Hunting IT professionals on the dark web

Come to the dark side

kaspersky

2023

Key outcomes

We are publishing the results of a study on the dark web job market based on information from various cybercriminals sites operating on the dark web.

We selected 155 dark web forums that contained job ads and job-related discussions in the period from January 2020 through June 2022. We analyzed only those ads which contained information about a long-term engagement or a full-time job.

Our study covers the peculiarities of this kind of employment, terms, candidate selection criteria, and compensation levels as well as the unique features of the most popular IT jobs on the dark web.

800+
More than 800 ads analyzed
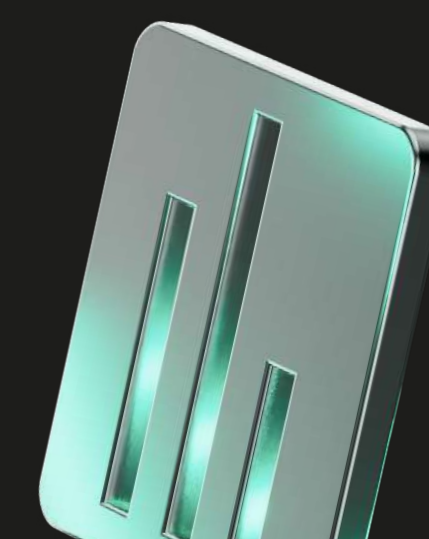
■ Resume — 26%
■ Jobs — 74%

$1,300–4,000
IT professionals' median monthly income

March 2020
peak number of ads posted

Major employer

Hacker teams and APT groups looking for those capable of developing and spreading malware code, building and maintaining IT infrastructure, and so on.
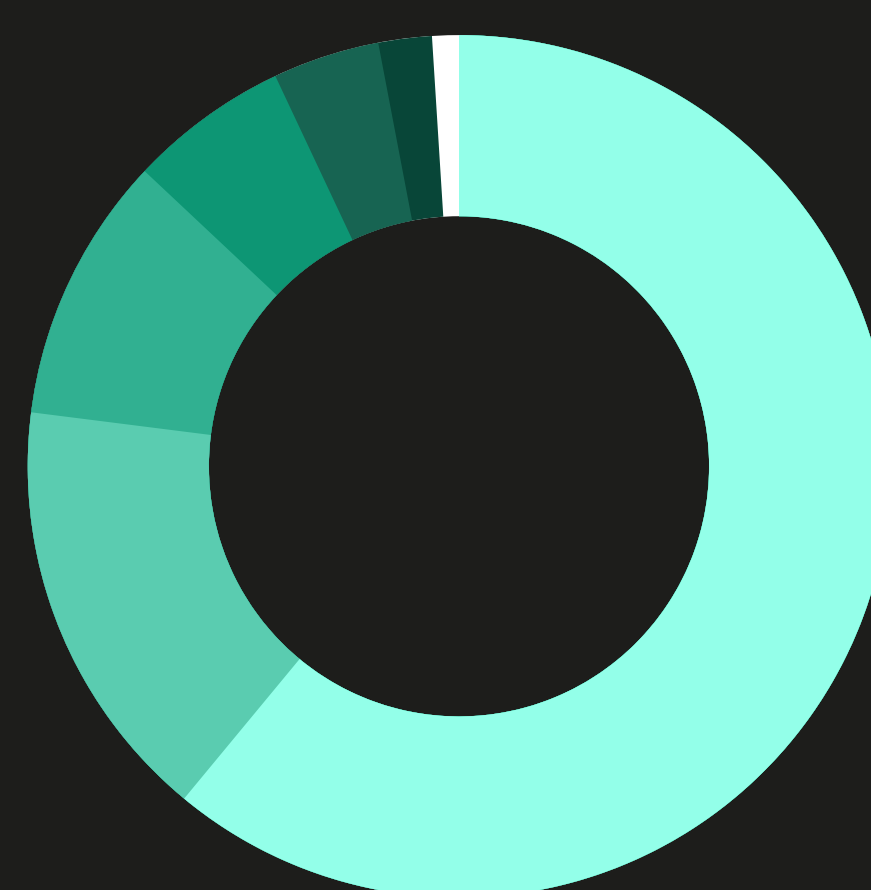
Highest-paying jobs

Developers topped the list of the best-paid dark web IT jobs: their monthly salaries may go as high as $20,000. **The highest median salaries** at $4,000 were offered in ads for **reverse engineers**.

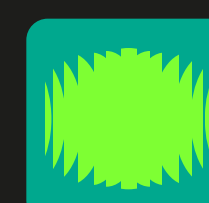## Top in-demand specialists

Job ads seeking **developers** are the most frequent ones at 61% of the total.

■ Developers — 61%
■ Attackers — 16%
■ Designers — 10%
■ IT administrators — 6%
■ Reverse engineers — 4%
■ Analysts — 2%
□ Testers — 1%

kaspersky

Digital Footprint Intelligence

Underground job market

The dark web is a collective name for a variety of websites and marketplaces that bring together individuals willing to engage in illicit or shady activities. Dark web forums contain ads for selling and buying stolen data, offers to code malware and hack websites, posts seeking like-minded individuals to participate in attacks on companies, and many more.

Just as any other business, cybercrime needs labor. New team members to participate in cyberattacks and other illegal activities are recruited right where the business is done – on the dark web. Most dark web employers offer semi-legal and illegal jobs, but there are ads with perfectly legal job offers that comply with national laws.

Offers of semi-legal and illegal jobs come from hacker groups, among others. Cybercrooks need a staff of professionals with specific skills to penetrate the infrastructure of an organization, steal confidential data, or encrypt the system for subsequent extortion.

Attack team coordination diagram

Dark web

- Internal team communications

- Customer communications

- Search for contractors, tools, and data

- Selling data, tools, and accesses

< Manager >
Coordinates the team

APT group

Attacker
Performs initial infrastructure compromise and attack development

Developer
Creates malware and tools

Reverse engineer
Reverse-engineers tools and creates new derived ones

Analyst
Gathers information for attack planning and processes stolen data

Designer
Creates fake websites and phishing emails

Tester
Debugs malware and evades protective measures

IT administrator
Configures and maintains the group's IT infrastructure, and controls hacked networks

kaspersky

Illegal activity

People may have several reasons for going to a dark web site to look for a job. Many are drawn by expectations of easy money and large financial gain. Most times, this is only an illusion. Salaries offered on the dark web are seldom significantly higher than those you can earn legally. Moreover, the level of compensation depends on your experience, talent, and willingness to invest your energy into work. Nevertheless, unhappy with their pay, a substantial percentage of employees in the legitimate economy quit their jobs to find similar employment on the dark web market. Changes on the market, layoffs, and pay cuts, too, often prompt them to look for a job on cybercrime websites.

Other factors are a lack of certain candidate requirements, such as a higher education, military service record, absence of prior convictions, and so on. Legal age is the main requirements that many ads have in common. Dark web jobs look attractive to freelancers and remote workers because there is no office they have to show up in, and they can remain digital nomads. Candidates are attracted by a large degree of freedom offered on the dark web: you can take as many days off as you want, there is no dress code, and you are free to choose any schedule, tasks and scope of work.

Another reason why people look for a job on the dark web is poor awareness of possible consequences or a flippant attitude to those. Working with underground teams, let alone cybercrime groups, poses serious risks: members can be deanonymized and prosecuted, and even getting paid is not a guarantee.

