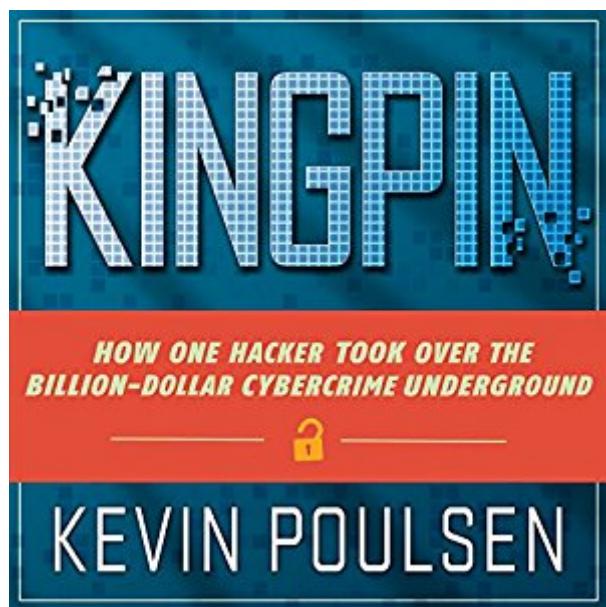The book was found

Kingpin: How One Hacker Took Over The Billion-Dollar Cybercrime Underground

Synopsis

The word spread through the hacking underground like some unstoppable new virus: Someone - some brilliant, audacious crook - had just staged a hostile takeover of an online criminal network that siphoned billions of dollars from the U.S. economy. The FBI rushed to launch an ambitious undercover operation aimed at tracking down this new kingpin. Other agencies around the world deployed dozens of moles and double agents. Together, the cybercops lured numerous unsuspecting hackers into their clutches. Yet at every turn, their main quarry displayed an uncanny ability to sniff out their snitches and see through their plots. The culprit they sought was the most unlikely of criminals: a brilliant programmer with a hippie ethic and a supervillain's double identity. Together with a smooth-talking con artist, he ran a massive real-world crime ring.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After reading the first 10 chapters or so, there was no way I was going to finish reading this book. As a focal point for the book, there's not much to like to the main character, Max Vision. Six months later, I picked up Kingpin one more time and I have to say the book finishes well.After a thorough introduction to the Max Vision, the book goes on to describe the Cyber Crime world over the course of the early 2000's. The vulnerabilities in newly networked systems enabled a large number of cyber criminals to make a good living on credit card fraud that the banking industry was loathe to bring to the light to the victims of these crimes. The creativity of the FBI after a few bumbling mistakes is also described in detail. In the end, this is an interesting book about cops and robbers in the

emerging Internet age.

This book is a must read for security professionals (cyber security as well as physical security) in order to get a glimpse behind the curtain of the attackers we deal with. It shows the tricks that these criminals use as well as their very real weaknesses, which are often an arrogance and overconfidence. These people are not superhuman but even the more talented ones are looking for others to show them what vulnerabilities can be exploited.As someone in the profession, this book yields valuable clues into those that made headlines over the years and how they were able to steal credit card and other info. Often when we first learn about an incident there are precious few details that are revealed.For those generally interested in one aspect of the hacker world this book should be an interesting read without being full of too much technical detail. You get a look at the personalities and backgrounds of those involved on the criminal side and ultimately the lesson is clear, these folks do not lead a glamorous life and eventually many get caught.

Just wow. This book describes how so many of the identity theft rings and credit card exploits have occurred. These are some very talented engineers - as a decent engineer you'll find yourself wondering if you too would yield to the temptation laid in front of you by the poor security the banks and merchants implement in allegedly protecting our identities and credit. You'll discover whether security or the bottom line is valued by these corporations, and walk away disturbed as you shut the book. A must read for consumers and engineers!

This book is an absolute thriller from beginning to end and, as a form of informational entertainment, is well worth the price. The narrative is fantastic and Kevin Poulsen describes the events in a way that inspires both intrigue and admonishment.Delving deeply into the story of black hat hacker, Max Butler, the book takes you turn by turn through the complex and unsurprisingly dog-eat-dog world of the underground carding scene. A place where illegal fortunes are made and lost at the click of a mouse, the swipe of a card, and the rattle of a keyboard. The cat and mouse aspect of Keith Mularski, the FBI agent charged with penetrating the underground criminal element and Max Butler plays out with so much drama and intensity that it would not surprise me if a translation to the big screen is made. Believe me when I say it is extremely hard to put this book down.The only negative remark I could make is that Mr. Poulsen is somewhat biased in his depiction of Max Butler. There are times when it feels as if he is trying to excuse or explain away Max's criminal actions as if he weren't the kingpin of an elaborate hacking and fraud ring, but instead just a conflicted brilliant mind.

Regardless, if you are even remotely interested in the topic then I would highly recommend getting this book.

Poulsen provides an interesting, mostly well-written glimpse into the world of those who would gladly swipe a credit card number just as a hobo grabbing up someone else's sandwich. Not overly heavy on hacker tech or lingo, Kingpin is accessible to most adults. The shifting loyalties and convenient deceptions among good guys and bad guys alike keeps the intrigue levels pegged, even when the narrative drags from time to time. I would have liked to have explored more about the mentality of breaking the law for the purposes of improving security, but all in all, still a very good read.

I bought this book yesterday after reading a synopsis about it on Wired; it was absolutely fantastic. The author takes the most important technological and cultural revolution of the last fifty years and pulls away the veneer to reveal a deep criminal underworld. With the colored perspective that only a former hacker could offer, the author delivers both a survey course in the rise and fall of phreaking and hacking communities, as well as a compassionate narrative regarding its willing victims. Although I work in the tech field, I immediately realized that it was in no way a pre-requisite for enjoying this piece. By focusing on characters and setting the author has done a terrific job of communicating the story without entangling the reader in unnecessary technical detail.Every part disturbing as I hoped it would be, this book showcases how fragile the internet revolution has made sensitive data. I felt like I was reading Le Carre, the double agents, the betrayal, it was everything to remind myself that this is a true story. I have already recommended this to friends.

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