

CTF Write-up: Follow the Money (Part 2)

This challenge was a continuation of the 'Follow the Money' mission. The objective was to identify the town where the hacker known as 'N0TrustX' lives. Using OSINT techniques, social media analysis, and reverse image searches, I pieced together digital breadcrumbs leading to the final flag.

Initial Recon

The investigation began with the username 'N0TrustX'. I used the OSINT aggregation site 'whatsmyname.app', which cross-references usernames across multiple platforms. Three matches appeared: GitHub, Internet Archive, and X (Twitter). Since GitHub and the Archive had already been reviewed in the previous challenge, I focused on the X profile.

The Profile and Encoded Message

On the X profile (@N0TrustX), the bio contained a numeric sequence:

111 40 141 155 40 164 150 145 40 157 156 145 40 167 150 157 40 153 156 157 143
153 163

After decoding these numbers as ASCII (octal), the message read 'I am the one who knocks'. While this referenced the Breaking Bad character 'Walter White', it served primarily as a thematic misdirection. Further analysis of the posts revealed stronger leads.

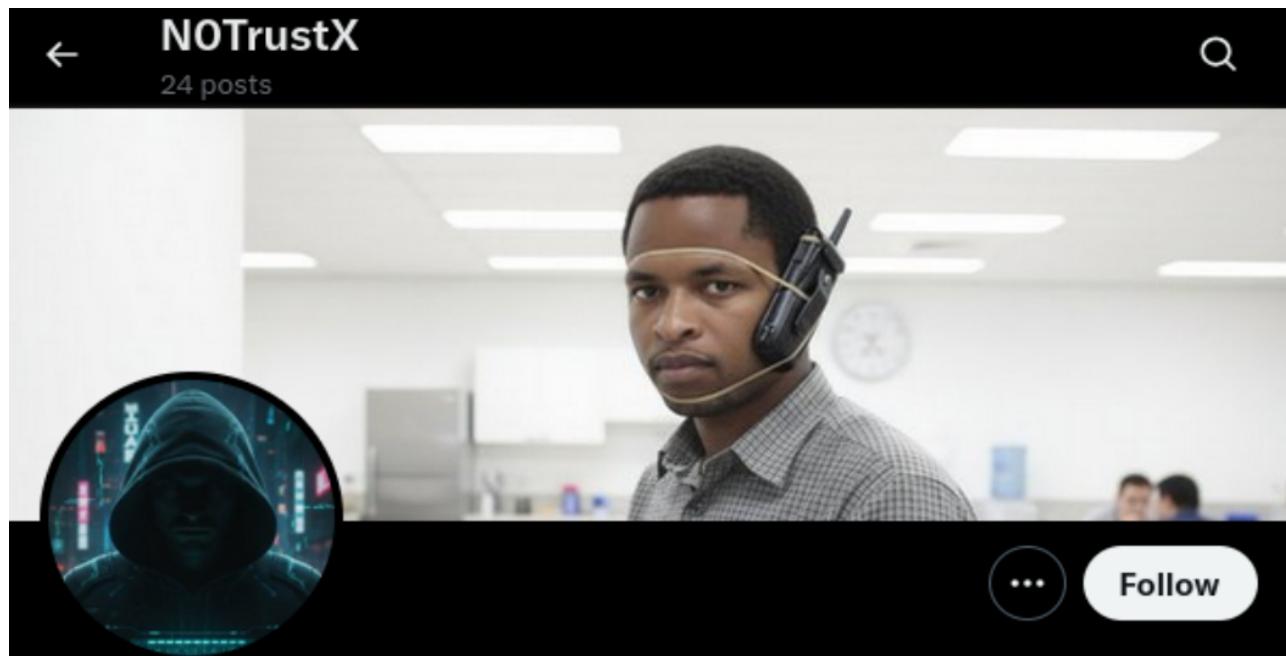
Analyzing Posts for Clues

Scrolling through the feed revealed recurring references to coffee ('Java') and working in 'this town'. Posts like 'Always review your local business' and 'Back to the grind' hinted at a coffee shop. Images showed quiet streets, brick sidewalks, and small-town storefronts. A reverse image search confirmed the location as Downtown Wytheville, Virginia.

Final Discovery and Flag

The mention of 'Java' and 'grind' led me to search for coffee shops in Wytheville. This resulted in finding 'The Grind' located at 155 E Main St, Wytheville, VA. Among the Google reviews, one by 'Jim Bossem' stood out — it included a direct CTF flag:

Evidence & Screenshots



N0TrustX
24 posts

N0TrustX
@N0TrustX

111 40 141 155 40 164 150 145 40 157 156 145 40 167 150 157 40 153 156 157 143
153 163



N0TrustX @N0TrustX · Oct 20
Always review your local business. Really helps them out. 🍔★★★★★

N0TrustX @N0TrustX · Oct 17
Working on some Java in this town. Pretty great Java

N0TrustX @N0TrustX · Oct 17
Anyway, back to the grind



NOTrustX @N0TrustX · Oct 4

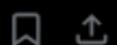
∅ ...

Just a quiet place. No one will know. No one is going to come looking.

1



412



NOTrustX @N0TrustX · Oct 5

∅ ...

Just perfect





NOTrustX @NOTrustX · Oct 4
love my film camera. Makes a vibe

0 ...



385



Jim Bossem
1 review · 1 photo



★★★★★ a week ago NEW

This place is fantastic! The staff is always great and friendly. Probably offering up the best java around! As a programmer I know how important Java is, haha!

Flag{this_is_good_java}

Food: 5

Service: 5

Atmosphere: 5

Conclusion

By combining social engineering awareness with practical OSINT tools, this challenge demonstrated the value of analytical reasoning. Through username tracking, pattern decoding, and location correlation, I confirmed that 'N0TrustX' is connected to Wytheville, Virginia. The final flag retrieved from a Google review concluded the investigation.

Flag: Flag{this_is_good_java}