Ads with potentially legal job offers comply with national laws. An example is creating IT learning courses.

Sketchy employment arrangements can border on the illegal and sometimes go against the law. An example of a dubious job is selling questionable drugs for profit on fraudulent websites.

Dirty jobs are illegal and often present a criminal offense. An individual engaged in these can be prosecuted and jailed if caught. Fraudulent schemes or hacking websites, social network accounts and corporate IT infrastructure all qualify as dirty jobs.
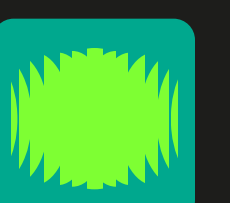
Example of a resume posting

Looking for a Job [SE / REFUND / or Something New] ...

I'm free for 12 hours daily, ready to learn as i learn so fast, have experience with SE (Fitbit, Logitech, DELL) I can do any other type of work even illegal work

PM me leave ur Discord.

Jountaa 16 April 2020

Dark web job market statistics

To analyze the state of the dark web job market in January 2020 through June 2022, we gathered statistics on messages that mentioned employment, posted on 155 dark web forums. Messages were selected from forum sections on any jobs, not necessarily those in IT.

A total of roughly 200,000 employment-related ads were posted on the dark web forums during the period in question. The largest number of these, or 41% of the total, were posted in 2020. Posting activity peaked in March 2020, possibly caused by a pandemic-related income drop experienced by part of the population.

The impact of the pandemic was especially noticeable on the CIS markets.

Some of the living in the region suffered from reduction of income, took a mandatory furlough, or lost their jobs altogether, which subsequently resulted in rising unemployment levels.

Some jobseekers lost all hope to find steady, legitimate employment and began to search on dark web forums, spawning a surge of resumes there. As a result, we observed the highest ad numbers, both from prospective employers and jobseekers, or 6% of the total, in March 2020.

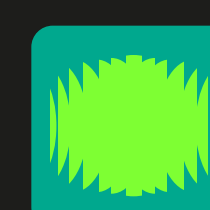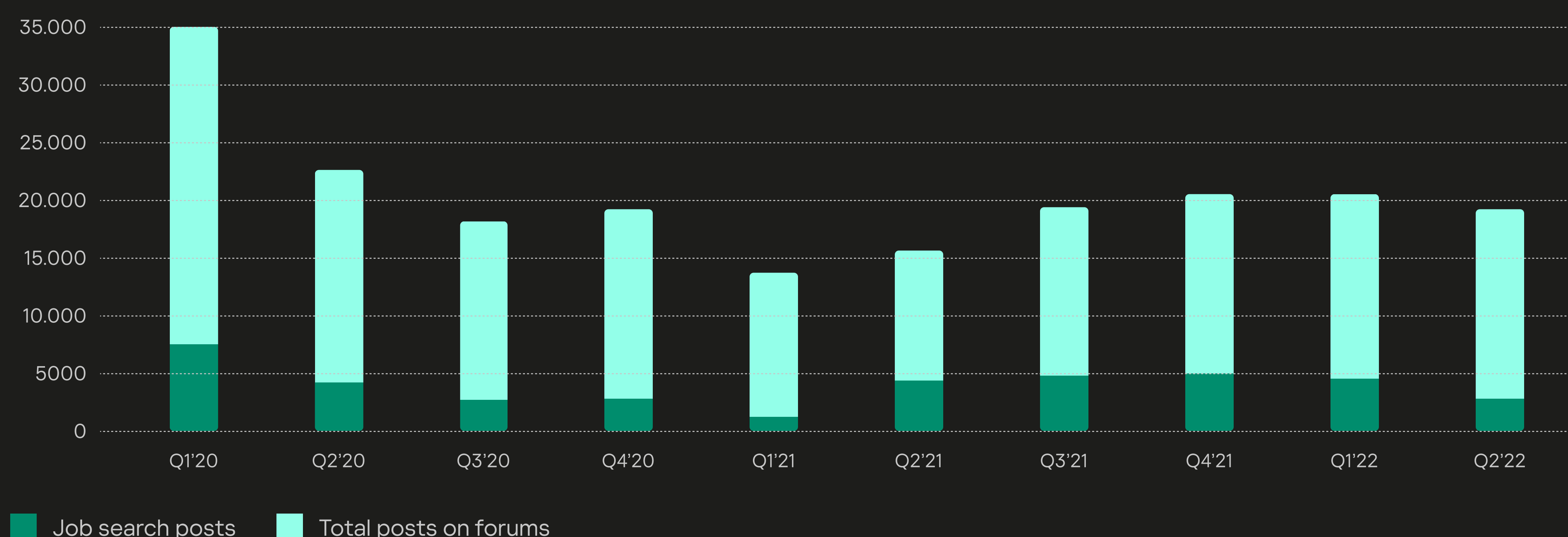The resume of a candidate who has found himself in a pinch

Looking To Get Hired   ···

So my family is in quarantine because of the corona (fake positive test said that my dad is positive, fuck this country). It's fucking us up tbh. I'm looking to get hired so I can get some money and help us out for at least month-2. Since we can't go outside for around a month, nobody can work. I'm willing to do many things and I can learn fast. I'm free daily for a few hours. I know some cracking and basic SE, willing to learn everything

🪪 Astralax 17 April 2020   ↩ 👍 🔗

Ad posting statistics by quarter, Q1 2020–Q2 2022

35.000		
30.000		
25.000		
20.000		
15.000		
10.000		
5000		
0	Q1'20 Q2'20 Q3'20 Q4'20 Q1'21 Q2'21 Q3'21 Q4'21 Q1'22 Q2'22	

■ Job search posts   ■ Total posts on forums

kaspersky

Posting dynamics on dark web job forums in 2020–2022

Legend: Total posts, Job search posts

Chart showing posting dynamics from jan 20 to may 22. Total posts peak at 13,632 in mar 20. Job search posts peak at 3,264.

X-axis labels: jan 20, mar 20, may 20, jul 20, sep 20, nov 20, jan 21, mar 21, may 21, jul 21, sep 21, nov 21, jan 22, mar 22, may 22

