

COSC 458-647

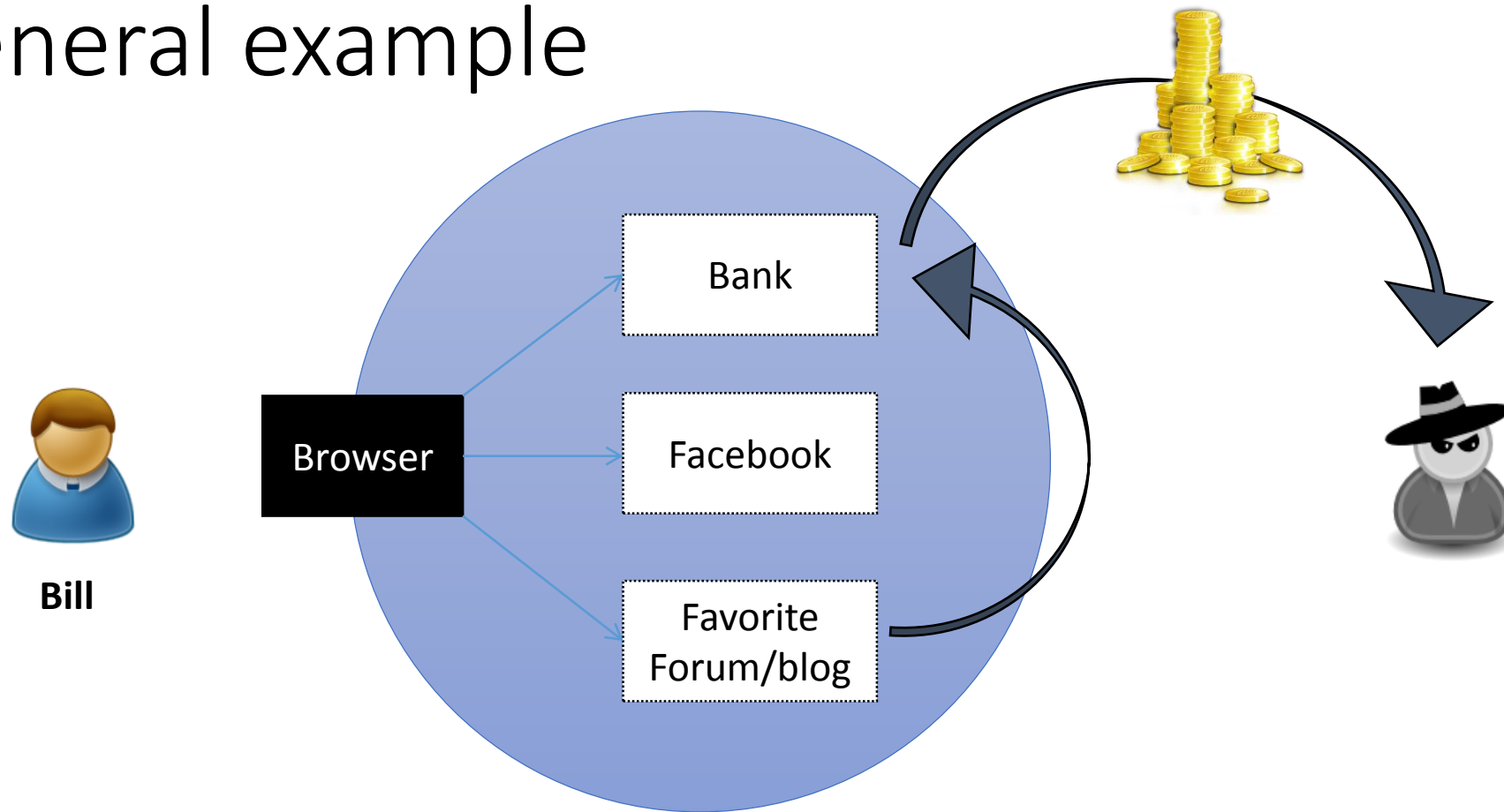
Application Software Security

Cross-site Request Forgery (CSRF)

Introduction (OWASP)

- CSRF is an attack which *forces an end user to execute unwanted actions on a web application in which he/she is currently authenticated*.
- With a little help of social engineering (like sending a link via email/chat), an attacker may trick the users of a web application into executing actions of the attacker's choosing.
- A successful CSRF exploit can compromise end user data and operation in case of normal user. If the targeted end user is the administrator account, this can compromise the entire web application.

