

Black Hat EU 2013



Post Conference Report

Event Type: Regional Black Hat Event

Event Location: Amsterdam, Netherlands

Event Date: March 14 - 15 2013

Event Website: <http://www.blackhat.com/eu-13/>

Local Event Planners: Martin Knobloch

Author: Samantha Groves

Organization Role: OWASP Staff (Provided planning and event logistics support)

Report Date: March 18, 2013

Event Overview

Black Hat EU is a regional European conference put together by the UBM Tech global conference team. OWASP was a conference partner which meant we had a booth at the event that required volunteers to manage. Martin Knobloch, Anil Pazvant, Dennis Groves, and I all helped manage the booth during the two conference days.

Overall, the event was a success for OWASP. All of the volunteers were very attentive to our booth visitors, and the volunteers took the initiative to get people to our booth space. Our location was not the best as we were situated behind an elevator with the Arsenal team. Nevertheless, the volunteers creatively engaged the attendees, and our booth received far more visitors on the second day of the conference. By the end of the final day, all of our OWASP branded materials had been given away.

Event Successes

Event Success	Factors That Supported Success
OWASP representation was very strong at this event.	• Staff and experienced outreach event organizer in attendance.
Many in-depth conversations with partner decision makers.	• Smaller Black Hat regional event gave us access and opportunity to these individuals. • OWASP members with personal relationships to decision makers.

Provided a fantastic learning experience for OWASP staff. Great competitor analysis.	● Identification of successful coopetition partner to learn from. ● Ability to attend the event with the assistance of local, experienced OWASP event organizer .
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Recommended Areas for Improvement and Possible Solutions

Event Logistics

VENUE/HOTEL

I stayed at the Grand Krasnapolsky Hotel in the center of Amsterdam. The hotel was also the venue for Black Hat EU. The venue was very beautiful, and it was perfectly situated to all of the local attractions. The vicinity to the town center also gave attendees an opportunity to choose a cheaper hotel option close to the venue. This was very well received by many attendees.

VOLUNTEERS & EVENT STAFF

Martin Knobloch, Anil Pazvant, Dennis Groves, and I all helped manage the booth during the two conference days. Martin provided all of the branded materials, and the rest of the team worked on setting up the booth, talking to booth visitors, and showcasing our projects.

My role: I wanted to attend Black Hat EU to get a better idea of how Black Hat runs their conferences. Black Hat is a very well respected brand within the information security industry, and their conferences are known to be some of the best in the community. Overall, I gained a large amount of tacit knowledge by simply attending. For example, location is key for partners, sponsors, and showcasing projects. Volunteer engagement with attendees is key, and the project demos and videos showcased at our booth worked very well. Additionally, I was able to meet with the general manager of Black Hat, the CEO of Hack in the Box, and I was met with Martin about our upcoming AppSec conferences and his participation with the OWASP University Challenge and CTF.

Event Content

Talks/Briefings

I attended 4 talks during the conference. This gave me an opportunity to view the content itself and the speaker's talent/ability. One thing I realized after sitting through talks by 4 different speakers is that their content is incredibly engaging and very cutting edge. However, our OWASP speakers are far more talented at speaking/entertaining than the ones at Black Hat. I feel this is a very important insight as I recall a primary criticism of our speakers at AppSec Ireland was that the content seemed to be repeated. I feel we need to work on our content by making it more engaging and relevant to our audience.

On Site Meetings

CTF & University Challenge

Martin Knobloch and I were able to meet and talk about how to bring University Challenge and the Capture the Flag event modules to AppSec EU Research, USA, and Latam. Martin was concerned since Dirk, the local AppSec EU Research organizer, did not seem too keen on having CTF & University Challenge event modules at this year's AppSec EU. Dirk was concerned over space availability.

Due to these concerns, Martin and I developed a solution that Dirk felt more comfortable with. We proposed to have the OSS, CTF, and the University Challenge event modules share a room. This meant that we will likely have to omit the OPT for this AppSec, but I agreed to this arrangement if it meant that CTF and the University Challenge will have their space at the conference. We are waiting to hear back from Dirk with

logistics details.

Hack in the Box Partnership

I had the fantastic opportunity to meet with the CEO of Hack in the Box, Mr. Dhillon Kannabhiran. Martin kindly set up the meeting for us as Dhillon is a personal friend of his. We spoke about a possible partnership between OWASP and Hack in the Box. We currently have a booth for the Amsterdam show, and I negotiated a booth for us at the Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia event as well.

One very important topic we discussed is the difference in leadership between Western and Asian chapter leaders. Dhillon shared his frustration with the Malaysian and Singaporean OWASP chapters, and I feel it is very important to bring this up. He mentioned that he has offered OWASP a booth at the Kuala Lumpur, Hack in the Box event for a few years. However, the local OWASP chapter volunteers have not been able to represent OWASP very well at his conference. He let me know that the local chapters lacked knowledge on how to manage an outreach opportunity for OWASP, and he felt this was mostly due to the difference in culture.

We suggested developing an OWASP Malaysia and Singapore outreach project that would involve a workshop, and the co-running of the Hack in the Box booth by members of both chapters. Dhillon agreed that developing a workshop with more experienced leaders giving primary direction, will help the Malaysian and Singaporean chapters understand their responsibilities at similar outreach events. Moreover, Dhillon agreed that if we can organize an outreach project like this, that he will have no problem giving us another opportunity to reach the Asian audience by giving us a space at Hack in the Box. I am currently putting together a proposal for this project.

Black Hat USA Projects Showcase Partnership

I was able to meet with Trey Ford who is the General Manager of the Black Hat Conferences. He and I spoke about the possibility of OWASP participating at Black Hat USA with our projects as well as having a booth at the conference. He was very interested in the Open Source Showcase event module so I went ahead and sent him some more information on what it is, how we run it, and the different options available regarding its customizability. I am waiting to hear back from him regarding this opportunity.

Event Shortcoming	Recommended Solutions
More involvement with partner organizations regarding location of our booth.	• Have more employee involvement in the selection of booth location with local event organizers. • Remind OWASP local booth organizers about the importance of negotiating a good location for our OWASP booth.
We need more branded material.	• We are currently working on this with our marketing company. We need to update our banners and have more information on our membership benefits and projects.

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Recommended Action Items

- Continue to develop and plan logistics for CTF & University Challenge event modules for our AppSec conferences.
- Develop a Malaysian and Singaporean Chapter Outreach Program that will assist local event organizers with leadership and direct instruction on how to manage an OWASP outreach opportunities.
- Continue to keep in contact with Trey Ford regarding a partnership opportunity with Black Hat and our OWASP project event modules.
- Look into developing more engaging content for our OWASP speakers.

Black Hat EU Images

[More Images can be found here.](#)