Y-axis: 0, 2,000, 4,000, 6,000, 8,000, 10,000, 12,000, 14,000
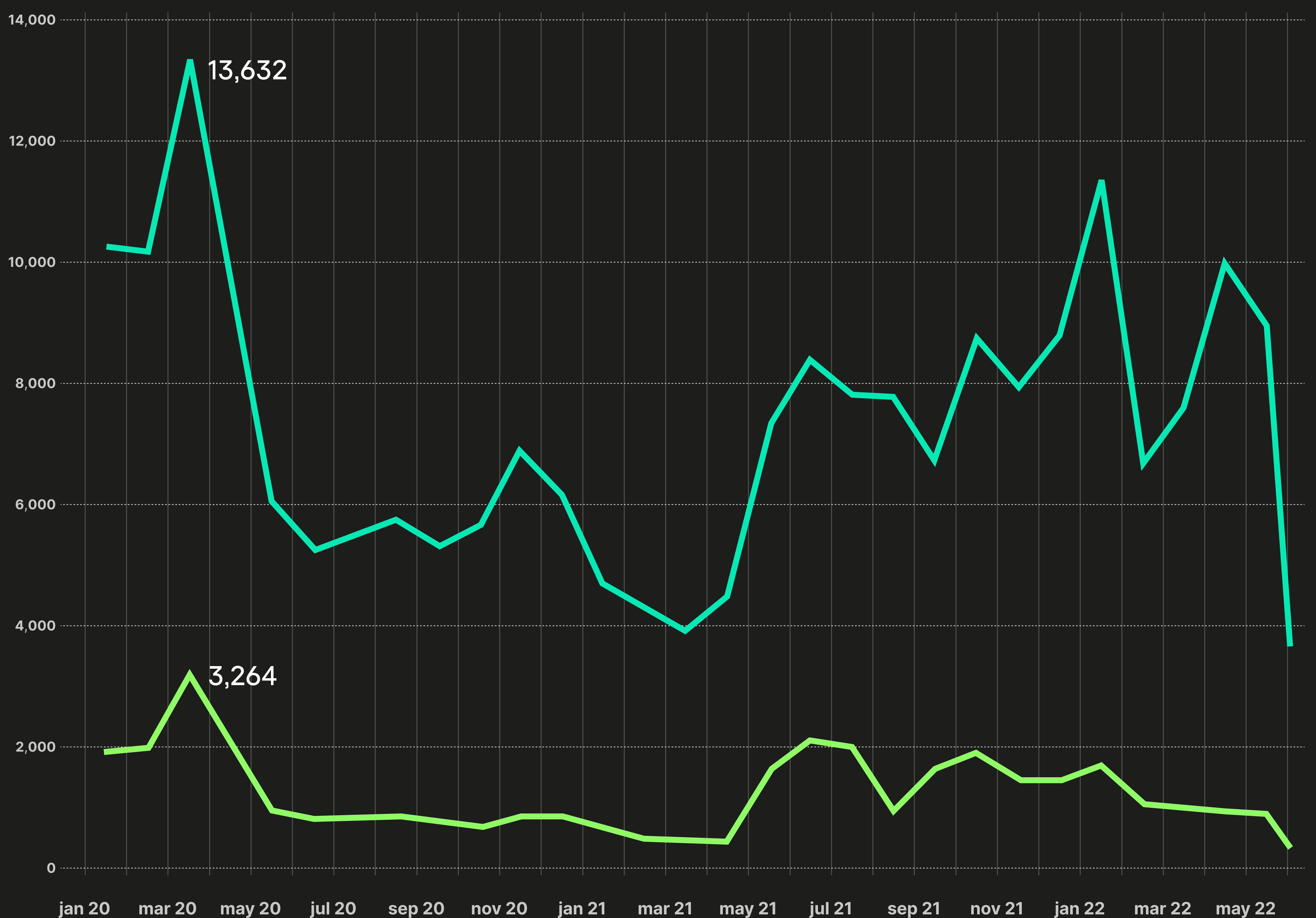
Ads seeking jobs were significantly fewer than those offering, **with just 17% of all ads we found related to employment**. The statistics suggest that jobseekers respond to job ads by prospective employers more frequently than they post resumes.

Resumes posted on dark web forums target diverse areas of expertise and job descriptions: from moderating Telegram channels to compromising corporate infrastructure. This study focused on IT jobs specifically. We analyzed 867 ads that contained specified keywords, 638 of the ads being vacancy postings and 229 being resumes.

kaspersky

Digital Footprint
Intelligence

Selection criteria

The methods of selecting IT professionals on the dark web market are much the same as those used by legitimate businesses. Employers similarly look for highly skilled workforce, so they seek to select the best candidates.

Job postings often mention test assignments, including paid ones, as well as interviews, probation periods, and other selection methods.

One job ad even contained a detailed description of the employee selection process. An applicant had to undergo several rounds of screening, test assignments involving encryption of malware executables and evasion of protective measures, and a probation period.

The absence of addictions, such as drugs and alcohol, is one of the requirements peculiar to the recruitment process on the dark web.

Example of a candidate selection flow

Схема отбора кандидатов следущая:

1. Даем Вам на крипт нашу тестовую дллку. Крипт должен быть FUD на скантайм и максимум 3 детекта незначительных AV на рантайме.
2. Если пункт 1 пройден, даем Вам на крипт боевой файл. Крипт должен быть FUD на скантайм, и продержаться чистым в течении 24 часов (без прогруза).
3. Если пункт 2 пройден, работаем с Вами в течении испытательного срока (2 недели), с оплатой $40 за крипт. С понедельника по пятницу до 13.00 по мск у нас должен быть работающий FUD dll/exe.

`Translation`

Candidate selection procedure:

1. We give you a test DLL to encrypt. Must be a FUD scantime encrypt with max 3 minor AV runtime detects.
2. If step 1 completed successfully, you get a live file to encrypt. Must be a FUD scantime encrypt, stay clean for 24 hours (no d/l).
3. If step 2 completed successfully, we put you on a trial period of two weeks for $40/encrypt. We expect a functional FUD DLL/EXE by 1 PM Moscow time every Monday through Friday.

tomp 02 December 2021

Selection criteria in dark web job postings

Test assignments — 82%

CV / Portfolio — 37%

Interviews — 26%

Probations — 2%

The percentages presented were calculated out of the total number of ads that clearly stated selection criteria.

Job posting that offers applicants a test assignment

Если Вас заинтересовала эта вакансия, вышлите свое резюме в пм - если ваша кандидатура нас заинтересует - мы вышлем оплачиваемое (20т.р.в бтц по курсу) тестовое задание.

`Translation`

PM us your resume if you're interested. We'll send the suitable candidates a paid test assignment (20,000 rub in BTC at current rate).

IT_Work 10 June 2021
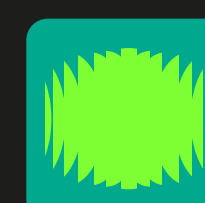
Employment terms

Employers on the dark web seek to attract applicants by offering favorable terms of employment, among other things. The most frequently mentioned advantages included remote work (45%), full-time employment (34%), and flextime (33%).