A general example



<http://mybank.com/showaccount?id=bill>

<http://mybank.com/withdraw?from=bill&amount=10000&for=someguy>

``

Example

- There are numerous ways in which an end-user can be tricked into loading information from or submitting information to a web application.
- In order to execute an attack, we must first understand how to generate a malicious request for our victim to execute.
- Example: **Alice wishes to transfer \$100 to Bob using bank.com**

The legal request generated by Alice will look similar to the following



```
POST http://bank.com/transfer.do HTTP/1.1
...
Content-Length: 19;
acct=BOB&amount=100
```



Example

- However, Eve notices that the **same web application** will execute **the same transfer using URL parameters** as follows

```
GET http://bank.com/transfer.do?acct=BOB&amount=100 HTTP/1.1
```

- Eve now decides to exploit this web application vulnerability using Alice as her victim.
 - Eve first constructs the following URL which will ***transfer \$100,000 from Alice's account to her account***

Example

```
<a href="http://bank.com/transfer.do?acct=MARIA&amount=100000">  
View my Pictures!</a>
```



EVE



ALICE



```
<a href="http://bank.com/transfer.do?acct=MARIA&amount=100000">  
View my Pictures!</a>
```



Example

- Assuming Alice is authenticated with the application when she clicks the link, the transfer of \$100,000 to Maria's account will occur.
- However, Maria realizes that if Alice clicks the link, then Alice will notice that a transfer has occurred.



```
HTTP/1.1 200 OK.  
Transfer amount=100000 complete!
```

- Therefore, Maria decides to hide the attack in a zero-byte image

```

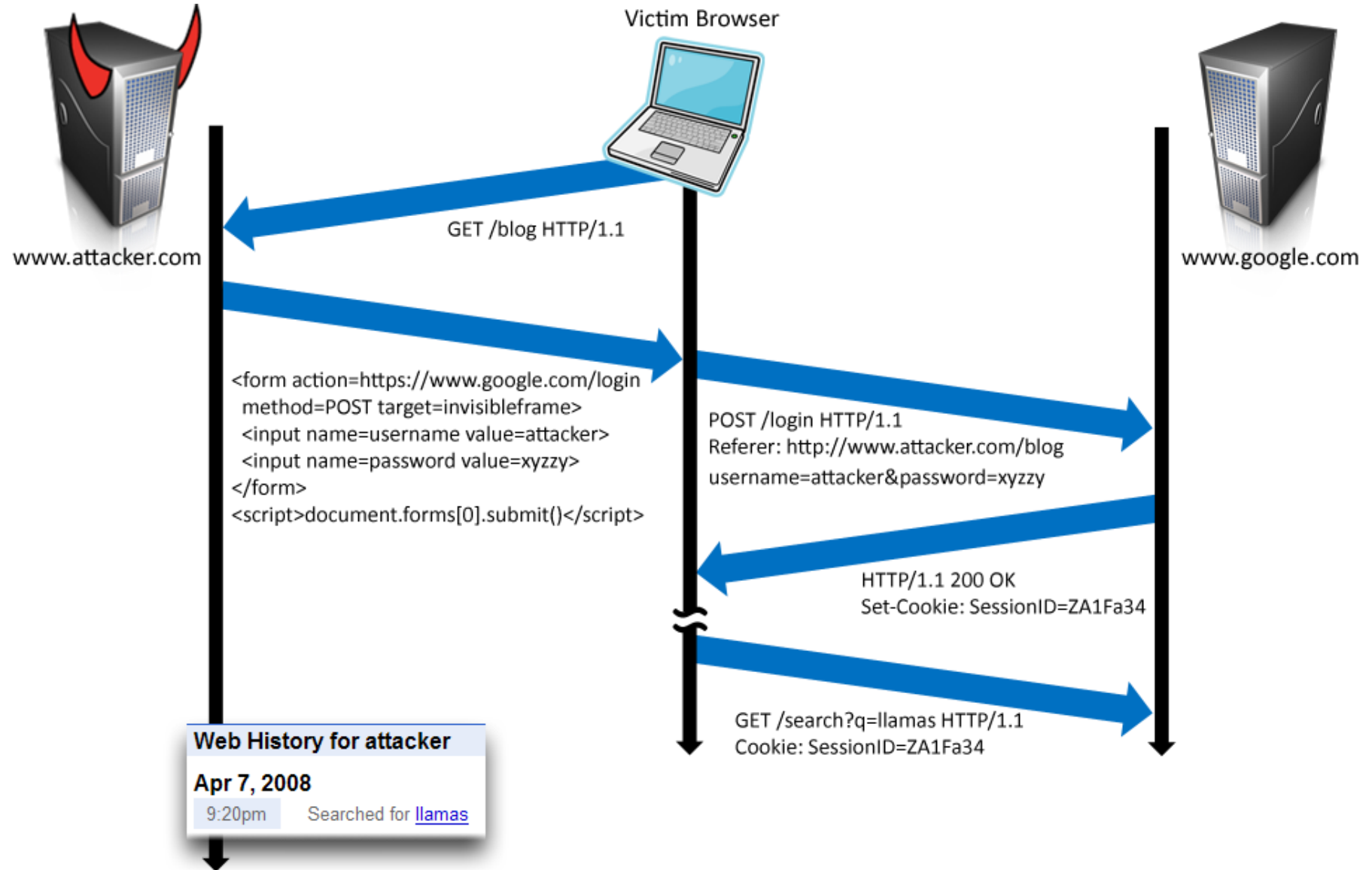
```

