HB

308

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2006 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 3
Bill Version: CSHB 308(JUD)
(H) Publish Date: 3/30/06

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction):
Dept. Affected: Public Safety
Title "An Act relating to false caller identification."
RDU Alaska State Troopers
Component AST Detachments
Sponsor Representative Lynn
Requester House Judiciary Committee
Component No. 2325

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )						

FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Denali Blueprint)						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2006) cost: 0.0
Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2006 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: *(Attach a separate page if necessary)*

This proposed legislation will have no fiscal impact on the Department of Public Safety.

Prepared by Lieutenant James Holgne
Phone 907-269-4532
Division Alaska State Troopers
Date/Time 3/17/06 1:54 PM
Approved by Commissioner William Tandeske
Date 3/17/2006
Agency Department of Public Safety

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2006 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 2
Bill Version: CSHB 308(JUD)
(H) Publish Date: 3/30/06

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction):
Dept. Affected:

Title: Caller ID Hackers
RDU: Alaska Court System
Component: Trial Courts

Sponsor: Representative Lynn
Requester:
Component No.:

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )						

FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2006) cost: 0.0

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2007 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: *(Attach a separate page if necessary)*

The court system does not anticipate any fiscal impact from the passage of HB 308.

Prepared by: Doug Wooliver, Administrative Attorney — Phone: 463-4750
Division: Alaska Court System — Date/Time: 3/17/06 @ 10:30 am
Approved by: Doug Wooliver for Stephanie Cole, Administrative Director — Date: 3/17/2006
Agency: Alaska Court System

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2006 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 1
Bill Version: CSHB 308(JUD)
(H) Publish Date: 3/30/06

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): 3/21/06 9:06 a.m.
Dept. Affected: Administration

Title: An Act relating to false caller identification
RDU: Legal and Advocacy Services
Component: Public Defender Agency

Sponsor: Rep. Lynn
Requester: (H) JUD
Component No.: 1631

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Personal Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )						

FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2006) cost: 0.0
Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2007 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS *(Attach a separate page if necessary)*

This legislation would create the new crime of False Caller Identification for inserting false information into a caller identification system. False Caller Identification would be a class B misdemeanor.

This legislation is not expected to have a fiscal impact on the Public Defender Agency.

Prepared by: Quinlan Steiner, Director
Phone: (907) 334-4414
Division: Public Defender Agency
Date/Time: 3/21/06 9:06 a.m.

Approved by: Mike Tibbles, Deputy Commissioner
Date: 3/21/2006
Agency: Administration

(Revised 2/10/06 OMB)

Alaska State Legislature

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Military & Veterans' Affairs

A Communication From
REPRESENTATIVE BOB LYNN
District 31 Anchorage

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SPONSOR STATEMENT

HB308

An Act relating to false caller identification

Warning. Do not trust your telephone caller ID. The name and number you see may be fake. Both private individuals and commercial spoofers can now deliberately cause false caller identification to be displayed on your caller ID screen. False caller identification is more serious than pranks, or the annoyance of intrusive telemarketing. It facilitates fraud, and can be potentially deadly.

For example, some financial institutions use caller ID to authenticate telephone requests for personal account information. With a few personal tidbits and your spoofed number, an impostor could access your bank or credit card account. Seniors could be victimized by scam artists who appear to be phoning from a reputable agency. There's potential for hoax emergency calls with false caller ID to law enforcement or the fire department. Predators could use caller ID spoofing to lure women and children for purposes of sexual assault or murder. The potential of false caller ID spoofing for crime and other mischief is almost endless.

Anyone with sufficient computer and telephonic skills can implement false caller identification. In fact an entire telephone spoofing industry has emerged, and is growing daily. Cost from one company for spoof calls is 10 cents a minute. These spoofing services can work with mobile phones, landlines as well as telephone services that are routed via the Internet.

The fake caller ID situation is primarily a federal issue, but it is essential that Alaska take whatever action possible within its jurisdiction. Caller ID spoofing from a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency is excluded from this bill.

REUTERS
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Scam Artists Dial for Dollars on Internet Phones

Sun Mar 20, 2005 09:40 AM ET

By Andy Sullivan

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Internet phone services have drawn millions of users looking for rock-bottom rates. Now they're also attracting identity thieves looking to turn stolen credit cards into cash.

Some Internet phone services allow scam artists to make it appear that they are calling from another phone number -- a useful trick that enables them to drain credit accounts and pose as banks or other trusted authorities, online fraud experts say.

"It's like you've handed people an entire phone network," said Lance James, who as chief technology officer of Secure Science Corp. sees such scams on a daily basis.

The emerging scams underline the lower level of security protecting Voice Over Internet Protocol, or VOIP, the Internet-calling standard that has upended the telecommunications industry over the past several years.

Traditional phone networks operate over dedicated equipment that is difficult for outsiders to penetrate. Because VOIP calls travel over the Internet, they cost much less but are vulnerable to the same security problems that plague e-mail and the Web.

Internet worms that snarl online networks can render VOIP lines unusable, and experts at AT&T say VOIP conversations can be monitored or altered by outsiders.

Federal Trade Commission Chairman Deborah Platt Majoras recently warned that unscrupulous telemarketers could use VOIP to blast huge numbers of voice messages to consumers, a technique known as SPIT, for "spam over Internet telephony."

All of these threats remain largely in the realm of theory. Caller ID spoofing, on the other hand, has emerged over the past six months as a useful tool for identity thieves and other scam artists, according to fraud experts.

PRESIDENT BUSH ON THE LINE

Any reporter would scramble for a ringing phone that reads "White House media line" on its caller ID display.

But it's not the Bush administration on the line -- it's security instructor Ralph Echemendia, calling from a mobile phone on a remote Georgia highway.

"You can see how this sort of thing could be used in a very malicious way," said Echemendia, a security instructor at the Intense School, a technology training company.

Caller ID spoofing is not prohibited by law, but the Federal Communications Commission requires telemarketers to identify themselves accurately, a spokeswoman said.

Echemendia built his own system to spoof calls, but several free or low-cost services allow even technical novices to falsify caller ID information as well.

Debt collectors and private investigators use Camophone.com's 5-cents-per-call service to trick people into answering the

phone, according to messages posted on a discussion board.

Traveling salesmen say the service comes in handy when they want clients to return calls to the main office, rather than their motel room.

James said criminal uses of caller-ID spoofing have become common over the last six months.

Wire-transfer services like Western Union (FDC.N: Quote, Profile, Research) require customers to call from their home phone when they want to transfer money in an effort to deter fraud -- a barrier easily sidestepped by any identity thief using a caller-ID spoofing service.

