



Springer Vieweg

1st
edition

1st ed. 2020, XIV, 205 p. 49
illus.

Printed book

Hardcover

Printed book

Hardcover

ISBN 978-3-662-61312-2

\$ 99,99

Available

Discount group

Professional Books (2)

Product category

Professional book

Computer Science : Systems and Data Security

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Attribution of Advanced Persistent Threats

How to Identify the Actors Behind Cyber-Espionage

- Explains how hackers operate and which mistakes they make
- Presents the technical methods to track and identify the perpetrators
- Compares the approaches of security companies and government agencies
- Shows how to identify false flags
- A look behind the scenes of investigators and analysts

An increasing number of countries develop capabilities for cyber-espionage and sabotage. The sheer number of reported network compromises suggests that some of these countries view cyber-means as integral and well-established elements of their strategical toolbox. At the same time the relevance of such attacks for society and politics is also increasing. Digital means were used to influence the US presidential election in 2016, repeatedly led to power outages in Ukraine, and caused economic losses of hundreds of millions of dollars with a malfunctioning ransomware. In all these cases the question who was behind the attacks is not only relevant from a legal perspective, but also has a political and social dimension. Attribution is the process of tracking and identifying the actors behind these cyber-attacks. Often it is considered an art, not a science. This book systematically analyses how hackers operate, which mistakes they make, and which traces they leave behind. Using examples from real cases the author explains the analytic methods used to ascertain the origin of Advanced Persistent Threats.

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ISBN 978-3-662-61312-2 / BIC: UR / SPRINGER NATURE: SCI28060

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