

Re: The Psychology of Responding to Crackpots

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.logic/2004-07/0401.html>

From: The Ghost In The Machine (*ewill_at_aurigae.athghost7038suus.net*)

Date: 07/03/04

Date: Sat, 03 Jul 2004 16:00:11 GMT

In sci.logic, Charlie-Boo

<chvol@aol.com>

wrote

on 3 Jul 2004 04:02:05 -0700

<3df1e59f.0407030302.7c520215@posting.google.com>:

> G. Frege <no_spam@aol.com> wrote

>> On 2 Jul 2004 12:55:54 -0700, chvol@aol.com (Charlie-Boo) wrote: bla
>> bla.

>>

>> <http://www.albinoblacksheep.com/flash/you.html>

>>

>> :-)))

>>

>>

>> F.

>

> *Once again violating federal law against distributing software*

> *designed to disrupt the functioning of computers. Under the Patriot*

> *Act, law enforcement officials can demand the identity of offenders*

> *from the ISP.*

>

> *The address to write to is groups-abuse@google.com*

>

> *I believe that the penalty is a function of the number of offenses.*

> *Would you like to try again, Frege? How many are we up to now, 5 or*

> *6? (But I guess I should check the other groups as well, come to*

> *think of it.)*

>

> *Charlie Volkstorf*

That particular Flash file is not designed to damage your computer, although it might mess with your mind... :-)) (The flashing may trigger epileptic seizures as well, though I can't say for sure.)

However, there is also an attached Javascript that could be mildly disruptive. It is designed to open at least 6 windows and move them around the screen, Furthermore, these windows cannot be closed (as the attempt creates

sci.logic: Re: The Psychology of Responding to Crackpots

6 more!) without killing the display subsystem — on Linux, Ctrl–Alt–Backspace will kill X; on Windows the three–fingered salute may be effective as there's no indication this javascript hides anything nastier than a self–replicating window.

And the windows move around, as well. It's a somewhat amusing effect but a limiter on the replication would be nice.

It's not a dangerous hack (a la Nimda), just a rather silly one — and the hack disrupts Linux machines as well. (In fact, mine had to reboot — but that's because of a display problem, methinks; my ATI9000 card and the proprietary drivers aren't all that happy with each other. Process quotas will probably keep this particular beastie in line in the future, should I wish to bother. My display problems, of course, are my own...)

You can probably attempt to contact sners at yahoo.com (the owner of the AlbinoBlacksheep.com website) whose address is given on the 'whois' registrant entry. His snailmail address is available as well (it's in Canada).

A traceroute indicates www.theplanet.com is involved as well. They are based in Dallas, TX. They are apparently a machine hosting service — "rent–a–rack" is the best way I can think of to put it.

All of this information is publically available (using traceroute and whois), and one can download copies of the offending Javascript (*without* activating it) using a tool such as 'wget':

```
wget http://www.albinoblacksheep.com/flash/you.html  
wget http://www.albinoblacksheep.com/script/you.js  
wget http://www.albinoblacksheep.com/flash/open.html
```

The offending code can then be viewed using an ordinary text editor. ("Open With" on Windows — use Notepad or Wordpad. Linux users can use their favorite text editor; I happen to like vi). Printouts might be useful as evidence in court, though one has to be careful here.

Dillo, Amaya, and lynx are also quite safe (no understanding of Flash, Javascript, or both). If you wish to browse these links in a Javascript–aware browser such as IE or mozilla, disable the Javascript first and proceed dead slow at your own risk. :-)

--

#191, ewill13@earthlink.net

sci.logic: Re: The Psychology of Responding to Crackpots

It's still legal to go .sigless.