Fraud rings can now transfer money directly out of stolen credit-card accounts, rather than buying merchandise and reselling it, he said.

Western Union spokeswoman Danielle Periera said the company has no other way to verify that transfer requests are valid.

"We try hard to stay one step ahead of them and recognize that scam artists are sophisticated and often change their schemes," she said.

Criminals can use caller-ID spoofing to listen to other people's voice mail, James said, especially when those accounts are not protected by passwords.

They also have begun to use the technology to make it appear that they are calling from a bank or other financial institution, said Dave Jevans, who chairs the Anti-Phishing Working Group, a banking-industry task force.

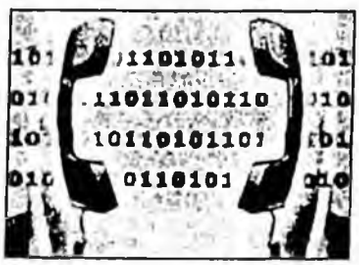
That helps them convince consumers to divulge account numbers, passwords and other sensitive information in a scam that echoes the "phishing" e-mails that have become common, he said.

VOIP industry pioneer Jeff Pulver, whose Free World Dialup service can be used to spoof calls, said he couldn't prevent abuse of his system.

The problem will likely recede as companies like VeriSign Inc. (VRSN.O: Quote, Profile, Research) and NeuStar Inc. develop ways to verify online identities, he said: "We're not there yet, but we're going to get there."

Close This Window

Caller-ID Spoofing: 'Appallingly Bad Idea'



By Erika Morphy
September 2, 2004 1:26PM

A new software system that allows users to fool telephone caller-I opens the door to a variety of abuses. "What an appallingly bad id security firm Sophos.

>> A startup company has developed a software system that allows users to spoof a caller-ID number in order to trick the telephone-call recipient into answering the phone.

Developed by Star38, the service will be marketed solely to collection agencies, private investigators and the police, according to statements made by the company.

The system itself is said to be easy to use, with the user typing in the recipient's number and the number he or she would like to appear on the caller ID.

Appallingly Bad

Critics of the system -- and there are many, even outside the usual privacy/consumer-advocacy brigade -- find the technology frightening. "What an appallingly bad idea," says Graham Cluley, managing consultant for security and antivirus firm Sophos. "It reminds me of the hacker-driven spam and phishing scams that have taken over the Internet," he told NewsFactor.

More on this topic.

In fact, it is a much worse form of deception than Internet fraud, says John Morris, staff counsel for the Center for Democracy & Technology, a Washington-based public-policy organization with a focus on technology.

Reasonable Expectation

"On the Internet, most people understand that the identity of someone who is sending an e-mail may easily be spoofed," Morris told NewsFactor. "But the phone, historically, has had a different set of expectations or assumptions. Most people that have Caller ID assume the number listed is accurate."

In news accounts, Star38 has emphasized its intent to limit the technology to the police, collection agencies and private investigators.

However, "there really isn't anything that will prevent this kind of technology from being used by other firms, such as telemarketers, now that it has been developed," Morris says, adding, "in this age of identity theft, we are skeptical that spoofing other phone numbers on Caller ID is a desirable development."

One scenario, Morris suggests, might be someone purporting to call from a distant relative's house, claiming the person had an accident.

Potential for Abuse

But even assuming that Star38 keeps the technology in the hands of collection agencies, private investigators and the police, there still would be cause for worry.

While the police may well have a legitimate need for the technology in criminal investigations, the potential for abuse by collection agencies and PIs is huge.

For example, there have been cases of stalkers retaining private investigators to find victims who went into hiding.

As for collection agencies, the potential for abuse is even wider. "We don't understand what purpose a legitimate collections agency would have in hiding its identity," Morris says.

The typical example, of course, is an agency that uses the system to get a phone-shy debtor to answer the call and coax him or her into paying the debt.

Collection agencies, though, have not entirely shed their less-than-upstanding practices since the passage of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act. Recently, one firm was fined for continually contacting and harassing a debtor's neighbors -- a

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practice clearly illegal under FDCP.

Over the Line

More often, though, when these agencies go over the line, it is a little more discreet.

Recently, a legal journal reported that a court found a collection agency had made false statements as to the time limit of a debt-discount offer; reportedly, the firm told the debtor she had 30 days to make a payment if she wanted to get a percentage taken off her debt. In truth there was no time limit of 30 days -- a deception prohibited by the law.

Which brings us back to Star38's latest contribution to the Internet age. In his first take on the system, Morris says he does not believe the system itself violates the tenets of FDCP. When it gets in the hands of the agencies, though, that may be a different story.

"I do believe we will see some deceptive practices on the part of the agencies that will violate the spirit of FDCP," he says.

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March 2005 Archive

March 08, 2005

"Caller ID spoofing" an emerging VoIP security threat

Real Audio | How to Listen

If you have caller ID, you might want to think twice about trusting the information displayed on your telephone. As more people place phone calls over the Internet instead of the wired telephone network, identifying the person on the other end of the line is getting more difficult.

Starting late last summer, people all over the U.S. and Canada got phone calls from a Twin Cities phone number -- a recorded voice offering a deal on wireless phone services. When they called the number to complain, they were patched through to a small Minneapolis company that definitely was not selling Nokias or Blackberries. It was a company that provides janitorial services to area businesses.

Building Resources Corporation office manager Rhiannon Fisk fielded the complaints.

"Around Christmastime, the call volume started to pick up, and we got dozens and dozens every day," she said. " It got to the point where we just had to start ignoring them because it was affecting how we did business."

Understandably, the callers complained angrily about the unwanted telemarketing calls.

"I'll pick up the phone, they immediately say you called my house and I want you to stop calling, and take me off the list, and they usually just hang up," Fisk said.

Fisk sought answers from the company's telephone provider, Integra, but received none. She then complained to the Minnesota Attorney General. The AG's office told fisk that, while nothing could be done, it knew the likely source of the problem: caller ID spoofing. The shady telemarketers, wanting to avoid detection, made it look like it was someone else. It's a mystery why they chose the Minneapolis company.

Scammers have long known how to fake the source of e-mail. Since Voice over IP, or VOIP, sends voices as packets of data, it was perhaps predictable that telephone customers would start seeing a

March 2005

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problem like e-mail spoofing.

"If you pick up you standard phone today, and you have caller ID, you can see which number is actually calling you, and you have a very high level of assurance that it really is that telephone number," said Stuart McIrvine, security researcher at IBM. Now, when you start to get into Voice over IP, it's very easy for someone to fake that number, so you think the call is coming from somewhere else."

