

THE

7 types of highly effective HACKERS

Digital transformation is impacting every aspect of business—shaping growth, transforming products, optimizing operations, and empowering employees. But with these extraordinary opportunities comes many questions about how IT leadership can effectively evolve their organizations, while still securing their data against the threat of increasingly severe cyberattacks.

1 Script Kiddies

Often bored teens, hacking alone, don't put much time or thought into gaining computer knowledge on their own and instead exploit existing code.

WHAT MOTIVATES THEM. Thrill seekers, these budding criminals mostly hack for fun, recognition, and bragging rights. But that doesn't mean they can't pose a serious threat.¹

2 Hacking Groups

A loose collection of script kiddies who wield more power as a collective than as individuals and can seriously disrupt business.

WHAT MOTIVATES THEM. While disregarded by some for the same reasons as script kiddies, these hackers, working together, glean confidence from their status as a collective and have the potential to wreak a great deal more havoc, often leveraging the combined range of skills within their group to be more effective.

3 Hacktivists

Collectives of savvy, politically motivated, and often exceptionally skilled hackers. They're fighting a war and cybersecurity is their weapon of choice.

WHAT MOTIVATES THEM. Grounded in hacker culture and ethics, hacktivist goals are often inspired by a passionate commitment to free speech, human rights, or freedom of information.

4 Black Hat Professionals

These are highly experienced hackers who do this work for a living, bringing decades of extensive computer knowledge to the table. They generally neither destroy nor seek publicity but figure out new ways to infiltrate impenetrable targets, developing avenues of attacks that often prove costly for both governments and businesses.

WHAT MOTIVATES THEM. A broad range of incentives and goals attract hackers at this elite level, including money, revenge, public attention, bragging rights, access to valuable data, and even mere amusement.

5 Organized Criminal Gangs

Led by seasoned professional criminals, these serious and very talented hackers function within a sophisticated structure, guided by strict rules to ensure their crimes go undetected by law enforcement. It's like The Mafia, only with computers. In fact, a large number of black hat hackers are affiliated with organized crime.

WHAT MOTIVATES THEM. Forget the image of a 17-year-old hacker, working alone in his parents' basement; instead, picture sophisticated and organized cybercriminals who choose this way of life as a profession. They're driven by the immense amounts of money they can make at this level, and how much "easier" cybercrime is relative to more traditional criminal activity.

6 Nation-States

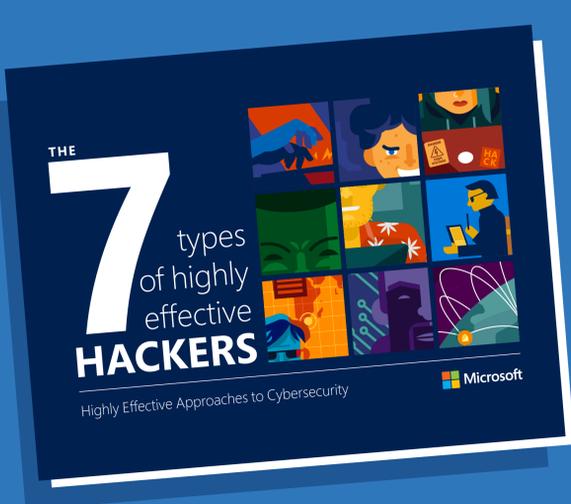
This is organized cybercrime at the international level, using cybersecurity as military, political, and economic weapons.

WHAT MOTIVATES THEM. Nation-states are more interested in political and economic espionage stealing state secrets, intellectual property, and the personal information of government employees—than simply making money. A recent example was the hack of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, which put at risk the personal information of up to 14 million current and former federal employees.²

7 The Cyberweapons Dealer

A more seasoned criminal who sells automated pieces of software that act like weapons, mostly to nation states or organized crime rings, but really to anyone who can afford them.

WHAT MOTIVATES THEM. Money. A lot of it.



For strategies on how to best defend your organization from the increasingly severe backdrop of cyberthreats, get the full e-book, **The 7 Types of Highly Effective Hackers: Highly Effective Approaches to Cybersecurity.**



¹ Wlasuk, Alan. "Help! I Think My Kid Is A Script Kiddie." Security Week. January 13, 2012. <http://www.securityweek.com/help-i-think-my-kid-script-kiddie>

² Armerding, Taylor. "Cybercrime: Much More Organized." CSO. June 23, 2015. <http://www.csoonline.com/article/2938529/cyber-attacks-espionage/cybercrime-much-more-organized.html>