

# How do we fight the war against cyber terrorism?

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The Internet has no borders, no universal legislation, and although highly social and distributed is not represented by cooperation across the globe. Given those characteristics how might nations make their plans for counter terrorism in cyberspace as active online as they are in the everyday world? A collaboration between researchers in the US and Iran hoped to address that issue and its findings are published this month in the *International Journal of Internet Technology and Secured Transactions*.

Incidence of online crime has grown considerably in recent years, with terms such as malware, Trojans, bot-nets and phishing attacks entering the common vernacular. There has also been a significant increase in activity that might at best be described as international commercial sabotage but that some would label more sensationally as cyber-terrorism. Much of the illicit activity that leads to internet outages, malware infections and other virtual atrocities are being carried out with purely criminal intent. However, there are alleged attacks orchestrated by whole nations against other countries, corporations and organizations that might truly be described more accurately as a form of terrorism.

Arash Barfar from the University of South Florida in Tampa and Kiyana Zolfaghar and her colleague from the KN Toosi University of Technology in Tehran, suggest that the first step that must be taken to surmount the barriers of failed cooperation and legislation is to organize national efforts to use "web mining" techniques and "honeypots" to wheedle out cyber-terrorists before they attack.

"The internet is a very important channel not only for communication, but also for searching information and for doing business, the pattern of counter terrorism should efficiently reflect that," the team says. They have now developed a framework that would allow leaders to develop and use the necessary tools to trace cyber terrorists effectively in real-time and to make arrests before any potentially debilitating attack were to take place.

**More information:** "A framework for cyber war against international terrorism" in *Internet Technology and Secured Transactions*, 2011, 3, 29-39

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