Consumer advocacy groups are just beginning to field complaints about the problem. Jordana Beebe with the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse says she's not sure how many people are being burned by caller ID spofing, but calls it a deceptive practice that should be stopped.

"Caller ID is there so that you know who is calling and you can make a determination about whether you want to take that call or not," she said. "And if for instance that technology is being abused so that you are duped into taking a call that otherwise you wouldn't take, we feel that consumers shouldn't be in that type of situation."

You don't have to be a skilled, devious hacker to trick called ID displays. In the past year, about a half dozen services have cropped up that use VoIP technology to sell caller ID spoofing, at five to ten cents a minute, to consumers. They go by names like "Telespoof," and "Camophone." They're marketed to people who want to hide their true identities, like bill collectors and private investigators. Only one caller ID spoofing service, responded to inquiries from MPR, but the owner wouldn't reveal his name, saying only that he believes his service is ethical and lawful.

Beebe of the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse says new regulations and laws are needed to fight caller ID spoofing. But VoIP is largely unregulated. A spokeswoman at the agency that would most likely have jurisdiction, the Federal Communications Commission, did not respond to numerous requests for comment.

In the meantime, caller ID spoofing could get worse as more consumers and businesses switch to Internet telephone calls.

"What we're going to see is more people devote more time and energy into breaking it, because it's going to become more popular," said David Endler of the Voice Over IP Security Alliance.

Back at the janitorial services firm, office manager Rhiannon Fisk says that mercifully, her phone stopped ringing off the hook about a month ago. The calls ended as mysteriously as they appeared.

Everything Jersey

'Spoofing' lets pranksters dial M for mayhem

Monday, April 11, 2005

BY KEVIN COUGHLIN
Star-Ledger Staff

When a hoax led sharpshooting SWAT teams to shut down a New Brunswick neighborhood last month, the world learned about a dangerous new game called "bombing."

Prank phone calling, once a summer pastime of slap-happy kids, had morphed into a blood sport.

While details still are unfolding on how the New Brunswick emergency call and others like it were faked, experts on privacy and security warn that Internet technology and legal loopholes are handing hoaxsters a powerful weapon to dupe everyone: caller ID "spoofing."

Over the past few months, companies such as Camophone, CovertCall, Telespoof and SpoofTel have sprouted online with offers to place calls that display any callback number you want, for just pennies a minute.

"Be Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime," proclaims the Web site of PI Phone.

PI Phone and rivals Star38 and U.S.Tracers purport to serve only private investigators or law enforcement personnel, who presumably have good reasons for tricking outlaws to answer the phone. But other services welcome all comers, for an extra fee some even will record the results.

"Wanna have some fun? Appear to be someone else, and set up the Ultimate Prank Call," says the Web site for CovertCall, which sponsors a $250 contest for the best prank.

CovertCall suggests fooling debtors into accepting calls, spoofing your business line to keep your personal number private, and exploiting cellular plans that offer free incoming minutes. "Want to chat with sexy singles? Get endless free trials by calling in with random caller IDs!"

On the Web, CovertCall users even debate methods -- and ethics -- of spoofing a spouse's number to access his or her cellular messages.

The Federal Communications Commission and Federal Trade Commission say they have taken no enforcement actions against these services. But others predict it won't be long before an emergency hoax, identity theft or duped domestic violence victim triggers calls for a crackdown.

"The potential for abuse with this technology is huge," says Jordana Beebe of the nonprofit Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, a San Diego group that advocates for consumer privacy protections.

Adds Kevin Mitnick, co-author of "The Art of Intrusion" and a reformed hacker himself: "You can't trust caller ID. There is no assurance that it is coming from the entity that's displaying on the device."

To prove his point, Mitnick used Vonage, the Edison-based Internet phone company, to call a reporter's cell phone. The call appeared to come from the reporter's office number. The ruse took Mitnick only a few seconds.

Many Internet telephone services let users update their accounts with any callback numbers or emergency addresses they choose. This can be a lifesaver. If you're vacationing and making calls over the Internet, you probably want your service provider to direct police to your vacation spot if you punch 911 in an emergency.

(Spoofing 911 calls over conventional phone networks is much harder. They deploy an embedded billing technology, called SS-7, which automatically links a 911 call with the physical address of the telephone. The New Brunswick hoax appears to have been phoned to a regular police line, not to 911.)

Mitnick, who spent almost five years in jail for hacking into companies such as Motorola and Sun Microsystems, says some financial institutions use caller ID to authenticate telephone requests for personal account information. With a few personal tidbits and your spoofed number, he says, an impostor could access your bank or credit card account.

SPOOF WITH EASEActually, spoofing phone calls is nearly as old as caller ID, a service that debuted in New Jersey -- despite protests from privacy advocates -- in the late 1980s. Back then, spoofing required some technical savvy. Now, anyone with a credit card and a phone or online computer can play.

Typically, after setting up an account with a spoofing service, you call its toll-free line or log onto the Web site. Enter a number to call, and the callback number to display, and the service does the rest.

The mere act of faking someone's phone number is not illegal, says Erin McGee of the CTIA, a wireless industry trade association.

Jim Reynolds of Star38 says his company, launched last fall in Delaware by former law enforcement agents for current agents, was the first commercial spoofing service. Other services are copycats and lawbreakers, he says.

"I guarantee those people will be prosecuted. It's only a matter of time," says Reynolds.

Star38 is meant to help the good guys hunt the bad guys; rivals "give people a license to harass people and break the law," he says.

Because Star38's calls are placed entirely over the Internet, they are exempt from FCC regulations, Reynolds contends. Competitors can't make the same claim, he insists.

But most Internet calls hop onto regular phone networks at some point, says Mark Wigfield of the FCC. "We would have to look at the facts" of any case, he says.

Federal Trade Commission rules bar telemarketers from spoofing caller ID to sidestep the national "Do Not Call" registry established in 2003. Some business uses of spoofing also could violate FTC prohibitions against unfair or deceptive trade practices, says spokesman Brad Winter.

Banning all spoofing would be a mistake, says Vonage chief technical officer Louis Mamakos. That might bar legitimate uses for altering callback numbers -- such as directing customers to general help numbers instead of to specific representatives.

In fact, spoofing services actually may help preserve personal privacy, says Jonathan Bick, a

Rutgers University law professor and author of "101 Things You Need to Know About Internet Law." These services restore a right to anonymous speech that caller ID had stripped, Bick says.

"We just have evolving technologies," he says. "And as technologies evolve, so do countermeasures."

THE SPOOFERSThe sudden rise of spoofing services can be tied, variously, to boredom, the National Hockey League, and a struggling college student.

