MICHIGAN HACKERS

Build. Break. Repeat.

Wednesday, September 12, 12

Thank you everyone for coming. We are Michigan Hackers and this is our first full year as an org. Before I go into what we do...

What is hacking?

For a lot of people, hacking is what organizations like Anonymous and lulzsec do. For them hacking is the practice of compromising websites by exploiting security vulnerabilities. We will be doing various security events throughout the semester but in general,

These aren’t the hacks we’re looking for

this is not what we do

“Hacking just means **building something quickly** or **testing the boundaries** of what can be done.”

- Mark Zuckerberg

“Hacking means **exploring** the limits of what is possible, in a spirit of **playful cleverness**.”

- Richard Stallman

“‘Hacker’ connotes **mastery** in the most literal sense: someone who can make a computer do what he [or she] wants.

- Paul Graham

This is from Zuck’s letter to Facebook’s investors. Hacking is a culture of building. Facebook really adopts that culture. Instead of debating whether a feature is possible, or how something should be built, engineers are supposed to just build it so people can play with it before making decisions. People often say at Facebook, “Code wins arguments”

Hacking is fun. We play with technology, try things out and see what’s possible.

and hackers don’t accept things when they see a problem, they come up with creative solutions to get shit done

so basically..

Hackers make stuff

and that’s what we’re going to be doing this year. We’re going to be making a lot of stuff

Hackers create art

That could be a beautiful algorithm or a mario coin block (or maybe even a hot tub in BBB)

Hackers solve problems

Most importantly, when hackers see a problem, they fix it. Sometimes they use code, and sometimes they use a shit ton of duct tape.

An Illustrative Example

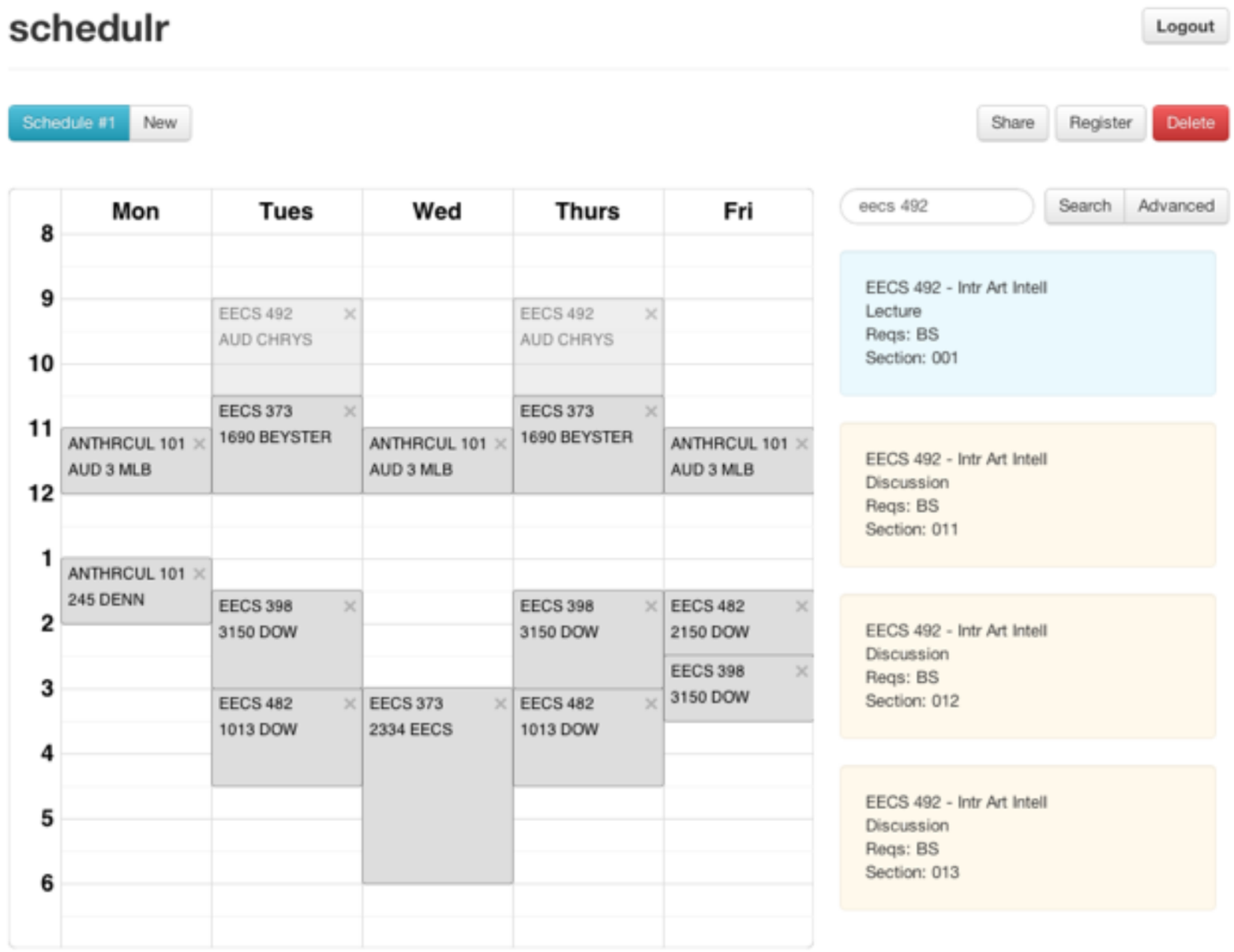
Problem: Planning a class schedule is hard

