Washington Area Trustworthy Computing Hour

WATCH

47th WATCH:
35 Years of Cyberwar: The Squirrels are Winning

Cris Thomas

Thursday July 20, 12pm, Room 110

About the WATCH series:

Transforming today's trusted but untrustworthy cyberinfrastructure into one that can meet society's growing demands requires both technical advances and improved understanding of how people and organizations of many backgrounds perceive, decide to adopt, and actually use technology. WATCH aims to provide thought-provoking talks by innovative thinkers with ideas that illuminate these challenges and provide signposts toward solutions. The series is jointly organized by NSF's Computer Science and Engineering (CISE) and Social, Behavioral, and Economic (SBE) Directorates and sponsored by the CISE Secure and Trustworthy Cyberspace (SaTC) Program. Talks will be recorded and made available over the Internet.

Thursday, July 20, 2017

Questions/comments about WATCH?
Contact Fen Zhao (fzhao@nsf.gov)

NSF Stafford I Room 110, 12pm
Public Invited

Abstract

Despite years and years of rhetoric concerning the weaknesses in the electronic defenses of the power grid there has yet to be one long term power outage directly caused by a cyber attack. While cyber attacks have not yet taken out the power squirrels have, hundreds of times every year. This talk will examine previous claims of infrastructure cyber attacks such as the Brazil blackout, Turkish pipeline explosion, German steel plant blast furnace and the recent power outages in the Ukraine among others. We will also examine decades of confirmed attacks by squirrels, birds, snakes, and other animals. We will breakdown our meticulously gathered data of cyber squirrel attacks by country, number of people impacted and length of outages and compare that with the same data caused by cyber attack. While some may see cyber squirrel attacks as funny the underlying message is deadly serious. #cyberwar4ever

Speaker

With more than two decades of experience, Cris Thomas (aka Space Rogue) commands an uncanny ability to link disparate events, read between the lines and distill complex, technical information into readily understandable, accessible and actionable intelligence. Space Rogue and his colleagues created the first security research think tank, L0pht Heavy Industries, and the widely popular video news show The Hacker News Network. Eager to share his wealth of knowledge on security trends, Cris has testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and has been interviewed by media organizations such as Wired, MSNBC and even MTV. Before joining IBM he worked at such ground breaking companies as @Stake, Guardent, Trustwave Tenable and others. Cris currently works for IBM X-Force Red where he helps clients understand their risks and how they can meet compliance and security challenges.