SpoofTel was born in Vancouver two months ago when a computer security specialist named Ryan Purita got bored.

"This is why having no hockey on TV is bad," jokes Purita, referring to the canceled NHL season.

Purita thought the Star38 service sounded cool but was miffed it only served cops. So he cooked up SpoofTel and says it now has about 800 active users who average between 2,000 and 5,000 minutes a day at a dime per minute, Canadian.

He promises to deal swiftly with any reported abuses but defends caller ID spoofing.

"We're offering a service. If someone is using it illegitimately, what can we do? That's the Internet," Purita says.

"They still sell crowbars, don't they? They can be used for many different things. I don't see anybody being stopped from selling guns. I would guess more people are killed by guns than from spoofing caller ID," he says.

Ben Rosenthal also entered the caller ID spoofing business in January, with his PI Phone service for private investigators.

"I saw an opportunity and profit there, and a way to do it honorably and legally, and jumped on it," says Rosenthal, based in Westchester County.

He says it's feasible thanks to free software called Asterisk. It turns a PC with a fast Internet connection into a full-fledged telephone system, with features that once cost thousands of dollars. "The barrier to entry became very low," Rosenthal says.

Asterisk was hatched in 1999 by Mark Spencer, an Auburn University computer engineering student. He also ran a tech support business for people using the free, "open source" Linux computer operating system.

"I needed a phone system. I couldn't afford to buy one, so I decided to make one," recounts Spencer, who now sells Asterisk-based services and hardware at Digium Inc. in Alabama.

Although Spencer's handiwork has spawned outfits that now sell deceptions by the minute, he insists the big phone companies could curb spoofing if they wanted. Not that he's a fan of spoofers, mind you.

"I honestly don't approve of people doing this," says Spencer, 27, who sees the world as divided between those who use technology for good and those who use it for evil. "I would rather be in that first camp, trying to do something to help people."

Kevin Coughlin covers technology. He can be reached at kcoughlin@starledger.com or (973) 392-1763.

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< http://www.securityfocus.com/news/9061 >

VoIP hacks gut Caller I.D.

Implementation quirks in Voice over IP are making it easy for hackers to spoof Caller I.D., and to unmask blocked numbers.

By *Kevin Poulsen*, SecurityFocus Jul 6 2004 1:54PM

Caller I.D. isn't what it used to be.

Hackers have discovered that the handy feature that tells you who's calling before you answer the phone is easily manipulated through weaknesses in Voice over IP (VoIP) programs and networks. They can make their phone calls appear to be from any number they want, and even pierce the veil of Caller I.D. blocking to unmask an anonymous phoner's unlisted number.

At root, the issue is one of what happens to a nugget of authentication data when it leaves the tightly-regulated realm of traditional telephony, and passes into the unregulated domain of the Internet.

On the old-fashioned phone network, Caller I.D. works this way: your local phone company or cell phone carrier sends your "Calling Party Number" (CPN) with every call, like a return address on an envelope. Transmitted along with your CPN is a privacy flag that tells the telephone switch at the receiving end of the call whether or not to share your number with the recipient: if you have blocking on your line, the phone company you're dialing into knows your number, but won't share it with the person you're calling.

This arrangement relies on telephone equipment at both ends of the call being trusted: the phone switch providing you with dial tone promises not to lie about your number to other switches, and the switch on the receiving end promises not to reveal your number if you've asked that it be blocked. In the U.S. that trust is backed by FCC regulations that dictate precisely how telephone carriers handle CPNs, Caller I.D. and blocking. Most subscribers have come to take Caller I.D. for granted, and some financial institutions even use Caller I.D. to authenticate customers over the phone.

Despite that, the system has long been open to manipulation. "A lot of times you can offer any number you want, and carriers won't validate that," says Lance James, chief security office of Secure Science Corporation. But in the past, the power to misrepresent your number came with a high price tag: you typically had to be a business able to pay the local phone company for a high-volume digital connection. On the other side of the equation, companies who pay for toll free numbers can often access an incoming caller's phone number even if it's blocked.

Voice over IP networks, currently outside FCC regulation, place those capabilities in the hands of ordinary netizens. In a telephone interview with SecurityFocus, 21-year-old phone hacker "Lucky 225" demonstrated how he could spoof his Caller I.D. to appear to be phoning from the reporter's office. In another demonstration, the reporter phoned Lucky's associate "Natas" from a residential phone with Caller I.D. blocked. Natas was able to rattle off the unlisted phone number.

As described by Lucky, who's scheduled to give a talk on the subject at the DefCon hacker convention later this month, much Caller I.D. chicanery can be accomplished by taking advantage of implementation quirks in Voice over IP networks that try, but fail, to implement Caller I.D. properly. "There are little exploits that you can do," says Lucky. But the most powerful tool for manipulating and accessing CPN data is the open-source Linux-based PBX software Asterisk, used in combination with a permissive VoIP provider. "It's fully configurable, you can pretty much do anything you want with it," says Lucky. "That's why Voice over I.P. is changing things."

Natas used Asterisk in conjunction with the NuFone Network for his demonstration of Caller I.D. unmasking. NuFone chief Jeremy McNamara didn't return phone calls for this story.

Privacy advocates, who had reservations about Caller I.D. when it was introduced in the 90s, aren't happy that it's becoming easier to subvert. "A worse case scenario is if you have a blocked number, and you're a victim of stalking, and you're duped into calling a number the stalker set up that was routed through a VoIP line," says Jordana Beebe of the San Diego-based Privacy Right's Clearinghouse. "It could put their life in danger."

Callers with life-or-death anonymity concerns might consider spoofing just to get a little privacy. For now, Lucky says pranks among friends are the most common use that he's seen of VoIP spoofing, but he believes that identity thieves and other swindlers could have a field day. "I've used it myself to activate my own credit cards, because I never give credit card companies my real number," he says. "One simple spoof, and it's like saying, if you have the guy's phone number, that piece of information is more important than his mother's maiden name and date of birth. If you have the phone number, you don't need anything else."

<tips@securityfocus.com>

Caller ID missing in OPD

by Lindsay Huett
DM Staff Reporter
February 25, 2005

One might assume that when a police dispatcher fields a telephone call, a caller ID device would immediately track the caller's whereabouts. This, however, is not the case at the Oxford Police Department.

According to Jason Plunk, owner of Night Town in Oxford, an apparent prank call led officers to his business Monday at midnight. Plunk said the police were unable to trace the call, and they responded to a false report of a fight occurring in the parking lot.

"My impression is that someone phoned the police department representing Night Town," he said. "I am the only one who can make a judgment decision about calling the police. So I knew that the call had not been made from Night Town."