This was a problem I faced. Backpacking classes sucked. It involved running a series of searches on wolverine access. Each took about 20-30 seconds to do. I'd map out my weekly schedule on excel. It was awful. So I decided for my own sanity, to make something to make this easier for myself

Also a shameless plug

Solution: **Schedulr**

theschedulr.com



so I built schedulr a little while back. I basically took all the features I wanted in a scheduling app and built it. There's a really light weight search. My weekly calendar is always visible. It's built for me and I love using it. Turns out a bunch of my friends also liked it and now around 100 people use the site.

“That's pretty cool, Gaurav. I have a ton of ideas of how to solve problems.

But I don't know how to make stuff. What should I do?”

Spam CS students with vague emails about the new hottest idea that will make millions.

(oh god, please don't)

Learn to build stuff yourself!

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And that’s where we come in.

Michigan Hackers exists to foster a community of individuals at the University of Michigan who solve problems through the innovative use of technology.

This is our mission statement. We're bringing the hacker culture to Michigan

How?

in order to create this community and culture, we’re going to be doing a couple different things

Tech Talks

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Open to the public

Anyone can come to a tech talk. And even if you can’t come, we’ll upload videos of every talk we give so anyone can see them. To the best of our abilities, we’ll also upload slides and whatever else you might need to understand the talk.

By Students

We will be heavily pushing student-led tech talks. This is an opportunity for hackers to share what they know with the rest of michigan hackers community. If you're interested in giving a talk and think you have something valuable to share with michigan students, let us know.

By Companies

We also hope to bring professionals from the industry to give us a view of the technical challenges and solutions that exist in the industry. We want to prepare Michigan Hackers for the technical challenges that they will face once they start working.

Always Technical

It’s very important that we don’t have companies coming in and giving “corporate info sessions.” We don’t want companies just coming in and talking about how awesome they are and why you should work for them. We will make sure that every talk has technical value to it and is interesting, regardless of whether you want to work for the company.

- Git + Github
- Mobile dev
- Code quality
- Shell scripting
- NoSQL
- Security
- Writing APIs
- Whatever you want

We don’t have a definitive list of talks we want to cover for the year, but here are some potential ideas. Our calendar is still pretty free, so if you think you can talk about something interesting please do reach out to us and let us know.

Hack Nights

The second thing we're planning on doing is hack nights. Basically it's a time for hackers to get together for a couple of hours and just hack. Work on whatever you want and get support from the community. You could work on a class project, or maybe just a hack on the side.

Thursdays at 9

probably

We'll see how thursdays at 9 work. If it's just not working out we can move it around. Also we're leaning towards a space in North Quad that's really nice for hacking but we're flexible.

We will build stuff

The point of hack nights is to build. You should build whatever you want.

We will share ideas

We will preface hack nights with small presentations whenever possible. They will be very informal and can either be about a new tool you learned that would be useful for people's hacks, or it could be about a hack you've been working on and just want to share with the group.