That being said, remote work is a necessity rather than an attractive offer on the dark web, as anonymity is key in the world of cybercrime. You can also come across paid time off, paid sick leaves, and even a friendly team listed among the terms of employment.
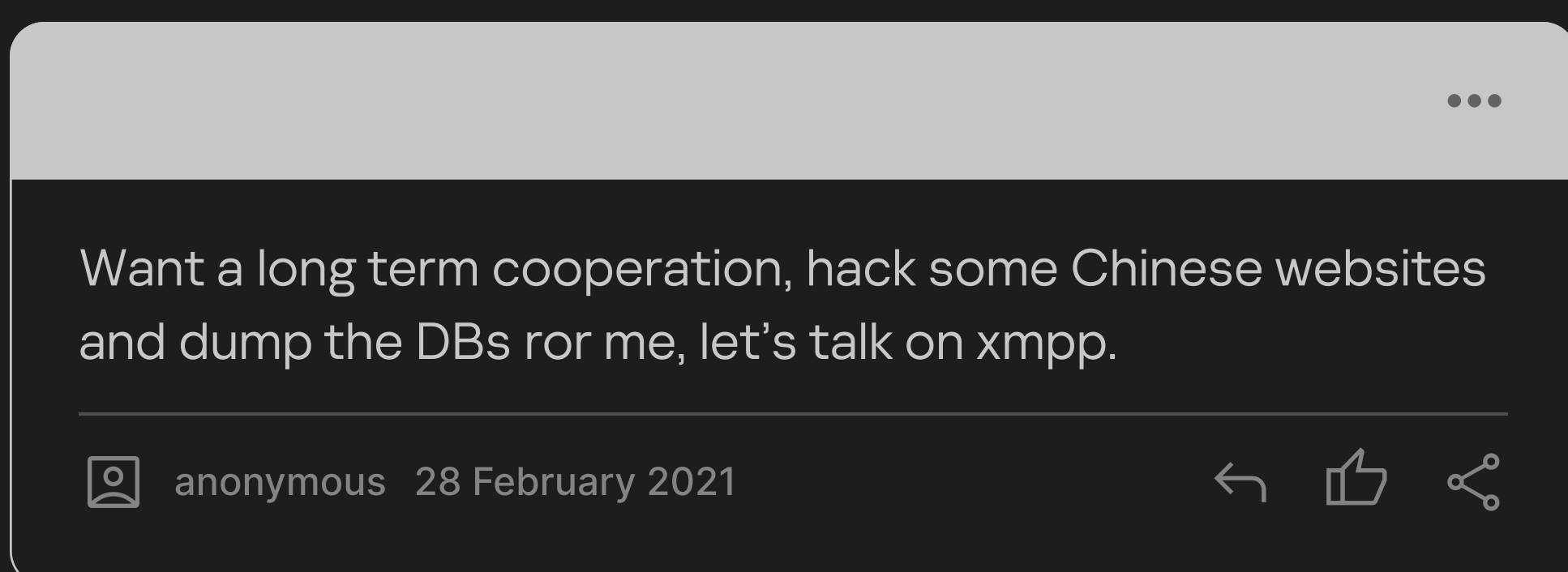
Cybercrime groups, who look for the most highly skilled professionals, offer the best terms, including prospects of promotion and incentive plans.

These groups may conduct performance reviews as did Conti. The reviews may result in the employee receiving a bonus or being fined due to unproductivity. On top of that, some underground organizations run employee referral programs offering bonuses to those who have successfully engaged new workers.

Similarly to the legitimate job market, dark web employers offer various work arrangements: full time, part time, traineeships, business relationships, partnerships, or team membership.

The absence of a legally executed employment contract is the key differentiator between the dark web and the legitimate job market. This is not to say that you never come across perfectly legal job ads on the dark web. For instance, we discovered several ads seeking a developer for a well-known Russian bank and mentioning a legally executed contract and voluntary health insurance.

Employment terms in dark web job postings

Remote working — 45%

Full-time employment — 34%

Flexible schedule — 33%

Fixed, promptly paid salary — 10%

Part-time employment — 8%

Close-knit team — 8%

Paid vacation and sick leave — 8%

The percentages presented were calculated out of the total number of ads that clearly stated the terms of employment

Employment terms in a dark web job posting

···

Условия: Мы предлагаем Вам своевременную зарплату. Уровень зарплаты определяется по итогам тестового задания и собеседования (от $2000 и выше). Работа полностью удаленная, 5 дней в неделю, сб и вс выходные. Оплачиваемый отпуск. БЕЗ оформления по ТК. У нас в условиях есть постоянный рост - на каждый успех вы получаете постоянную прибавку плюс мгновенный бонус

Translation **Terms:**

Paychecks on time. Pay rate ($2000 and up) to be fixed after successful test assignment and interview

- Fully REMOTE, 5 days/week, Sat and Sun off.
- PTO
- NO formal employment contract
- We offer a continuous increase in pay: with each successful assignment, you get a raise and an instant bonus

IT work 11 June 2021

Job posting that suggests cooperation

···

Want a long term cooperation, hack some Chinese websites and dump the DBs ror me, let's talk on xmpp.

anonymous 28 February 2021

Digital Footprint
Intelligence

Levels of compensation

We analyzed more than 160 IT job ads that explicitly stated a salary. When reviewing the statistics, it is worth bearing in mind that dark web employers typically state rough salary figures. Many employers provide a pay range or a lower limit.

Your level of compensation may grow with time depending on how much effort you invest, your contribution, and how successful the business is on the whole. Compensation is typically indicated in dollars, but in practice work is often paid for in cryptocurrency.

The diagram below shows the minimum and maximum levels of compensation for selected IT jobs.

The most highly paid job at the time of the study was coding, commanding a maximum of $20,000 per month. However, the lower limit there was the smallest: just $200.

Job Median monthly salary

Attacker — $2,500

Developer — $2,000

Reverse engineer — $4,000

Analyst — $1,750

IT administrator — $1,500

Tester — $1,500

Designer — $1,300

Job posting that indicates a ballpark level of compensation

Team Member Required-Salary is $5000-$8500 a month

We are looking for a person to join our team to oversee basic administrative and recruitment tasks. Salary is $5000-$8500 a month via cryptocurrency. Must be capable of coding and have experience in web development, as some of your administrative tasks will include development. Must be motivated and give 100% commitment to the team.

Cx2MM 07 October 2021

IT pay ranges from dark web job ads

	0	5000	10.000	15.000	20.000
Developer					
Attacker					
Reverse engineer					
Tester					
Analyst					
IT administrator					
Designer					

■ Pay ranges (minimum - maximum levels)   ■ Median level

Salary levels expressed in Russian rubles were converted using the effective rate at the time of the study: 75 rubles per dollar.

kaspersky

Digital Footprint Intelligence
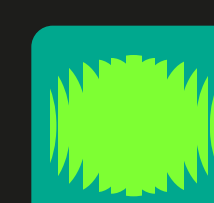
The median monthly salary of a reverse engineer was also notably high at $4,000.

Some dark web job ads promised levels of compensation much higher that the figures quoted above, but it included bonuses and commissions from successful projects, such as extorting a ransom from a compromised organization.

Not every job posting made the compensation statistics, as some looked suspicious or openly fraudulent.

Thus, a job ad on the dark web promised up to $100,000 per month to a successful pentesting candidate. Interestingly enough, the work was described as "legal."

Besides the usual hourly, daily, weekly, and monthly rates, there are other forms of compensation that serve as the base pay or complement it. You could come across job ads that offered wages to be paid for completing a job: hacking a website or creating a phishing web page.

Various performance-dependent commission was often promised in addition to the salary. For example, a pentester could be promised a monthly salary of $10,000 along with a percentage of the profits received from selling access to a compromised organization's infrastructure or confidential data, extortion, and other ways of monetizing the hack.

Candidates were often offered commission only. In several cases, no compensation of any kind was provided. Applicants were offered to work pro bono, for promised commission, or for a share of the profits in the future.

Example of offer with the highest salary for developers

Looking for a long term buisness partner ⋯

I'm working on a big project, I am looking for someone who has programming skills and is experienced, is very passionate about their work and will not get angry at me for my silly questions, ideal person would be a full stack web developer with hosting skills, willing to pay $20,000+, please message me for more information about what I am working on, how much you would be paid and more, my discord is

👤 TheAbsolution 11 January 2020

Example of an unpaid job ad

Looking for Front End Developer ⋯

Hello, I'm looking for a front end developer who would like to try and make some nice websites along with some profits to be made. Currently this is not a paying job, however as funds come available from the websites in the future we can discuss rates. A lot of the front end work I currently need is related to gaming projects. If you have some experience and would like to start some projects (php/html/nodejs) please add me on discord.