Plunk said the police told him the call came from a cell phone, but they did not know — and would have no way of discovering — who made the call.

Assistant Police Chief Mike Martin said implementing a caller ID system would be problematic.

"With as many lines as our telephone system has, we have been told that we may never be able to have caller ID," Martin said.

Martin said the police department currently has 12 lines connected with their telephone system, and the caller ID function only works with a one-line system.

In the event of a serious prank, the department has other ways of tracking calls through the Bell South telephone company.

But Martin said the majority of prank calls are made to the emergency 911 system.

Emergency 911 dispatchers do have identification capabilities.

The police department's telephone system is networked with the fire department and city hall. If the system were to be updated to incorporate caller ID, the whole network would have to be changed, Martin said.

Lori Nicholson of the Germantown Police Department in Germantown, Tenn., said their telephone system is also connected to the fire department and city hall.

They have seven emergency department lines do not contain the caller ID function either.

She said Germantown's emergency 911 lines are the only ones able to identify incoming calls.

T-Mobile security flaw in voicemail. Beware and change

By **David Ciccone**, posted Tuesday, Feb. 22nd, 2005
Reader Comments: 4
Pageviews: 20,245

Simple caller-id spoofing enables unwarranted access to your voicemail.

If any of our members of the community have Sprint or T-Mobile and you have auto voicemail login enabled, you are vulnerable to a simple hack to access your voicemail. I have auto voicemail login enabled because I hate entering my voicemail PIN number each time I want to check my messages.

The voicemail authentication system is simple. It uses caller ID to validate the originating number – if the caller ID matches your cell phone number (ie. your cell phone calling in to check your voicemail messages), it will log you in automatically.

Since the announcement of commercial caller ID spoofing systems such as CovertCall and another called TeleSpoof. For those not in-the-know, caller ID spoofing allows you to change your caller ID number to anything you like. This is extremely vulnerable and make sure you turn off auto login enabled. This is probably how they hacked into Paris Hilton's voicemail.

What is CoverCall?

Covert Call allows you to alter the caller id that is sent to the phone you are calling. It can operate just like a calling card, all for the price of a normal long distance call.

here's a scenario: Out of the office and need to contact a business associate, but don't want to reveal your private cell phone number?... Covert Call will display your business number on their caller id. No one will ever know where you are really calling from!

Manipulate the caller id, that is sent from your phone. Appear to be anyone, anywhere. This service is compatible with nearly all phones, cell phones, and even the new VoIP phones!

What is TeleSpoof?

Telespoof is offering the first domestic and international Caller I.D. spoofing service, allowing business professionals to remain anonymous when calling from anywhere in the world, to anywhere in the world. Telespoof allows you to be whoever you want to be.

Our service is for business professionals within the U.S. including, but not limited to; Private Investigators, Skip Tracers, Law Enforcement, Debt Collection Agencies, Insurance Agencies and Lawyers, allowing the freedom to choose any number to show up on the Caller I.D. display.

Telespoof operates on toll free numbers within the U.S. giving clients access from wherever they may be. No need to be in the office or at a computer to use the service. Telespoof also allows clients to place international calls with spoofed Caller I.D. permitting the technology is available within the destination country.

Dirk Moffatt

From: Bob Lynn [boblynn@alaska.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 06, 2005 8:48 PM
To: Rep. Bob Lynn
Subject: *****SPAM***** Caller ID Articles
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Scam artists dial for dollars on Internet phones

Caller ID spoofing has emerged as a useful tool for fraudsters

News Story by Andy Sullivan

MARCH 21, 2005 (REUTERS) - Internet phone services have drawn millions of users looking for rock-bottom rates. Now they're attracting identity thieves looking to turn stolen credit cards into cash.

Some Internet phone services allow scam artists to make it appear that they are calling from another phone number -- a useful trick that enables them to drain credit accounts and pose as banks or other trusted authorities, according to online fraud experts.

"It's like you've handed people an entire phone network," said Lance James, who as chief technology officer of Secure Science Corp. sees such scams on a daily basis.

The emerging scams underline the lower level of security protecting voice over IP. Traditional phone networks operate over dedicated equipment that is difficult for outsiders to penetrate. But because VoIP calls travel over the Internet, they cost much less -- but are vulnerable to the same security problems that plague e-mail and the Web. Internet worms that snarl online networks can render VoIP lines unusable, and experts at AT&T Corp. say VoIP conversations can be monitored or altered by outsiders.

Federal Trade Commission Chairman Deborah Platt Majoras

recently warned that unscrupulous telemarketers could use VoIP to blast huge numbers of voice messages to consumers, a technique known as SPIT, for "spam over Internet telephony."

All of these threats remain largely in the realm of theory, although Caller ID spoofing has emerged over the past six months as a useful tool for identity thieves and other scam artists, according to fraud experts.

Any reporter would scramble for a ringing phone that reads "White House media line" on its Caller ID display. But it's not the Bush administration on the line -- it's Ralph Echemendia, calling from a mobile phone on a remote Georgia highway. "You can see how this sort of thing could be used in a very malicious way," said Echemendia, a security instructor at the Intense School, a technology training company.

Caller ID spoofing is not prohibited by law, but the Federal Communications Commission requires telemarketers to identify themselves accurately, a spokeswoman said.

Echemendia built his own system to spoof calls, but several free or low-cost services allow even technical novices to falsify Caller ID information as well.

Debt collectors and private investigators use Camophone.com's 5-cents-per-call service to trick people into answering the phone, according to messages posted on a discussion board. Traveling salesmen say the service comes in handy when they want clients to return calls to the main office, rather than to their motel room.

James said criminal uses of Caller-ID spoofing have become more common.

Wire-transfer services like Western Union require customers to call from their home phone when they want to transfer money in an effort to deter fraud -- a barrier easily sidestepped by any identity thief using a Caller-ID spoofing service. Fraud rings can now transfer money directly out of stolen credit card accounts, rather than buying merchandise and reselling it, he said.

Western Union spokeswoman Danielle Periera said the company has no other way to verify that transfer requests are valid. "We try hard to stay one step ahead of them and recognize that scam artists are sophisticated and often change their schemes," she said.

Criminals can use Caller ID spoofing to listen to other people's voice mail, James said, especially when those accounts are not protected by passwords.

They also have begun to use the technology to make it appear that they are calling from a bank or other financial institution, said Dave Jevans, who chairs the Anti-Phishing Working Group, a banking industry task force. That helps them convince consumers to divulge account numbers, passwords and other sensitive information in a scam that echoes the "phishing" e-mails that have become common, he said.

