

# WEDNESDAY MORNING: IF IT AIN'T BASEBALL, IT'S WINTER



[image: Jimmy Brown via Flickr]

It may be sunny and 90F degrees where you are, but it's still winter here. A winter storm warning was issued here based on a forecast 12 inches of snow and 35 mph winds out of the northeast off Lake Huron. For once, Marcy's on the lee side of this storm and won't be blessed with the worst of this system.

I'll cozy up in front of the fireplace and catch up on reading today, provided we don't have a power outage. Think I'll nap and dream of baseball season starting in roughly five weeks.

Before the snow drifts cover the driveway, let's take a look around.

**Hey Asus: Don't do as we do, just do as we say**  
Taiwanese computer and network equipment manufacturer Asus settled a suit brought by the Federal Trade Commission over Asus leaky routers. The devices' insecurities were exposed

when white hat hacker/s planted a text message routers informing their owners the devices were open to anyone who cared to look. Terms of the settlement included submitting to security auditing for 20 years.

What a ridiculous double standard: demand one manufacturer produce and sell secure products, while another government department demands another manufacturer build an insecurity.

### **Ads served to Android mobile devices leak like a sieve**

Researchers with the School of Computer Science at the Georgia Institute of Technology presented their work yesterday at 2016 Network and Distributed System Security Symposium, showing that a majority of ads not only matched the mobile user but revealed personal details:

- gender with 75 percent accuracy,
- parental status with 66 percent accuracy,
- age group with 54 percent accuracy, and
- could also predict income, political affiliation, marital status, with higher accuracy than random guesses.

Still some interesting work to be presented today before NDSS16 wraps, especially on Android security and social media user identity authentication.

### **RICO – not-so-suave – Volkswagen**

Automotive magazine Wards Auto straps on the kneepads for VW; just check this headline:

Diesel Reigns in Korea as Volkswagen Scandal Ebbs

“Ebbs”? Really? *Au contraire, mon frère*. This mess is just getting started. Note the latest class-action lawsuit filed in California, this time accusing VW and its subsidiaries Audi and Porsche as well as part supplier Bosch of

racketeering. Bosch has denied its role in the emissions controls defeat mechanism:

...The company has denied any involvement in the alleged fraud, saying it sold an engine control unit to Volkswagen, but that Volkswagen was responsible for calibrating the unit.

The scandal's only just getting going when we don't know who did what and when.

Worth noting Wards' breathless excitement about VW passenger diesel sales uptick in South Korea. But then Wards ignores South Korea's completely different emissions standards as well as the specifics in promotions for that market. Details, details...

#### **Splash and dash**

- Sony Pictures' hackers still on the prowl (WaPo)  
It's curious how the researchers aren't willing to pin the ongoing work on North Korea.
- Apple iPhone owners and privacy groups held 50 rally events yesterday (Mac Rumors)  
Gee, Mr. Gates, when's the last time Windows users and privacy groups rallied for Microsoft?
- BlackBerry launching a cybersecurity consultancy with UK acquisition (TechCrunch)  
Doesn't BB grok their relative security lies in part with their small market

share?

Don't miss Ed Walker's latest in his series on totalitarianism and Marcy's fresh exasperation with polling on FBI vs Apple. Wind's brisk out of the north, bringing the first wave of flurries. I'm off to check the gasoline in the snowblower and wax my snow shovels.