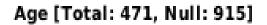
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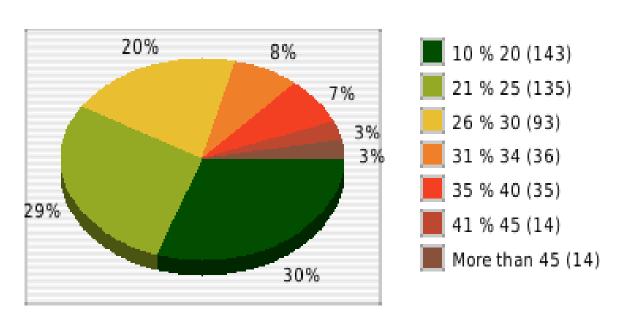






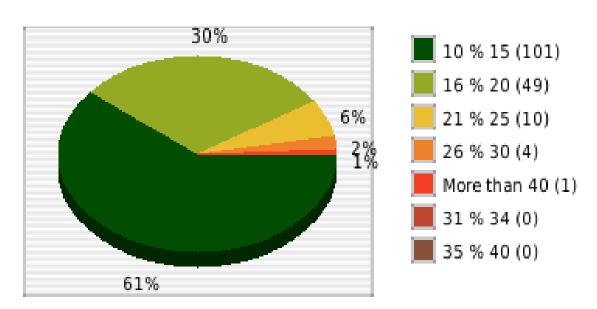








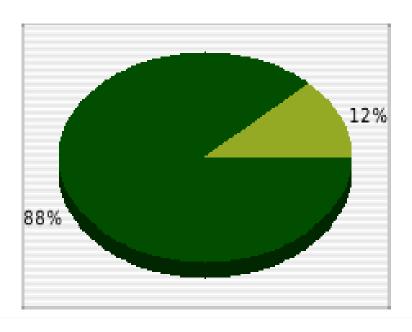
Age that you started with hacking [Total: 171, Null: 1212]









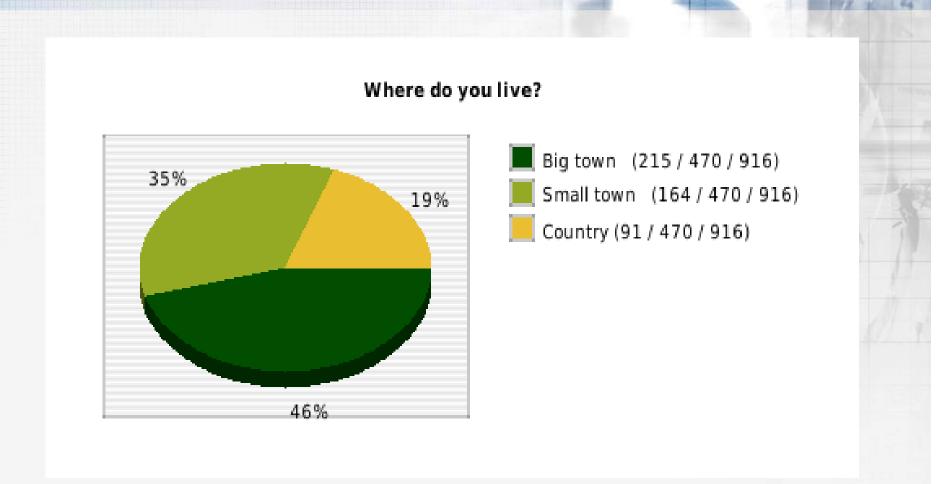


No (176)

Yes (25)

