

An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Internet Miscreants

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Summary

- Internet miscreants are using IRC channels as a semi-open marketplace to trade in digital goods and services that are used in illicit online activities such as identity theft, credit card fraud, spamming, phishing etc.



Comments

- The work is highly original and insightful.
- No indication of how representative the networks monitored are of a possibly larger collection of markets across the internet.
- Only public messages can be analysed.



What do public messages show us?

- There is a market
- A seller must find a buyer and a buyer must find a seller
- In the interest of anonymity this must happen publicly



What do public messages show us?

- So we know approximately how many people are buying and selling
- The real numbers can only be very loosely approximated as the details of transactions happen behind closed doors
- They have an incentive to obfuscate and withhold information from the potentially untrustworthy masses



Take a peek through the keyhole

- Can we go follow this analysis further down the rabbit hole by imitating active participants to gather data that would not otherwise be made public?