👤 0×676f64 15 November 2021
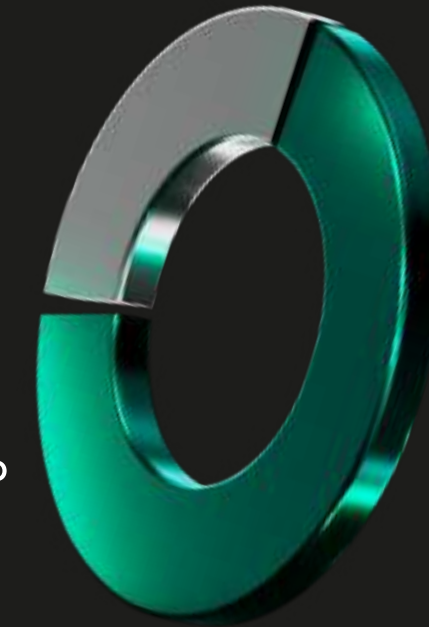
kaspersky

Digital Footprint Intelligence

Developer

Developers were the most in-demand type of professional on the dark web: they accounted for 61% of all the IT job ads that we found.

Total posts
553

- Resumes — 30%
- Jobs — 70%

Specialization

Web developer — 60%

Desktop application developer — 34%

Mobile developer — 6%

Game developer — 3%

Among those, web developer was the most sought-after specialization (60% of all ads). Web developers create various web products, the most popular being phishing pages and sites (admin panels, forums, etc). Also, in demand were malware coders. Their job description can include development of malware (Trojans, ransomware, stealers, backdoors, botnets, and other), along with creation and modification of attack tools.

Team members are selected against the employer's criteria listed in the job posting.

Job descriptions could resemble or completely match those offered by legitimate businesses.

The main requirements listed were development experience and programming language skills. Our analysis showed that most employers looked for PHP developers as evidenced by 20% of ads. Other two in-demand programming languages were JavaScript and C++.

Example of a job ad for a developer

Looking for an experienced developer for gambling bot!

I am looking for an experienced person to develop an idea I've had for awhile now. I will inform you more on the project if you show interest and enthusiasm.

Requirements: Experience with telegram bot development; Good communication with me (I love to hear updates and progress); able to correctly connect blockchain and btc transactions with bot credit; work efficiently (I would like bot done within a week if possible

Guccisocks 18 March 2020

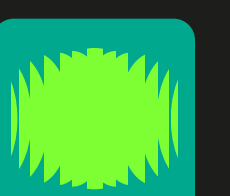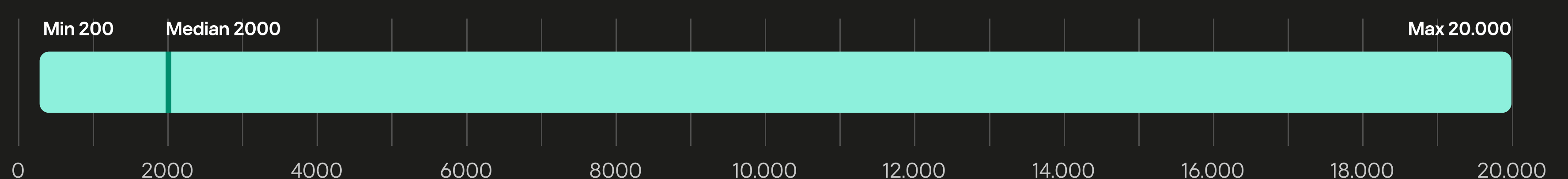## Five most popular programming languages

PHP — 20%

JavaScript — 20%

C++ — 19%

Python — 14%
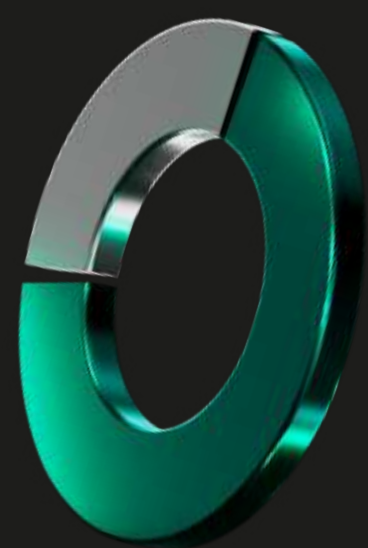
CSS — 10%

Levels of compensation, USD

Min 200 | Median 2000 | Max 20.000

0 — 2000 — 4000 — 6000 — 8000 — 10.000 — 12.000 — 14.000 — 16.000 — 18.000 — 20.000

kaspersky

Attacker

Job ads for attackers accounted for 16% of the total number of postings.

Total posts

150

- ■ Resumes — 30%
- ■ Jobs — 70%

Specialization

Network attacker — 48%

Web application attacker — 21%

Mobile device attacker — 5%

Unlike other specializations, the dark web hacker's job is markedly different from its closest legitimate approximation: the penetration tester.

Most of the jobs we found on the dark web were associated with compromising corporate infrastructure. The objectives of a hack are often ransomware infection, data theft, or stealing cash directly from accounts.

There are groups whose business is not developing attacks but rather selling access to compromised systems to other cybercriminals. Attackers are also often hired to hack web and mobile applications.

This job requires a command of appropriate tools, such as Cobalt Strike (mentioned in 71% of ads that specified attack tools), Metasploit (67%), vulnerability scanners (14%), Mimikatz (10%), and Empire (5%).

Example of a job ad seeking an attacker

Looking for active pentesters/red team operators individual's or teams to perform several tasks

Looking for pentester's and red teamers to complete certain tasks related to red team operation's on a daily basis. We will offer you everything needed to complete these tasks (whether it be a teamserver for cobalt or something else) and will help to achieve the goals faster if needed. HQ software with unique features will be used for the final stage of work. the rate of success is incredibly high due to creative ways of getting payouts. Keep in mind if you have skills we will appreciate them. PM for information and to discuss in depth about some details for for These positions on the team. Even if you do not feel like a possible candidate try it, we have other position's on the team.

External   25 September 2021

Requirements

Experience — 20%

Tools and frameworks — 19%
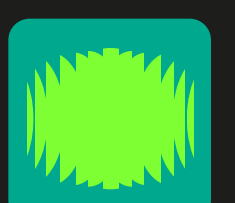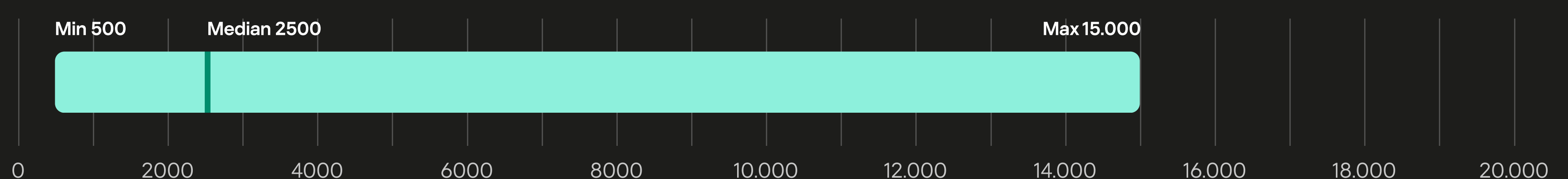
Active Directory attacks — 14%

Coding skills — 13%

Searching for web vulnerabilities — 6%

Methods of escalating privilege — 6%

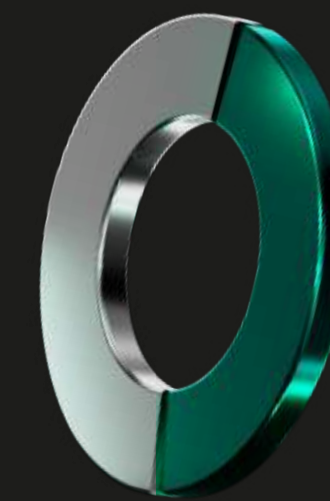Scripting languages — 3%

Levels of compensation, USD

Min 500   Median 2500   Max 15.000

0   2000   4000   6000   8000   10.000   12.000   14.000   16.000   18.000   20.000

kaspersky

Digital Footprint Intelligence

Designer

Designer jobs accounted for 10% of the ads we found for the period in question.

