

We d-build it, but they didn't come

Decentralization
FOSDEM 26



ZeroTrust

- Zero Trust is basically cybersecurity saying:
- “I love you... but I still need to see your ID, your birth certificate, and a blood sample before you touch the Wi-Fi.”

How did everithing start?

- Chat-Control – media and society negligence
- PGP training for journalists
- Cypherpunks - Activist advocating widespread use of strong cryptography
- F/LOSS tools to fight back

What is the main challenge

- Our first step is done – the technology exists and it's good and it's working
- ...and only a few of us are using it?

**• How do we change
that?**

A task for you

- Our goal is to protect everyone»s communication with decentralized and privacy respecting tools that use strong encryption
- Our goal is adoption (ergo value)
- Look at the feedback I collected and think on how you can apply this and how this can be scaled to 1B people.
- Can your product/community help with that?

Research sources

- HackerNews ([link](#))
- Mastodon ([link](#))
- Sessions Messenger
- 1:1 conversations at various events
- Proprietary messaging networks

Results:

- I have asked my doctor to use N to respect my HIPPA rights.
- I just said to my friends, I am on N, if you want me, follow me.
- I set a WhatsApp Business auto responder that I moved to N

Results:

- „I think the key is to just make the best service. For the masses, **privacy and security** aren't selling points. Make the core product great, and then it happens to also be privacy respecting FOSS.
- Of all the FOSS software that has made inroads with the masses, none of it has been due to it being FOSS or the privacy. People don't use **VLC because it's FOSS**, they use it because a video file didn't play in the player they had, and VLC played it without and fuss.
- **Solve problems users have.** They don't see not being FOSS as a problem. So yes, make FOSS, but don't expect that to be your headline feature. Like it or not, very few people actually care.“

Results:

- „People will stay where their friends are. Having a fall-back solution that gives them more privacy or a way to remain in contact when their **primary means are down** can be useful at times. How vigilant people are about privacy will vary greatly by generation and by group interests.“
- „The main reason behind every switch was not the better privacy, but the greater product: features, that the mainstream alternative did not have.“

Results:

- Kids: They don't have phone numbers (or phones in many cases) but want to be included in family group chats. Once kids got in on it,N spread like wildfire among our extended family, relatives, inlaws and friends. Even a kid with [#downsyndrom e](#) onboarded their grandpa in seconds while I had earlier struggled to get him on another platform
- A great thing about N is that, unlike other clients, there's no search and discovery feature so kids do not stumble upon untrusted groups and strangers' profiles.

Results:

- The N was really useful for my friends where we were on a protest in Sofia against the government. It worked offline without the need of a cell connectivity.

Results:

 Delta Chat
@delta@chaos.social

⌚ Aug 13, 2025

What are the main obstacles for you to adopt usage of #deltachat apps with your families, friends or communities?

if you have other issues than the poll options please add to the replies. Oh, and those who are also living through heat waves: stay hydrated, and remind everyone else :)

Percentage	Obstacle
65%	can't get my folks to install another app
29%	lack of audio/video calls
7%	lack of Sealed-Sender/PQC/Forward-secrecy
36%	haven't used it (enough) myself yet

[Refresh](#) · 389 people · Closed

← 19 ↔ ☆ ⏙ ...



Hristo Hristov

@hristohristov@mastodon....

Jan 12

@bart @bogo In recent years, I have helped many people switch to Signal. At that time, few had heard of Signal.

Then I did the same with TeleGuard and Briar.

I have always given examples of the advantages of the platform. End-to-end encryption, and consequently, you don't have to connect your phone to a paid Alma for communication.

Session is great, but one reason is that the device you use powers your network with tokens. That's why it drains the battery.



adb

@adbenitez@mastodon.so...

Jan 11

@opensourceopenmind similarly, I got my family and friends to talk to me via #DeltaChat because I simply don't have #WhatsApp, #Telegram etc. in my phone, I never try to convince them talking about encryption or open source, I simply say "I don't use that apps, you can reach me in this one" and then it is about a practical problem and not ideological one, I don't go saying "you should uninstall whatsapp now" but they are more willing to respect/understand your own ideological decisions



Bogomil Shopov - Boro

@bogo

Jan 11

@quaithe was that an easy conversation? or it was more like, If you need me I am here?

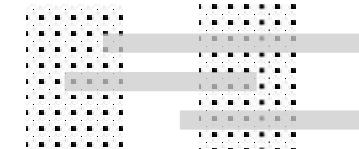


Eva Infeld

@quaithe@mastodon.social

Jan 11

@bogo Not too difficult, it helps to explain that it works well and people *do* care about the encryption and feel uncomfortable with, say, Facebook these days. The enshittification has done a lot of the legwork here. Also if you actually start and organise group chats they get into it fast, because there's a lot going on in a group chat.



A few ideas to think about

- If it feels **radical**, people won't trust it. If it feels like plumbing, it wins. You don't sell "encryption."
- Success is adoption, value and daily use
- UX must feel like something they already know. No ideology without convenience.
- Grandmas can use it and Developers can build on it.
- Move from privacy aware messaging to a larger public one : "This is like WhatsApp, but no company owns your messages."
- Pick one group, focus on it and share the success. Repeat and scale.

The One Thing Worth Remembering

No users

No decentralization.

Join my network!

I am cool :)

- fediverse/mastodon:
@bogo@hapyyr.com
- web: Talkweb.eu
- mail: bogomil@talkweb.eu (PGP)
- Sessions messenger session:
0531634331f5b6be12375bf4229412eed
3f2f3543cfe119df37e1b72c883143d4a