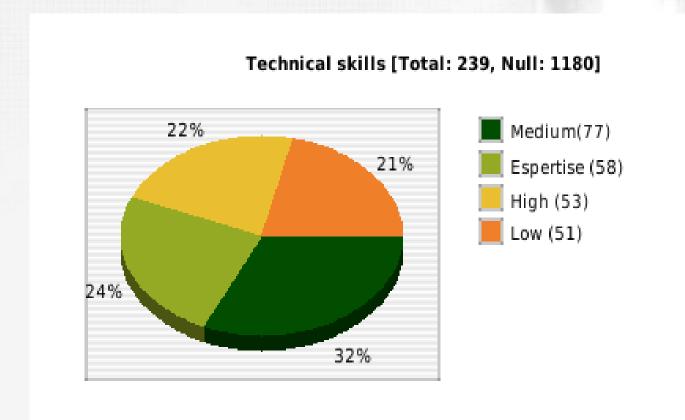






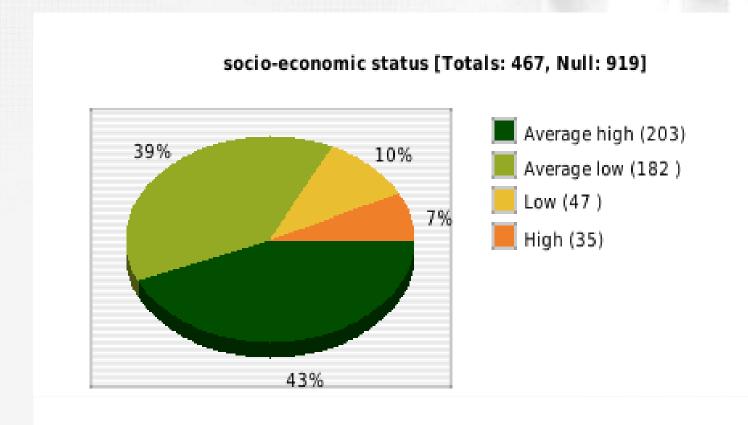






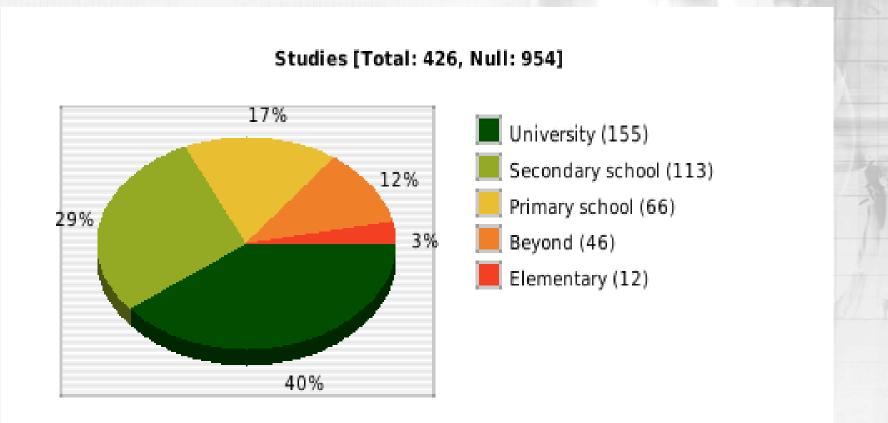






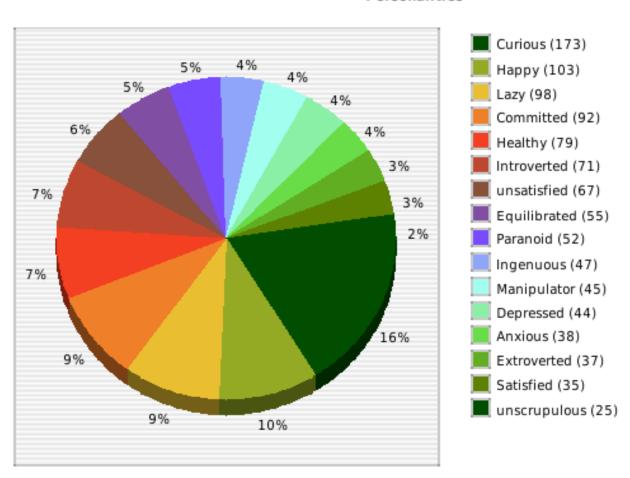








Personalities





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Conclusions

- The hacking world has not always been linked to criminal actions;
- The researches carried out till today have **not depicted properly** a so **complex**, **hierarchical** and in **continuous evolution** phenomenon as the underground world;
- The application of a profiling methodology is possible, but it needs a 360° analysis of the phenomenon, by analysing it from four principal point of views: Technological, Social, Psychological, Criminological;
- We still have a **lot of work to do** and **we need support**: if we have been able to reach these results on our own (5 people), imagine what we can do by joining your forces and experiences!
- The H.P.P. Project is **open to partnerships.**



Considerations

The whole Project is self-funded and based on independent research methodologies.