VoIP industry pioneer Jeff Pulver, whose Free World Dialup service can be used to spoof calls, said he couldn't prevent abuse of his system. But the problem will likely recede as companies like VeriSign Inc. and NeuStar Inc. develop ways to verify online identities, he said. "We're not there yet, but we're going to get there," Pulver said.

Internet phones a hacking risk?

Low-cost services may attract identity thieves looking to turn stolen credit cards into cash.
March 18, 2005: 3:45 PM EST

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Internet phone services have drawn millions of users looking for rock-bottom rates. Now they're also attracting identity thieves looking to turn stolen credit cards into cash.

Some Internet phone services allow scam artists to make it appear that they are calling from another phone number -- a useful trick that enables them to drain credit accounts and pose as banks or other trusted authorities, online fraud experts say.

"It's like you've handed people an entire phone network," said Lance James, who as chief technology officer of Secure Science Corp. sees such scams on a daily basis.

The emerging scams underline the lower level of security protecting Voice Over Internet Protocol, or VOIP, the Int[illegible]t-calling standard that has upended the telecommunications industry over the past several years.

Traditional phone networks operate over dedicated equipment that is difficult for outsiders to penetrate. Because VOIP calls travel over the Internet, they cost much less but are vulnerable to the same security problems that plague e-mail and the Web.

Internet worms that snarl online networks can render VOIP lines unusable, and experts at AT&T (Research) say VOIP conversations can be monitored or altered by outsiders.

Federal Trade Commission Chairman Deborah Platt Majoras recently warned that unscrupulous telemarketers could use VOIP to blast huge numbers of voice messages to consumers, a technique

known as SPIT, for "spam over Internet telephony."

All of these threats remain largely in the realm of theory. Caller ID spoofing, on the other hand, has emerged over the past six months as a useful tool for identity thieves and other scam artists, according to fraud experts.

President Bush on the line

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what's this?

Caller-ID Spoofing: 'Appallingly Bad Idea'

By Erika Morphy
NewsFactor Network
September 2, 2004 1:26PM

A new software system that allows users to fool telephone caller-ID into displaying false numbers opens the door to a variety of abuses. "What an appallingly bad idea," says Graham Cluley of security firm Sophos.

COMPLETE STORY

A startup company has developed a software system that allows users to spoof a caller-ID number in order to trick the telephone-call recipient into answering the phone.

Developed by Star38, the service will be marketed solely to collection agencies, private investigators and the police, according to statements made by the company.

The system itself is said to be easy to use, with the user typing in the recipient's number and the number he or she would like to appear on the caller ID.

Appallingly Bad

Critics of the system -- and there are many, even outside the usual privacy/consumer-advocacy brigade -- find the technology frightening. "What an appallingly bad idea," says Graham Cluley, managing consultant for security and antivirus firm Sophos. "It reminds me of the hacker-driven spam and phishing scams that have taken over the Internet," he told NewsFactor.

In fact, it is a much worse form of deception than Internet fraud, says John Morris, staff counsel for the Center for Democracy & Technology, a Washington-based public-policy organization with a focus on technology.

Reasonable Expectation

"On the Internet, most people understand that the identity of someone who is sending an e-mail may easily be spoofed," Morris told NewsFactor. "But the phone, historically, has had a different set of expectations or assumptions. Most people that have Caller ID assume the number listed is accurate."

In news accounts, Star38 has emphasized its intent to limit the technology to the police, collection agencies and private investigators.

However, "there really isn't anything that will prevent this kind of technology from being used by other firms, such as telemarketers, now that it has been developed," Morris says, adding, "in this age of identity theft, we are skeptical that spoofing other phone numbers on Caller ID is a desirable development."

One scenario, Morris suggests, might be someone purporting to call from a distant relative's house, claiming the person had an accident.

Potential for Abuse

But even assuming that Star38 keeps the technology in the hands of collection agencies, private investigators and the police, there still would be cause for worry.

While the police may well have a legitimate need for the technology in criminal investigations, the potential for abuse by collection agencies and PIs is huge.

For example, there have been cases of stalkers retaining private investigators to find victims who went into hiding.

As for collection agencies, the potential for abuse is even wider. "We don't understand what purpose a legitimate collections agency would have in hiding its identity," Morris says.

The typical example, of course, is an agency that uses the system to get a phone-shy debtor to answer the call and coax him or her into paying the debt.

Collection agencies, though, have not entirely shed their less-than-upstanding practices since the passage of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act. Recently, one firm was fined for continually contacting and harassing a debtor's neighbors -- a practice clearly illegal under FDCP.

Over the Line

More often, though, when these agencies go over the line, it is a little more discreet.

Recently, a legal journal reported that a court found a collection agency had made false statements as to the time limit of a debt-discount offer; reportedly, the firm told the debtor she had 30 days to make a payment if she wanted to get a percentage taken off her debt. In truth there was no time limit of 30 days -- a deception prohibited by the law.

Which brings us back to Star38's latest contribution to the Internet age. In his first take on the system, Morris says he does not believe the system itself violates the tenets of FDCP. When it gets in the hands of the agencies, though, that may be a different story.

"I do believe we will see some deceptive practices on the part of the agencies that will violate the spirit of FDCP," he says.

Caller ID: Do you really know who's calling?

By Ben Charny CNET News.com August 30, 2004, 4:37 PM PT

Your Caller ID feature may no longer be telling the truth.

This week, a company is launching technology that will make it possible for someone to choose what appears on phones that have Caller ID, the feature for displaying identifying information about an incoming call.

It could be a different phone number, or even a few words, said Jason Jepson, founder of Star38, which has developed the commercial Caller ID spoofing service. Sales of Star38 will be limited to licensed private investigators and collection agencies, Jepson said. The service will cost $20 a month plus airtime charges.

The technique for replacing the usual bits of identifying information, such as ph

Caller ID Spoofing Service Debuts Sept. 1, 2004

Star38's service disguises who is making the call but will only be sold to collection agencies, private investigators, and law-enforcement personnel.
By Paul Travis
InformationWeek

A service introduced Wednesday can send misleading information to phones that display Caller ID information, which is used to identify who is placing a call before the called party answers the phone.

The service will only be sold to collection agencies, private investigators, and law-enforcement personnel, says Jason Jepson, founder and CEO of Star38. "This is not for public use," he says. "We just opened today and we've gotten 600 inquiries so far."

The service will let collection agencies and others avoid breaking laws that prohibit them from using phony phone numbers when they try to collect money, Jepson says. His service will provide them with a legitimate phone number--but one that can't be associated with the actual caller, he says.