Total posts
115

- Resumes — 55%
- Jobs — 45%

Specialization

Web designer — 62%

UI/UX designer — 41%

Graphic designer — 17%

Creating phishing pages accounts for the bulk of designers' work on the dark web. These pages can be both regular replicas of popular websites (social networks, banking apps, and internet services) and pages created specifically for targeted attacks on organizations. Designers are also responsible for scam projects and phishing email. The goal is to make the product hard to distinguish from the real thing, because the greater the likeness, the higher the profits.

Web designers can be engaged to create the user interfaces of dark web forums, administration panels, marketplaces, and so on.

The key requirement for a designer is a portfolio of completed projects and sample works. Requirements often include graphic software expertise (Photoshop, Illustrator, Adobe XD, Figma).

Example of a job ad seeking a designer

[HIRING] Graphic Designer

Hiring Graphic Designer

Teamwork capability is required Must speak english Any European language is a plus Experience with Instagram related works are required Apply with your previous contents At least some degree of creative insight is preferred Long-term cooperation is possible if we are satisfied

monakS   27 September 2021

Requirements

Portfolio — 43%

Graphic software skills — 38%

Knowledge of standards — 38%

Fundamentals of web development — 6%

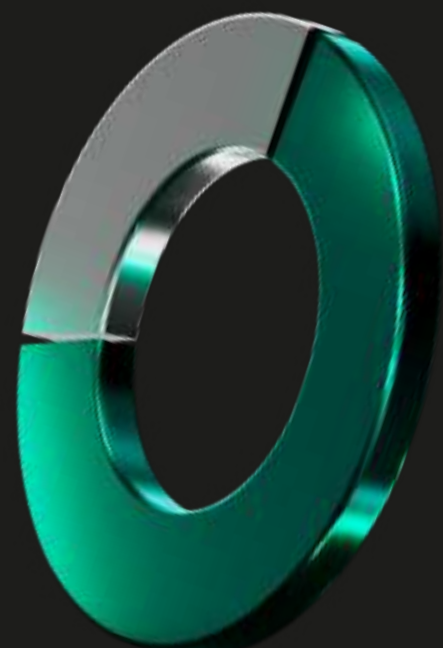Experience as a designer — 3%

Levels of compensation, USD

Min 1000   Max 2000

Median 1300

0   2000   4000   6000   8000   10.000   12.000   14.000   16.000   18.000   20.000

IT administrator

Six percent of the job postings we found were for administrators.

Total posts

52

- Resumes — 31%
- Jobs — 69%

Specialization

System administrator — 53%

Web administrator — 11%

DevOps engineer — 8%

NOC administrator — 3%

The lower-than-expected demand could be linked to other members of hacker groups sharing infrastructure administration duties. Besides, cybercriminals and hacker groups increasingly use cloud-based services, which are maintained by their providers.

Employers may specify exactly which type of administrator they are looking for. More than half of the job ads sought system administrators. DevOps, web admin and NOC admin jobs are less common. Administrators are needed to configure and maintain attack infrastructure, and to control victims' compromised networks.

Their job descriptions may include server maintenance, patch panel installation, purchasing of hosting services, proxy server set up, etc.

Administrators can be engaged to participate in "compromising the victim's infrastructure," because it takes certain knowledge and skills that these professionals have to gain access and fully compromise a system.

Example of a job ad for an IT administrator

salary work for basic coder

Hi. An administrator is required for a project business. the skills should fall under and hours online per day.

linux/apache/php/html

We will offer salary from starting.

PM

giggins 27 September 2021

Requirements

Operating systems — 47%

Networks, protocols, and routing — 31%

Programming languages — 28%

Virtualization — 28%

Active Directory, GPO — 22%

Levels of compensation, USD

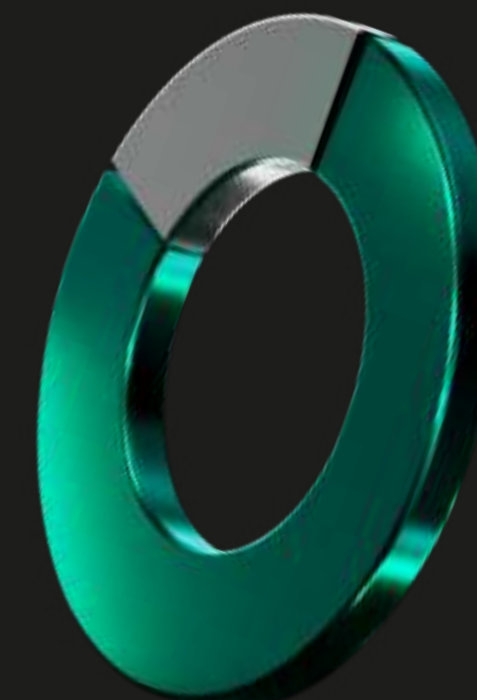Min 1000   Max 2000

Median 1500

0   2000   4000   6000   8000   10.000   12.000   14.000   16.000   18.000   20.000

Reverse engineer

4% of job ads posted in cybercrime communities were looking for reverse engineers.

Total posts

33

- Resumes - 21%
- Jobs - 79%

Specialization

Software reverse engineer — 31%

Mobile app reverse engineer — 31%

Traffic analyst — 15%

Embedded systems reverse engineer — 8%

Reverse engineers may accept one-off jobs to search for vulnerabilities in an application, or they may sell information about discovered vulnerabilities.

Searching and exploiting new vulnerabilities in popular hardware or software can be considered reverse engineers' key role as part of a team. They may also contribute to security solution analysis and tracking of security updates to look for bypassing methods.

Reverse engineering skills prove helpful when it comes to analyzing other hackers' tools for the purpose of modifying these or developing a new product, for example, malware or an attack tool.

Job experience appeared more frequently as a requirement for reverse engineers than it did for any other job. Possibly because a beginner's tasks can be handled by a coder, whereas dedicated reverse engineer roles are reserved for seniors.