Despite many problems, we have been carrying out the Project since the last **five** years.

The final methodology will be released under **GNU/FDL** and distributed through ISECOM.

It is welcome the **interest on our Project** by research centres, public and private institutions, and governmental agencies.

We think that we are elaborating something beautiful...

- ...something that didn't exist before...
- ...something that really seems to **have a sense!**:)

It is not a simple challenge. However, we think to be on the right path.



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Biography and References (1)

During the different phases of bibliography research, the Authors have made reference (also) to the following publications and on-line resources:

H.P.P. Questionnaires 2005-2009

Stealing the Network: How to 0wn a Continent, an Identity, a Shadow (V.A.), Syngress Publishing, 2004, 2006, 2007

Stealing the Network: How to 0wn the Box, (V.A.), Syngress Publishing, 2003

Underground: Tales of Hacking, Madness and Obsession on the Electronic Frontier, Suelette Dreyfus, Random House Australia, 1997

The Cuckoo's Egg: Tracking a Spy Through the Maze of Computer Espionage, Clifford Stoll, DoubleDay (1989), Pocket (2000)

Masters of Deception: the Gang that Ruled Cyberspace, Michelle Stalalla & Joshua Quinttner, Harpercollins, 1995

Kevin Poulsen, Serial Hacker, Jonathan Littman, Little & Brown, 1997

Takedown, John Markoff and Tsutomu Shimomura, Sperling & Kupfler, (Hyperion Books), 1996

The Fugitive Game: online with Kevin Mitnick, Jonathan Littman, Little & Brown, 1997

The Art of Deception, Kevin D. Mitnick & William L. Simon, Wiley, 2002

The Art of Intrusion, Kevin D. Mitnick & William L. Simon, Wiley, 2004

@ Large: the Strange Case of the World's Biggest Internet Invasion, Charles Mann & David Freedman, Touchstone, 1998

SecurityFocus.com (BugTraq, VulnDev), **Mitre.org** (CVE), **Isecom.org** (OSSTMM), many "underground" web sites & mailing lists, private contacts & personal friendships, the Academy and Information Security worlds





Biography and References (2)

The Estonia attack: Battling Botnets and online Mobs, Gadi Evron, 2008 (white paper)

Who is "n3td3v"?, by Hacker Factor Solutions, 2006 (white paper)

Mafiaboy: How I cracked the Internet and Why it's still broken, Michael Calce with Craig Silverman, 2008

The Hacker Diaries: Confessions of Teenage Hackers, Dan Verton, McGraw-Hill Osborne Media, 2002

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Inside the SPAM Cartel: trade secrets from the Dark Side, by Spammer X, Syngress, 2004

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Profiling Hackers: the Science of Criminal Profiling as applied to the World of Hacking