We will meet people

An important part of hack nights is to interact with other people in the Michigan Hackers community. Ask questions, meet people, recruit people to work on a project with you. Hack nights are supposed to be an informal space to just work with other hackers like you.

We will hack

Social Events

It’s also important that we occasionally just have fun. We’ll have social events about once a month.

Board Game nights

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Our first social event will be a board game night. We'll be doing it the weekend after the career fair to recover a bit. If you have a favorite game, be sure to bring it. We'll have more details later

Larger Events

In addition to the stuff I've mentioned we will occasionally put up larger events

Learn to Hack-athon

On Sept 21st we'll be doing a learn to hack-athon. If you've never done a hackathon before and want to learn how to really start building stuff in a hackathon setting, this is for you. We'll also need hackathon veterans to come and help out.

Hack Michigan

In November we'll be doing a Hack Michigan Hackathon. The theme of the hackathon is to improve life at Michigan. These are hacks to solve problems that students of the university or residents of Ann Arbor face. Schedulr is an example. There's a ton of really great problems to solve and the best hacks are going to be solving real problems in the community. We'll work on opening up interesting data from the University to play with.

Security Capture The Flag

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An idea we've been playing around with is doing a security Capture the Flag event. The idea is that teams are given a machine that they need to protect while simultaneously breaching the security of opponents machines. It'll be a great event to try out your security hacking skills. We'll have a couple talks and workshops leading up to the event so people know what they're doing

PennApps

with

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We are partnering with the center for entrepreneurship to take over 20 people going to UPenn to compete in PennApps, which is a huge hackathon, this weekend. Hopefully we can represent Michigan at more events like this throughout the year.

Projects

We’ll also be doing projects as a group

Open Source

All of our projects will be open source. They'll be hosted on github, so check out Michigan Hacker's github to see what projects are there.

Our website

Our only current project is the Michigan Hackers website. Feel free to start contributing, there’s already a growing issues list

“Cool! How do I start?”

- Join the Facebook Group
- Like our Facebook page
- Sign up on our website
- Retweet our tweets
- Create a Michigan Hackers Pinterest Board
- Rate us on jotly

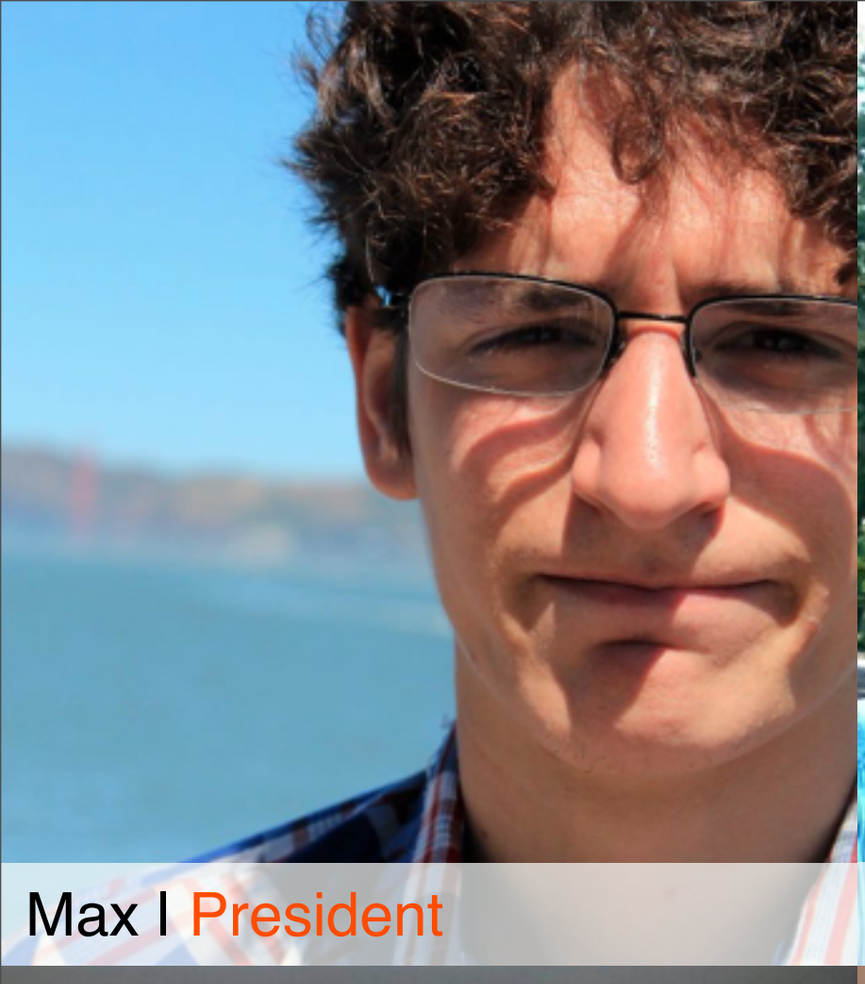
But most importantly...

