

# Spam on social networks

London Action Plan

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# OPTA

- **Independent Post and Telecommunications Authority**
  - Administrative law, founded 1997
  - Enforces Dutch Telecommunications law based on European directives
  - Enforces ban on spam/malware since 2004
  - Independent investigative body
  - Fines (€ 450.000 max per offence)
    - No jail sentence
    - No 'track record' for offenders
    - Fine decisions *are* published though

# If it walks like a duck...

- Traditional spam → botnets
- Targeted spam through other media
  - Bluetooth
  - SMS
  - Social networks
- Following: a case example



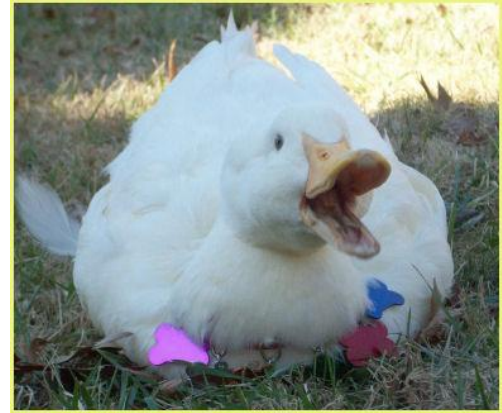
## ... swims like a duck...



1. Script the creation of about 26.000 fake accounts on the n° 1 Dutch social networking site using several foreign computers
2. Lock down the accounts and log in to them
3. Script sending 3.100.000 scraps to random social network site members, promoting your RPG game
4. Do all this in 9 days

# What was the message?

# ...and quacks like a duck...



- Is this spam according to Dutch law:
  - √ electronic message sent over a public communications network
  - √ commercial, charitable or idealistic content
  - √ sent to subscribers (non-legal persons) of a public telco service
  - √ sent without permission, sender identity or valid unsubscription method



## ...it just might be a duck

- *“but it’s not e-mail!”*
  - scraps are not sent to or stored in a ‘mailbox’
  - this tends to confuse law people
- *“scraps are public!”*
  - yes, but only visible after one logs in to the community site
- *“subscribers who are non-legal persons”*
  - very tough part of the investigation
  - investigating the 1300 complaints at social community site lead to 3 usable complaints for OPTA
  - that’s a 0,25% rate





## ...it just might be a duck

- New type of spam in the Netherlands
- Obviously, OPTA thinks this should be treated as spam
- Biggest challenge: find valid complaints
  - subscriber vs. user

questions?

سؤال

問題?

ερωτήσεις;

domande?

вопросы?

vragen?

perguntas?

¿preguntas?

kyseen?

質問か。

שאלתה

frågor

Fragen?