ISBN: 978-1-4200-8693-5-90000

RAOUL CHIESA • STEFANIA DUCCI • SILVIO CIAPPI

PROFILING HACKERS

The Science of Criminal Profiling as Applied to the World of Hacking





Contacts, Q&A

Raoul Chiesa

chiesa@UNICRI.it

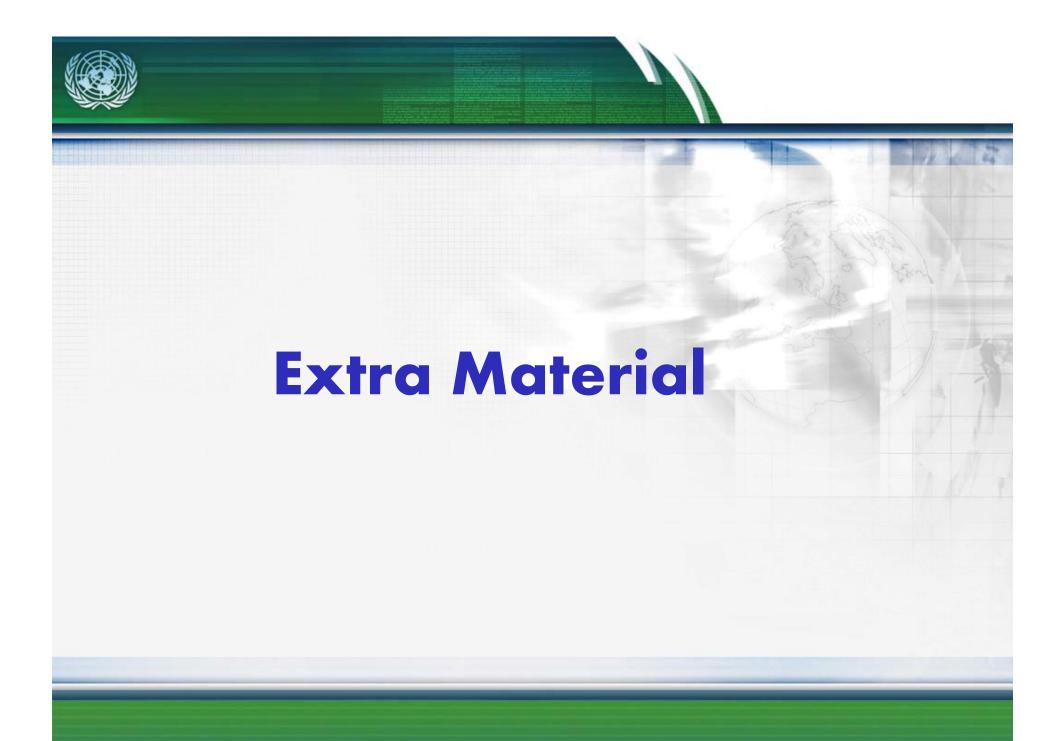
UNICRI's cybercrime home page:

HPP home page: http://www.isecom.org/hpp

HPP questionnaires: http://hpp.recursiva.org

http://www.unicri.it
Thank you

http://www.unicri.it/wwd/cyber_crime/index.phpfor your attention





Overview of HPP Training Course

UNICRI offers a unique glimpse into the motivations and lifestyles of hackers with modular HPP Training Courses:

- ✓ Offered in basic (3 days), average (5 days) and advanced (5 days, very in-depth) modules,
- Covers a wide breadth: basic criminal profiling science, history of the "underground", what motivates hackers, what makes them select specific targets, their "careers" and ethics, deterrents, analysis of the Hackers Profiling book and the questionnaire results, etc...
- ✓ Includes special guests: real ethical hackers and their stories.





Level of technical skills

Wannabe Lamer

Script Kiddie

Cracker Ethical hacker

Q.P.S. Hacker

Cyber-Warrior

Industrial spy

Government Agent

Military Hacker





Degree of danger

Wannabe Lamer Script Kiddie

Ethical Hacker Q.P.S. Hacker

Cracker
Cyber-Warrior
Industrial spy
Government Agent
Military Hacker





Correlation standards

Gender and age group

Background and place of residence

How hackers view themselves

Family background

Socio-economic background

Social relationships

Leisure activities

Education

Professional environment

Psychological traits

To be or to appear: the level of self-esteem

Presence of multiple personalities

Psychophysical conditions

Alcohol & drug abuse and dependencies

Definition or self-definition: what is a real hacker?

Relationship data

Handle and nickname

Starting age

Learning and training modalities

The mentor's role

Technical capacities (know-how)

Hacking, phreaking or carding: the reasons behind the choice

Networks, technologies and operating systems

Techniques used to penetrate a system

Individual and group attacks

The art of war: examples of attack techniques

Operating inside a target system

The hacker's signature

Relationships with the System Administrators

Motivations

The power trip

Lone hackers

Hacker groups

Favourite targets and reasons

Specializations

Principles of the Hacker Ethics

Acceptance or refusal of the Hacker Ethics

Crashed systems

Hacking/phreaking addiction

Perception of the illegality of their actions

Offences perpetrated with the aid of IT devices

Offences perpetrated without the use of IT devices

Fear of discovery, arrest and conviction

The law as deterrent

Effect of convictions

Leaving the hacker scene

Beyond hacking