Potential customers must go to the Star38 Web site and download an application. They must provide copies of business licenses and other proof that they are the types of businesses that Jepson wants to serve. Once that information is verified--a process that can take seven to 10 days--a customer is granted access to the Star38 service.

For a collection agency to use the service, it would log on to the Star38 server and telephone-switching system and fill out a form with the target's phone number. The Star38 system places the call and, if answered, automatically routes the call to the collection agency's call center or other specified phone number. If the target isn't home and calls back later, the call will be automatically routed to the collection agency's phone.

Jepson says he has purchased several phone numbers from local telephone companies; one of these is what pops up on the Caller ID screens used by many consumers to see who's calling them.

"We are providing collection agencies with another option," Jepson says. "Our service will completely document each call, including how long it took, when it was made, and data like that." The service costs $20 per month, plus 7 to 10 cents per minute for phone charges.

one number and name, that accompany inbound calls was discovered a few years ago by hackers. Privacy advocates fear that in the wrong hands, commercial services have the potential to be abused. For instance, telemarketers could use technologies similar to Star38's to trick people into answering a call that looks like a familiar phone number.

Star38 aims to overcome the stigma created by earlier pranksters and thieves. "Unfortunately, what's happened is some hackers have got to it first and gave it a bad name," Jepson said. "If they step back and see the forest through the trees, they'd realize what they are doing is hard and illegal. What we are doing is neither."

The company plans to explore other markets as well. For example, Jepson said he's begun talks with Musicphone, a San Francisco-based service that lets people send songs, along with personalized messages, to any kind of phone--cellular or standard.

Musicphone wants to use Star38's software to send even more information about certain artists, he said. A Musicphone representative could not immediately be rea

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CONGRESSMAN
Tim Murphy
Working For The 18th District Of Pennsylvania

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Biography

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At a young age, Tim Murphy learned that hard work is the key to success. He was one of eleven children, born to working class parents who stressed the importance of family, education and self-reliance.

He worked his way through college and graduate school, eventually earning a PhD in psychology. He started a family of his own, opened a small business, went to work at hospitals across Western Pennsylvania, consulted fo schools and Head Start, and taught at the University of Pittsburgh. He authored several publications, including tw books: the award-winning "The Angry Child," and "Overcoming Passive-Aggression." During this time, he becam widely known as "Dr. Tim" through regular appearances on local and national radio and television.

From 1997-2002 he served in the Pennsylvania State Senate. As an elected official, and one of very few with a health care background, he found that he could help more families. He penned the state's historic Patient Bill of Rights and increased funding for medical research, while consistently supporting responsible fiscal management government to promote job creation and reduce the tax burden on families.

He took this commitment to Congress when he began representing the people of the 18th district of Pennsylvani in 2003.

He got to work immediately in Washington. In just his second term, Congressman Murphy was named a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee. He has three subcommittee assignments: Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection; Energy and Air Quality; and Environment and Hazardous Materials. Tim quickly emerged a a leader among his peers and was elected by his colleagues to serve as President of the 2003 class. He also is recognized as a leader in Congress on mental health issues, and serves as Co-chair of both the Congressional Mental Health Caucus, and the 21st Century Healthcare Caucus.

During his tenure in the state Senate, he served as chair of the Pennsylvania Committee on Aging and Youth. He utilized this unique experience to ensure the recent Medicare Prescription Drug Act would work in conjunction wit Pennsylvania's PACE program. As a result, it is estimated that PACE will save up to $150 million over the next tw years.

Tim Murphy makes it a priority to bring together business and community leaders to focus on new and innovative ways to retrain our job force to better position Western Pennsylvania to face the challenges of the new world economy. Representing a district with a large number of veterans – and a member of the Sons of American Legic himself, he firmly supports our armed services and shows commitment to our veterans by working to expand benefits and improve services to veterans' health care.

Nan and Tim Murphy reside in Upper St. Clair with their daughter, Bevin who is currently attending college. They attend St. Thomas More Catholic Church in Bethel Park.

He earned a bachelors degree from Wheeling Jesuit University, a master's degree from Cleveland State University, and a his PhD from the University of Pittsburgh.

A fierce proponent of community involvement, he is a strong advocate of the Rails to Trails programs, an active participant in events for Habitat to Humanity and member of several Rotary Clubs and Chambers of Commerce.

CONGRESSMAN
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Veterans' Affairs

Rep. Murphy attends a hearing at the House Committee on Veteran's Affairs.

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Technology facilitates Caller ID spoofing

AP Associated Press

Rep. Tim Murphy, R-Penn., picks up his telephone handset in his office in the Cannon House Office building on Capital Hill, Wednesday, March 1, 2006 in Washington. Last fall, Murphy's office started getting phone calls from constituents who complained about receiving recorded phone messages that bad-mouthed Murphy.The constituents were especially upset that the messages appeared to come from the congressman's own office. At least, that's what Caller ID said. In the last few years, Caller ID spoofing has become much easier. Millions of people have Internet telephone equipment that can be set to make any number appear on a Caller ID system. (AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)

By Peter Svensson, AP Technology Writer | March 1, 2006

NEW YORK –Last fall, U.S. Rep. Tim Murphy's office started getting phone calls from constituents who complained about receiving recorded phone messages that bad-mouthed Murphy.

The constituents were especially upset that the messages appeared to come from the congressman's own office. At least, that's what Caller ID said.

"People thought we were making the calls," Murphy said.

The calls, which the Pennsylvania Republican estimated in the thousands, were apparently placed with fake Caller ID. That has been possible for a long time, but it generally required special hardware and technical savvy.

In the last few years, Caller ID spoofing has become much easier. Millions of people have Internet telephone equipment that can be set

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to make any number appear on a Caller ID system. And several Web sites have sprung up to provide Caller ID spoofing services, eliminating the need for any special hardware.

For instance, Spoofcard.com sells a virtual "calling card" for $10 that provides 60 minutes of talk time. The user dials a toll-free number, then keys in the destination number and the Caller ID number to display. The service also provides optional voice scrambling, to make the caller sound like someone of the opposite sex.

Caller ID spoofing appears to be legal, though many of its uses are not. The Federal Communications Commission has never investigated the issue, spokeswoman Rosemary Kimball said.

Lance James, chief scientist at security company Secure Science Corp., said Caller ID spoofing Web sites are used by people who buy stolen credit card numbers. They will call a service such as Western Union, setting Caller ID to appear to originate from the card holder's home, and use the credit card number to order cash transfers that they then pick up.

Exposing a similar vulnerability, Caller ID is used by credit-card companies to authenticate newly issued cards. The recipients are generally asked to call from their home phones to activate their cards. Some card companies maintain, however, that they use additional means to confirm new cards. And caller ID spoofing may not work for calls to 1-800 numbers, where the hardware can identify calls using a separate technology.