Example of a job ad for a reverse engineer

Looking for Experienced Reverse Engineers / Crackers

Looking for experienced reverse engineers to join as a PARTNER. Estimated Payout / Month:

Basic: - Salary: USD 2,000 - Working Hours: Less than 3 hours a day. Most days, nothing needed to be done, but i'd recommend improving reverse engineering / cracking skills. Ie. practicing or developing tools to aid in such tasks. - Note*: I will be prioritizing applicants that are willing to exceed basic expectations. Extra: - Depending on the amount of effort put in, USD 30,000 - USD 60,000 (feel free to break the record) in profits per month. (Statistics based on history) - As for %-tage splits, discuss in private.

kfC5YdncP9   09 December 2020

Requirements
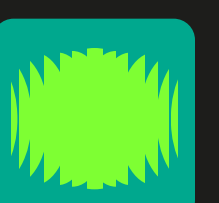
Reverse engineering experience — 38%

Programming languages — 38%

Knowledge of tools — 27%

Protocol/traffic analysis — 27%

Computer architecture — 23%

Levels of compensation, USD

Min 1000   Median 4000   Max 5000

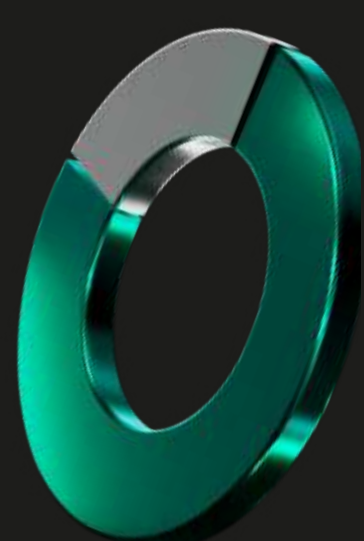0   2000   4000   6000   8000   10.000   12.000   14.000   16.000   18.000   20.000

Analyst

Analyst job postings are a rare sight on dark web marketplaces. They accounted only for 2% of the total job ads for the period in question.

Total posts

14

- ■ Resumes — 22%
- ■ Jobs — 78%

Specialization

Data analyst — 45%

Business analyst — 36%

OSINT analyst — 9%

Cybercrime groups may resort to help of business analyst while planning attacks – to gather information about potential victims based on data from open sources. In particular, the analyst obtains information about the company's resources, (primarily financial). In addition to that, information provided by the analyst may be used for designing an attack scheme and estimating the size of the ransom to demand.

In the final phase of an attack, cybercriminal may engage a data analyst. They are assigned to extract information of interest to the cybercriminals from large, often-unstructured, stolen datasets, and analyze this data.

Requirements for future team members may differ depending on the nature of the job. The most common ones are English proficiency (half of all job ads) and advanced computer skills.

Example of a job ad for a data analyst

OSINT researcher and hacker

• • •

I'm looking for somebody who can help me with OSINT analysis. Also I'm looking somebody who can help me with hacking/cracking servise. I pay pretty well but depends on skills. I prefer longterm cooperation, anonymity and professionally.

Please PM

Topmop 01 February 2020
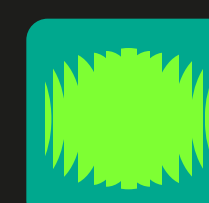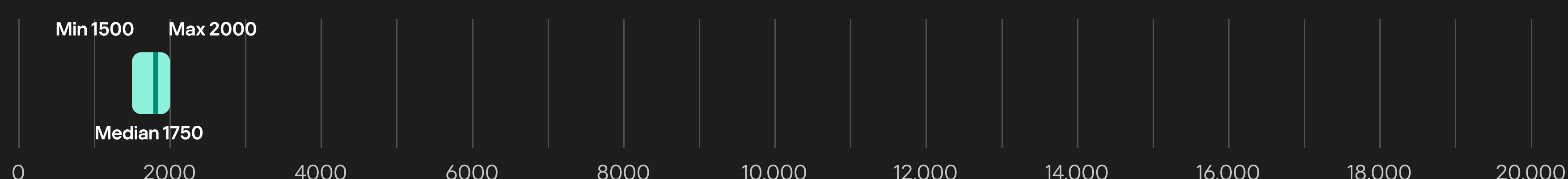
Requirements

English — 50%

Advanced computer user — 40%

Analytical mindset — 20%

Information extraction methods — 20%
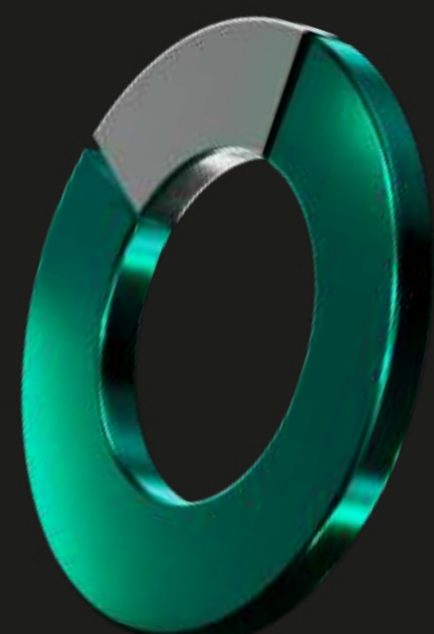
DBMS — 20%

Levels of compensation, USD

Min 1500   Max 2000

Median 1750

0   2000   4000   6000   8000   10.000   12.000   14.000   16.000   18.000   20.000

kaspersky

Digital Footprint Intelligence

Tester

Like analysts, testers are seldom sought on dark web job marketplaces (1%).

Total posts:
10

- Resumes — 20%
- Jobs — 80%

Specialization

Software tester — 56%

Web application tester — 22%

Mobile application tester — 11%

QA engineer — 11%

Testers in cybercrime communities are mostly tasked with testing malware (Trojans, stealers, checkers, bruters) and attack toolkits.

They may also test web resources, such as scam sites or phishing pages imitating popular banking web apps, and mobile apps, such as Trojans. Their tasks include checking the possibility of evading antivirus detection.

A mandatory requirement for any tester is the ability to install and configure a test environment on virtual machines running various operating systems (Windows, Linux, Android, or iOS).

Example of a job ad for a tester

WE ARE HIRING FOR HACKING TEAM(skilled)

Whats the work schedule?

- A specific 6 day workweek (managers 7 days), so thats ome number of staff is always available, thats what make them ready to handle issues immidiately.

- we also offer paid leaves(this will be rolled out once we have at least 3ransom payment). This is to stabilize our group and manage our cashflow. We also offer timely salaries +% of the ransom payment. We are looking for these kind of people listed below.

2- Tester:- People responsible for testing malicious codes (Malwares) against security tools and sometimes advice developers to bypass these antivirus

ramoon13 11 June 2022
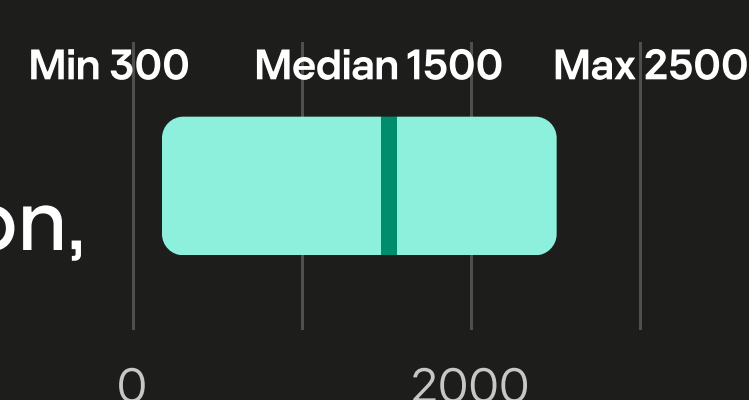
Requirements

Virtual machines — 56%

Windows administration — 22%

Competent computer user — 22%

Identifying software issues — 11%

Unix experience — 11%

Levels of compensation, USD

Min 300 Median 1500 Max 2500

0   2000   4000   6000   8000   10.000   12.000   14.000   16.000   18.000   20.000

Other IT jobs

There are many other jobs in IT, but they did not make the statistical summary due to ads for these being too rare. These other IT jobs on the dark web include various kinds of engineers and architects, support specialists, technical writers, forum moderators, and even executives and project managers.