- Just start coming to stuff

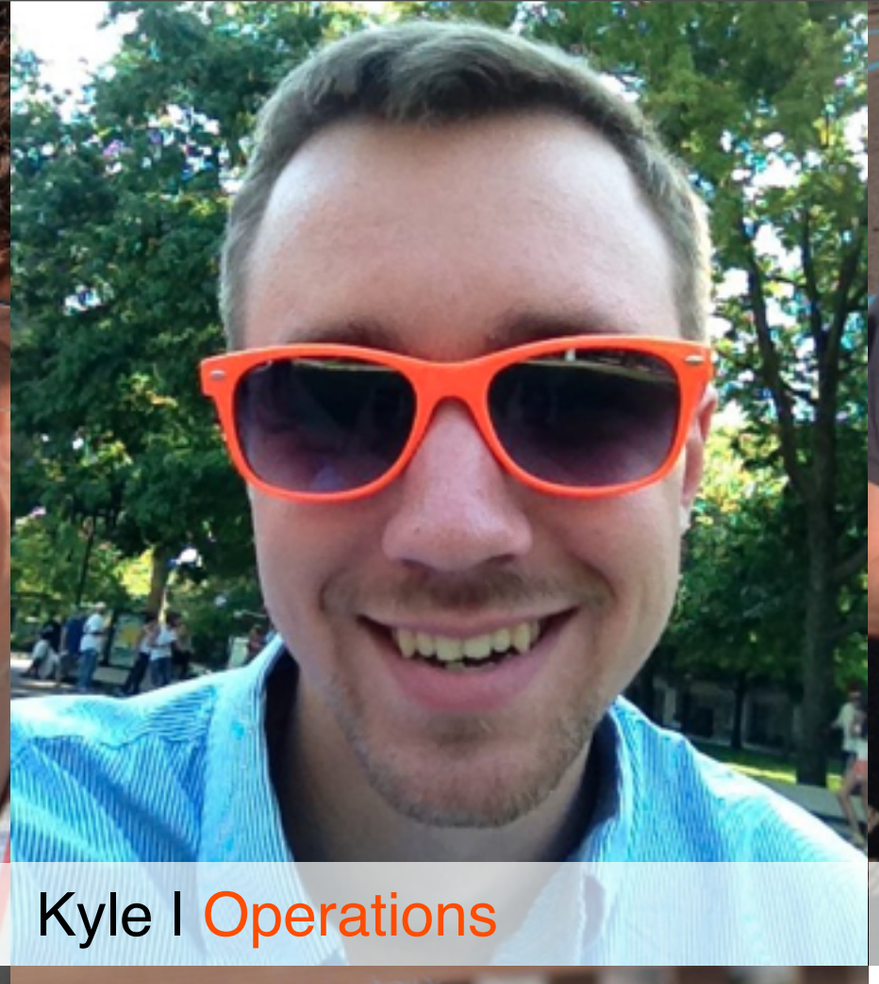
Membership is pretty easy to get. Come to one event a month (excluding mass meetings). Sign up for an account on our website and we'll track your membership status automatically. Most of our announcements will be on our Facebook page, and the group is for general discussion. Hack nights and Social events announcements will be sent out to members.

Who is Michigan Hackers?

