



When the Bad Guys Hide in Plain Sight:

Hacking Platforms You Know and Trust



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Hindsight is 2020



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KEVIN MITNICK
FORMER COMPUTER HACKER

C-SPAN
LIVE

MR. KEVIN MITNICK
Committee:

Honorable Chairperson Thompson, Distinguished Senators, and Members of the

My name is Kevin Mitnick. I appear before you today to discuss your efforts to create legislation that will ensure the future security and reliability of information systems owned and operated by, or on behalf of, the federal government.

I am primarily self-taught. My hobby as an adolescent consisted of studying methods, tactics, and strategies used to circumvent computer security, and to learn more about how computer systems and telecommunication systems work.

In 1985 I graduated cum laude in Computer Systems and Programming from a technical college in Los Angeles, California, and went on to successfully complete a post-graduate project in designing enhanced security applications that ran on top of a computer's operating system. That post-graduate project may have been one of the earliest examples of "hire the hacker" the school's administrators realized I was hacking into their computers in ways that they couldn't prevent, and so they asked me to design security enhancements that would stop others' unauthorized access.

I have 20 years experience circumventing information security measures, and can report that I have successfully compromised all systems that I targeted for unauthorized access save one. I have two years experience as a private investigator, and my responsibilities included locating people and their assets using social engineering techniques.

My experience and success at accessing, and obtaining information from computer systems first drew national attention when I obtained user manuals for the COSMOS computer systems (Computer Systems for Mainframe Operations) used by Pacific Bell.

Ten years later the novel "Cyberpunk" was published in 1991, which purported to be a "true" accounting of my actions that resulted in my arrest on federal charges in 1988. One of the authors of that novel went on to write similarly fictionalized "reports" about me for the New York Times, including a cover story that appeared July 4, 1994. That largely fictitious story labeled me, without reason, justification, or proof, as the "world's most wanted cybercriminal." Subsequent media reports distorted that claim into the false claim that I was the first hacker on the FBI's "Ten Most Wanted" list. That false exaggeration was most recently repeated during my appearance on CNN's Burden of Proof program on February 10, 2000. Michael White of the Associated Press researched this issue with the FBI, and FBI representatives denied ever including me on their "Ten Most Wanted" list.

I have gained unauthorized access to computer systems at some of the largest corporations on the planet, and have successfully penetrated some of the most resilient computer systems ever developed. I have used both technical and non-technical means



Looking Foward

N E W S

Demo (USB Attack)



Demo

(Zero Login Exploit)





Final Thoughts & Takeaways



Thank You

KnowBe4
Human error. Conquered.