Like any other businesses, dark web entrepreneurs are in need of marketing consultants, targetologists, SMM consultants, link builders, copywriters, and other type of professionals to grow and promote their projects and products.

On the dark web there are also ads for IT education jobs, namely, curriculum developers and instructors for popular Russian IT training centers and tutors for international educational platforms.

Finally, even dark web employers cannot do without HR. Business owners will sometimes handle recruitment duties themselves, but high-income teams may hire an HR specialist to do the job.

Example of a job ad for a manager

Anonymous managers wanted · · ·

Long-term decentralized project.

Managers wanted: good knowledge of cryptocurrencies and blockchains; good knowledge of Tails system (and Linux in general); rational open mind

Send your cv to one of the contacts. And please append small text on 4 topics: you, life, technologies, anonymous technologies. Anonymity is essential.

hmdfis   14 December 2020

Example of a job ad for an IT tutor

Computer Science Tutor(s)? Needed for Homework Completion Server · · ·

I am looking for a Computer Science Tutor, or Tutors for my homework completion service. We have been getting a lot of tickets lately and need new people to assist.

The subjects vary widely and can include networking, functional programming, computer architecture, automata, assembly, C++, JAVA, Haskell, Scheme, Lisp. Knowing everything is not required but having a good diversity of knowledge would be helpful.

ClaireLovely   09 December 2021

kaspersky

Digital Footprint Intelligence
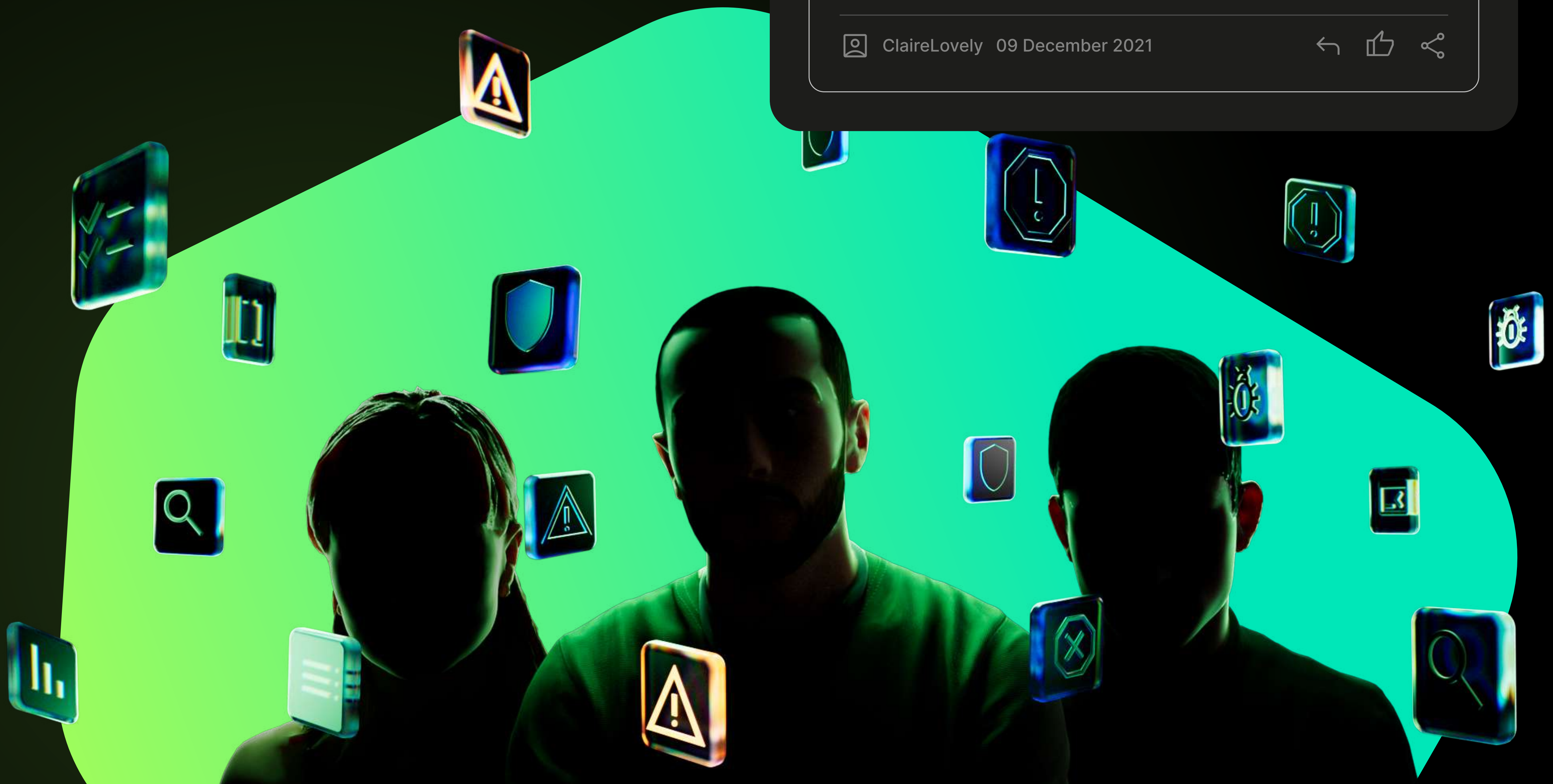
Takeaways

The dark web is a versatile platform that cybercriminals not only use for striking deals and spreading illegal information, but also for hiring members to their teams and groups.

The data provided in this report shows that demand for IT professionals is fairly high on cybercrime websites, with new team members often being salaried employees. It is interesting, too, that cybercrime communities use the same methods for recruiting new members as legitimate organizations, and job ads they post often resemble those published on regular recruitment sites.

The ads we analyzed also suggest that a substantial number of people are willing to engage in illicit or semilegal activities despite the accompanying risks. In particular, many turn to the shadow market for extra income in a crisis. Thus, the number of resumes on dark web sites surged as the pandemic broke out in March 2020. Although dark web jobs could be expected to pay higher than legitimate ones, we did not detect a significant difference between the median levels of IT professionals' compensation in the cybercriminal ecosystem and the legitimate job market.

Software development proved to be the most sought-after specialization, with 61% of all ads seeking developers. This could suggest that the complexity of cyberattacks is growing. The higher demand for developers could be explained by a need to create and configure new, more complex tools.

It is worth noting that the risks associated with working for a dark web employer still outweigh the benefits. The absence of a legally executed employment contract relieves employers of any responsibility. A worker could be left unpaid, framed or involved in a fraudulent scheme.

It is not worth forgetting the risks of being prosecuted, put on trial and imprisoned for the unlawful activities. The risks of cooperating with hacker groups are especially high, as deanonymization of their members is a priority for cybercrime investigation teams. The group may be exposed sooner or later, and its members, face jail time.

To inquire about threat monitoring services for your organization, please contact us at

dfi@kaspersky.com

kaspersky

Digital Footprint
Intelligence