Security Now! #455 - 05-13-14
Q&A #187

This week on Security Now!

- The Second Tuesday in May.
- The Certificate Authority Security Council weighs in on Chrome's revocation solution.
- Meanwhile… Chrome's developers triple-down.
- On appeal, the court overturns Google's previous victory over Oracle.
- Some fun miscellaneous stuff...
- And questions from our listeners

Security News:

The Second Tuesday in May --> Awaiting MS14-022
- Eight Bulletins:
  - 2 Critical
    - Internet Explorer (v6-v11)
    - Windows Sharepoint Server & Web Apps
  - 6 Important
    - Office

Revocation:
- CA Security Council
- https://casecurity.org/2014/05/08/casc-heartbleed-response/

And... "Confusing" revocation option being removed from Chrome
- https://code.google.com/p/chromium/issues/detail?id=361820
- "Issue 361820:   Check For Server Certificate Revocation checkbox is confusing"
- 27 hours ago:
  - Tested the same on Win8 chrome version 37.0.1987.1 (Official Build 269719) canary - Fix works as expected. The confusing certificate revocation check box is removed under "Manage Certificates" button as shown in the screenshot.
- I'm at Chrome v34.0.1847.131m
  - "Google Chrome is up to date."
- (Note: Bloat was coming from add-ons -- surprisingly bloaty!)

Federal Circuit Court of Appeals == HORRIFIC RULING

2010: Oracle sued Google over 37 Java APIs used in Android.
2012:
- http://www.wired.com/2012/06/google-oracle-api-bookshelf/
- <quote> Oracle said the Java APIs were like a beautiful painting. Google said they were more like a file cabinet. And in the end, Judge William Alsup came closest to agreeing with Google, comparing an API to a library that organizes the Java programming language.

  In the much-anticipated 2012 ruling in the epic legal battle between Google and Oracle, Alsup wrote: "Each package is like a bookshelf in the library, Each class is like a book on the shelf. Each method is like a how-to-do-it chapter in a book. Go to the right shelf, select the right book, and open it to the chapter that covers the work you need."

  His ultimate point was that the organization of a library is not subject to copyright. Yes, he said, the books are copyrightable, but not the way the books are organized.

  In other words, Google did not infringe on Oracle's copyright when it cloned 37 Java APIs in building its Android mobile operating system. Though Google copied the organization of the APIs, it built the code behind them on its own — or at least mostly on its own.

  "The Java and Android libraries are organized in the same basic way, but all of the chapters in Android have been written with implementations different from Java but solving the same problems and providing the same functions."

  Google wrote: "This reaffirms our longstanding understanding of the law: that these APIs were free for anyone to use as we did, taking just the declarations and doing our own independent implementations. That's the way developers use Java. You can't say a language is free for everyone to use and then hold back the nouns and the verbs."

- Let's remember: JAVA only succeeded BECAUSE it was free to use.

2014:
- http://www.techdirt.com/articles/20140509/10133727178/appeals-court-doesnt-understand-difference-between-software-api-declares-apis-copyrightable.shtml
- http://www.wired.com/2014/05/oracle-copyright/

- <quote> Oracle won a big legal victory over Google on Friday, when a federal appeals overturned a ruling in their epic battle over the Java programming language. Larry Ellison and company are calling it a win for the entire software industry, but others see it differently. They believe it could harm the industry in enormous ways. Some even think it could come back to bite Oracle.

  The dispute comes down to arcane code used in Google's Android operating system, and if the courts ultimately find in favor of Oracle, the decision could reverberate across the tech industry. The situation is complicated, but it can be summed up pretty simply. Oracle owns Java. Google cloned Java in building Android. Oracle sued. And now the courts are trying to decide when it's OK to clone someone else's software.

If you asked a software developer about this, he will probably tell you the cloning is fine as long as you don't just cut and paste the source code. But in suing Google, Oracle argues differently. They claim copyright not just over the source code itself, but over the standard names and structures used to organize Java. In other words, Oracle says it owns the designs of Java's application programming interfaces, or APIs.

In 2012, Judge William Alsup ruled against Oracle, and software developers rejoiced. After all, many important pieces of open source software are clones of something else, including the Linux operating system and various cloud services. With APIs protected by copyright, they could all be in trouble.

- Speaking of cloning APIs... "Halt & Catch Fire..."

Firefox quietly crept forward to v29.0.1 on Friday (May 9th), to fix four small bugs.

Miscellany:

Halt & Catch Fire:
- The CLONING of the IBM PC -- reverse engineering by COMPAC in Texas.

Harry's Shaving Products!... OMG!

SQRL Update: Once again rolling forward

SpinRite:

Another of the many uses for SpinRite... when you want to be sure your data is NOT recoverable!

- Nick Bowen in Walnut Creek, California
  Subject: SpinRite allowed me to wipe my data

  A friend recently brought me his computer for me to run DBAN on, prior to him getting rid of it. But it was now an older machine, and DBAN would not run because the HD would just grind. I had purchased SpinRite a couple of years ago and hadn't used it yet, but I thought this would be a great opportunity. So I ran a quick level 2 repair scan... and it fixed the issue. This allowed me to then securely wipe the data before it was given away. Thanks for the Podcast and great product. ...Nick