

ICANN hires hacker to keep Internet safe

April 29 2011



Rod Beckstrom, chief executive officer and president of Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), pictured in January 2011. The agency in charge of the world's Internet addresses on Thursday appointed veteran hacker Jeff Moss to be its chief of security.

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Moss, whose hacker name is Dark Tangent, is the founder of [Black Hat computer security](#) conferences as well as an infamous DefCon gathering of hackers that takes place annually in Las Vegas.

Moss will begin work Friday at the Washington, DC offices of the [Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers \(ICANN\)](#) as vice president and chief security officer.

"I can think of no one with a greater understanding of the security

threats facing Internet users and how best to defend against them than Jeff Moss," said ICANN chief executive Rod Beckstrom.

"He has the in-depth insider's knowledge that can only come from fighting in the trenches of the on-going war against [cyber threats](#)."

A self-described hacker for more than 20 years, Moss has a resume that includes stints at Secure Computing Corporation and in the security division of professional services firm Ernst & Young.

Moss is on the US Department of Homeland Security Advisory Council.

"I'm looking forward to bringing my skill sets to ICANN," Moss said.

"Its role in coordinating the global Internet addressing system means that it is positioned to become the leader in identifying and dealing with online threats to the Domain Name System that could affect two billion global [Internet users](#)," he continued.

Beckstrom joined Moss at [Black Hat](#) in Las Vegas last year to announce a key upgrade to the Internet that promised to stop cyber criminals from using fake websites that dupe people into downloading viruses or revealing personal data.

ICANN teamed with online security services firm VeriSign and the US Department of Commerce to give websites encrypted identification to prove they are legitimate.

The Domain Name System [Security](#) Extensions, referred to as DNSSEC, basically adds a secret, identifying code to each website address.

The domain name system is where the world's [Internet addresses](#) are registered and plays a key role in enabling computers around the world

to speak with one another online.

"The global threats to the Internet's Domain Name System are in essence the digital cold war of the new millennium," said Merlin Hay, member of the British House of Lords and chairman of the Information Society Alliance.

"To win this war we need someone like Jeff Moss who understands the hacker's mindset and has the international experience to grasp that today's online attacks can come from just about anywhere on the planet."

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Citation: ICANN hires hacker to keep Internet safe (2011, April 29) retrieved 8 September 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-04-icann-hires-hacker-internet-safe.html>

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