**George Hotz Biography**

A person sitting in a chair with his hands up

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

**Introduction**

George Hotz, born on October 2, 1989, is an infamous software engineer, notorious for his work in jailbreaking and reverse engineering several high security devices such as the PlayStation 4 and the Samsung Galaxy S5. He has since abandoned those ventures and is now the Chief Research Scientist for his own tech start-up, comma.ai.

**Hacking and Jailbreaking**

From a young age, Hotz had a burning curiosity and aptitude for developing software. At the age of seventeen, he became the first person to remove the Sim lock on the iPhone, demonstrating just how talented he was at such a tender age. Two years later, he released ‘blackra1n’, a program that could jailbreak all iPhone and iPod touch devices running iOS 3.1.2. The program uses a bug in the USB code to allow unauthorised code to be executed. Hotz’s mischief only continued as he begun attempting to breach security of the PlayStation 3 towards the end of 2009. A month later, he released an exploit to the public which allowed read and write access to the machine’s system memory as well as hypervisor level access to the machine’s CPU. Hotz abandoned this endeavour following a lawsuit filed by Sony. It was revealed that Sony and Hotz had settled the lawsuit out of court, on the condition that Hotz would never again resume any hacking work on Sony products. All this work jailbreaking, and hacking is made even more impressive considering it was all achieved by the age of 21. However, he was not finished with his hacking antics just yet. Since Hotz was now forbidden to toy with any Sony products, he begun working on Android devices. In June 2014, he published a root exploit software hack for Samsung Galaxy S5 devices, which exploited an issue in the Futex subsystem that allowed for privilege escalation. The software hack was found to be compatible with other software devices such as the Nexus 5 and the Galaxy S4 Active. Following updates to the Android operating system that patched the source of the exploit, Hotz decided to abandon his hacking ways and joined Google.

**Career**

On July 16, 2014, Google hired Hotz to work on their Project Zero team. Project Zero is a team of security analysts tasked with finding zero-day vulnerabilities. Here he developed ‘Qira’ for dynamically analysing application binaries. At the beginning of 2015, Hotz was hired at a start-up called Vicarious, an artificial intelligence company that uses theorized computational principles of the brain to build software that can think and learn like a human, a stint that lasted six months.

**Comma.ai**

After years of moving from project to project and job to job, Hotz finally decided to setup his own start-up, comma.ai. Comma produces open-source driver assistance systems which can be installed into a car to provide adaptive cruise control and automated lane changing capabilities to one’s car. Comma.ai has continued to grow since its inception and has now released it’s third edition of its product ‘comma three’, which has three 1080p cameras with 120dB of dynamic range, two generations ahead of Tesla vehicles.

**Other Notable Achievements**

In 2013, Hotz began making hip hop music on his SoundCloud, tomcr00se. As of June 2021, he has made 28 original songs and covers. In February 2020, Hotz founded the cheapETH crypto currency, a fork of Ethereum with the intention to reduce ETH gas fees. The crypto currency is currently successful.

**Ending**

George Hotz has had a very successful career as a software engineer and has achieved so much in such a short period of time. He’s only 32 so I anticipate that we can expect far more from him and his future ventures with comma.ai. Perhaps he can be the one to rival Elon Musk in the self-driving car space. Either way, he is an important and inspirational software engineer of our time.