Title: Trafficking Fraudulent Accounts: The Role of the Underground Market in Twitter Spam and Abuse

Speaker: Dr Chris Grier

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Venue: Executive Classroom, COM2-04-02

Chaired by: Dr Saxena, Prateek, Dean's Chair Assistant Professor, School of Computing (prateeks@comp.nus.edu.sg)

Abstract:
To facilitate access to online social networks, an underground market has emerged where fraudulent accounts - automatically generated credentials used to perpetrate scams, phishing, and malware - are sold in bulk by the thousands. We investigate the market for fraudulent accounts to monitor prices, availability, and fraud perpetrated by 27 merchants of Twitter accounts over the course of a 10-month period. We use our insights to develop a classifier to retroactively detect several million fraudulent accounts sold via this marketplace, 95% of which we disable with Twitter's help.

Bio:
Chris Grier is a research scientist at the University of California, Berkeley. He has a Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Chris is currently involved in several projects that investigate the criminal underground that supports large-scale abuse; including malware, account credentials, search hijacking, advertising fraud, and other forms of cybercrime. Recent projects have included the infiltration of several pay-per-install affiliate programs, automated classification of drive-by download payloads, and several studies examining social network spam and abuse. He has also worked on building secure web browsers in the past.