To finish this off I just wanted to introduce the team to you all. These people have been working tirelessly the past couple weeks and will probably continue for the entire year. Be sure to introduce yourself to us afterwards, we'd love to chat. We've got a pretty solid team but we need your help. If you're interested in getting

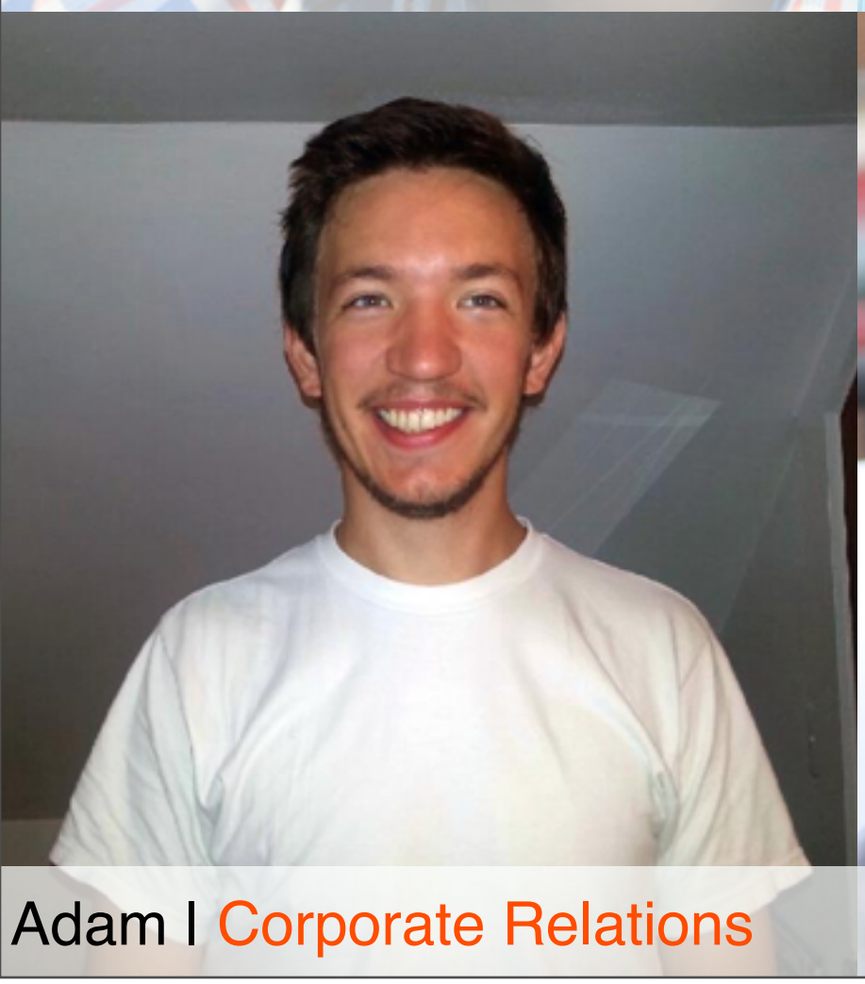


Max | President



Kyle | Operations

Jonathan | Student Outreach



Adam | Corporate Relations

Gaurav | Education

A ton of help

Ian
Otto
Han

and hopefully you

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So how can you contribute to the org

Task Forces!

Hackathons

with Jon and Otto

The hackathon committee will be responsible for making sure we put on really awesome hackathons. That involves getting sponsorships and managing logistics to make sure we have killer hackathons. They'll also be involved with other major events like the CTF. Jon and Otto Sipe are leading this committee, so if you're interested, be sure to chat with one of them.

Events

with Gaurav

Events are tech talks and hack nights. We need to make sure we're consistently booking really solid talks. There's also a lot of cool stuff we can do with hack nights. If you're interested in helping out, talk to me afterwards.

Projects

with Max and Adam

We'll be doing a ton of projects throughout the semester. We'll be managing several projects at any given time through github, such as the Michigan Hackers website. People on the projects team need to make sure that our membership can meaningfully contribute to Michigan Hackers projects. We want to be able to show off all the cool shit Michigan Hackers built by the end of the semester. Talk to Max if you want to help out with this.

We have a really exciting year in front of us and we're going to be doing a lot of awesome stuff. So...

Let’s build some awesome shit!

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