Two spoofing services contacted by The Associated Press, Spoofcard.com and Telespoof.com, did not return messages seeking comment about their business. However, some of the five or so Web sites in the business don't appear to be completely unscrupulous: James said he had been hired by a few of them, which he would not name, to help stop the Western Union scam.

Also, both Spoofcard.com and SpoofTel.com say they will surrender call logs to authorities in response to subpoenas. Spoofcard.com's site says the service is "intended for entertainment purposes only."

Telephone companies can trace calls to their origin regardless of the Caller ID information they carry, but the process is laborious, especially since a call may be carried by several companies before reaching its destination. The fragmented nature of the telephone network also makes it technically difficult for the carriers to prevent spoofing.

At Verizon Communications Inc., security manager John Lewandowski said the company often gets complaints about fake Caller ID after a telemarketer has spoofed his number to cover his tracks.

In a typical case, someone will be jarred in the middle of the night by repeated telemarketing calls. He checks Caller ID, calls the number -- which is false -- and starts "cussing out" the person at the other end of the line, Lewandowski said.

"And that poor guy was asleep. It wasn't him at all," Lewandowski said. The company investigates and tracks down the callers, he added.

Apart from fraud and telemarketing, Caller ID spoofing can be used

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for pranks and spying.

In one case, SWAT teams surrounded a building in New Brunswick, N.J., last year after police received a call from a woman who said she was being held hostage in an apartment. Caller ID was spoofed to appear to come from the apartment.

It's also easy to break into a cell phone voice mailbox using spoofing, because many systems are set to automatically grant entry to calls from the owner of the account. Stopping that requires setting a PIN code or password for the mailbox.

In a slightly more complicated fashion, spoofing was part of the technique used by a hacker who broke into Paris Hilton's cell-phone voicemail in 2004, according to security consultant Kevin Mitnick, who said he was citing hacking sources. The hacker apparently called the celebrity socialite posing as a technical-support person from the carrier, and lured the password from her.

That is known as a "pretext" call -- someone poses on the phone as a customer, employee or even a regulator to obtain personal information from companies and individuals. And indeed, while Spoofcard.com contends that its service is for "entertainment purposes," it also notes that "Private Investigators will find Caller ID spoofing valuable for pretext calls."

Robert Douglas, a privacy consultant in Colorado, testified before Congress last month that pretexters trade tips on finding the best spoofing services.

Pretexters generally claim their practices are legal, as long as they don't involve financial information. A bill introduced in the Senate would make it illegal to pose as someone else to obtain phone records, or to buy records from phone company insiders.

Douglas would like legislation against Caller ID spoofing as well, but there appears to be little interest in Washington.

"If I'm paying extra for Caller ID, which I do ... there should be some ability on my part to believe what I'm getting," Douglas said.

In Alaska, State Representative Bob Lynn has introduced a bill to make spoofing a misdemeanor. "False caller identification is more serious than pranks, or the annoyance of intrusive telemarketing," Lynn writes. "It facilitates fraud, and can be potentially deadly."

However, it is unclear what effect the bill would have. As Lynn notes, Caller ID is a federal issue. ■

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Quote

The only reason for the staff at Dave's iPAQ posting this is to protect the members of our community. We do not support any of these types of actions at all!

And if I purchase a throw away cell with 100minutes how are you going to track it back? That's basically how hackers do it.

Posted by **David Ciccone**, Wednesday, Feb. 23rd, 2005

The easy way to secure your voicemail from spoofed caller ID is to set it up to require you to enter your password every time.

David chose to copy and paste the ad copy directly from CovertCall and Telespoof's respective web sites. It should be noted that, even with spoofed caller ID, there is a record of the source and destination of every phone call that is placed on the US telephone network. There is no such thing as untracable phone calls.

Additionally, Telespoof was not the first company to market with caller ID spoofing.

Posted by **PI Phone**, Wednesday, Feb. 23rd, 2005

I used to have a Sanyo (5000?) cell phone years ago that allowed me to screen calls. When the phone rings, you would hit a side button that activated a local digital voice mail like introduction recording. It would appear to be a normal voice mail greating. (ot what ever you recorded) You could then interrupt to say hi after confirming it was actually someoen you want to talk to. (assuming they know to say something early, or while they are leaving a message) That's the only way I can think of to get around some of the potential headache. I havnt seen a phone with this feature though since then.

Posted by **s4czech**, Tuesday, Feb. 22nd, 2005

Everyone please note this is a very easy way to access voicemails. Paris Hilton's entire Tmobile voice mailbox is all over the internet. This could possibly be the way they got in.

Posted by **David Ciccone**, Tuesday, Feb. 22nd, 2005

Prank Calls Spook 'Other' Clintons

NORTH LITTLE ROCK, Ark. - Prank calls are nothing new for the famously named Bill Clinton of North Little Rock, but never as scary - or as high-tech - as this one.

Clinton, who is not related to the former president and Arkansas governor of the same name, was the victim of a dangerous p month when another person used a computer to hack into a caller-ID system and hijack Clinton's home number.

After hacking into a computer system in a process called "caller-ID spoofing," the as-yet unidentified caller made several calls home Jan. 29, telling Clinton's son he was going to disturb all the neighbors with calls that would appear to come from Clinto

The prankster then called police to make it look like it was Clinton calling, said he had a gun to someone's head and hung up armed officers to besiege Clinton's home.

Clinton had been sleeping, but his son had received the crank calls, including one saying the police were on the way. Clinton went outside to meet the police, who discovered that several calls were recorded on Clinton's own caller-ID system as having come from his own phone. That's when they realized somebody had hacked into the computer system and impersonated Clinton's telephone identification code.

Computer experts say that few people know about "spoofing" programs, which are available on the Internet and were developed so that telemarketers can bypass caller-ID systems. Coskun Bayrak of the computer science department at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock said wider knowledge of "spoofing" could encourage copycats, but could also pressure the software industry to develop improvements to cover the loopholes.

Clinton said he's received bomb threats and harassing telephone calls before, "presumably because his name is William Clinton and he lives in the Little Rock area," the police report said.

Police haven't found the culprit, but reviewed Clinton's phone records and found one suspicious call from Winterville, N.C., before the series of calls disguised as coming from Clinton's phone. The owner of t North Carolina told Winterville police that she too had been victimized by the crank caller.

The spoofer called again later the night of Jan. 29, after the police left, to see if the police had shown up. When Clinton menti an inkling the caller was from Winterville, the line went dead and the person hasn't called back, Clinton said.