- If this image tag were included in the email, Alice would only see a [little box indicating that the browser could not render the image](#). However, the browser *will still* submit the request to bank.com without any visual indication that the transfer has taken place.

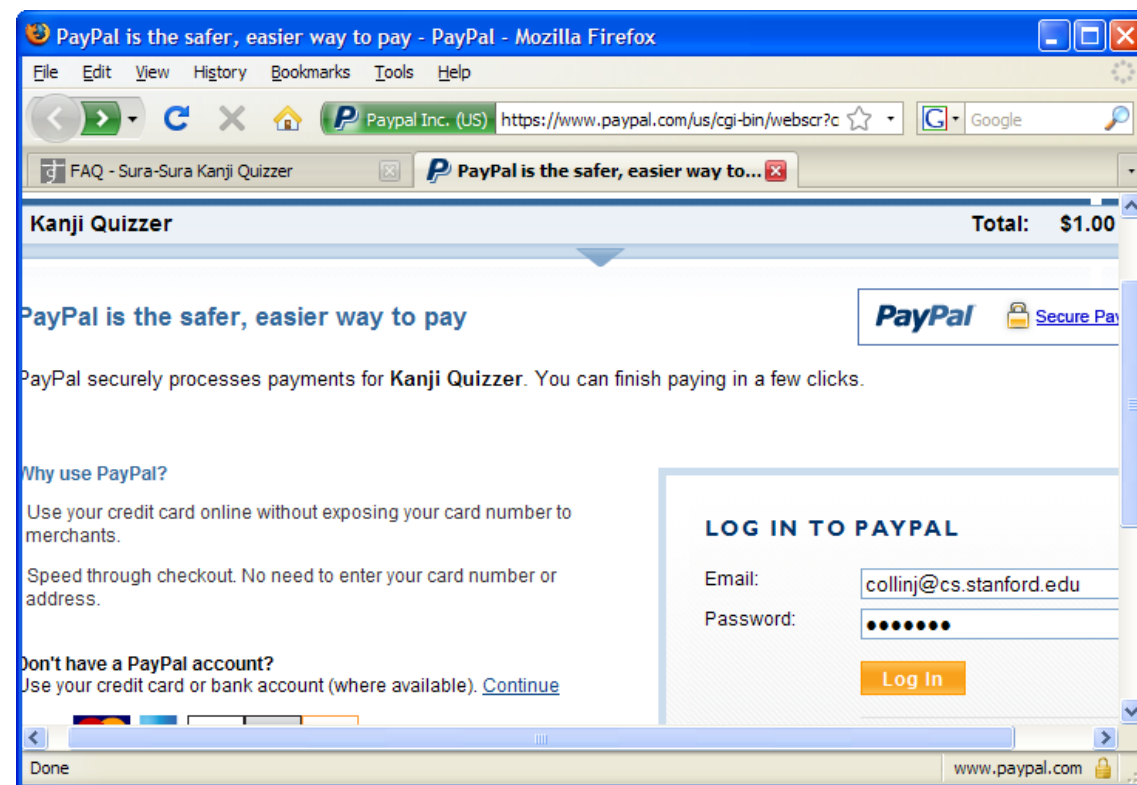
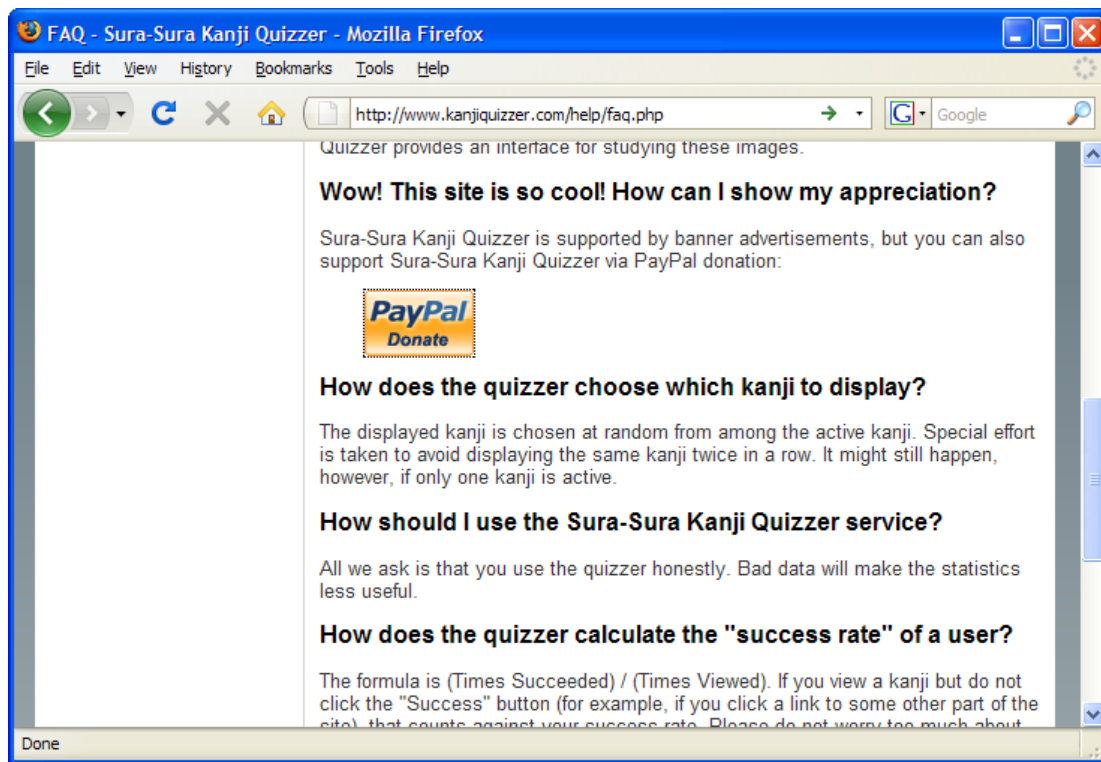
CRSF (OWASP - Top 10 2013)

Threat Agents	Attack Vectors	Security Weakness		Technical Impacts	Business Impacts
Application Specific	Exploitability AVERAGE	Prevalence COMMON	Detectability EASY	Impact MODERATE	Application / Business Specific
Consider anyone who can load content into your users' browsers, and thus force them to submit a request to your website. Any website or other HTML feed that your users access could do this.	Attacker creates forged HTTP requests and tricks a victim into submitting them via image tags, XSS, or numerous other techniques. <u>If the user is authenticated</u> , the attack succeeds.	CSRF takes advantage the fact that most web apps allow attackers to predict all the details of a particular action. Because browsers send credentials like session cookies automatically, attackers can create malicious web pages which generate forged requests that are indistinguishable from legitimate ones. Detection of CSRF flaws is fairly easy via penetration testing or code analysis.		Attackers can trick victims into performing any state changing operation the victim is authorized to perform, e.g., updating account details, making purchases, logout and even login.	Consider the business value of the affected data or application functions. Imagine not being sure if users intended to take these actions. Consider the impact to your reputation.

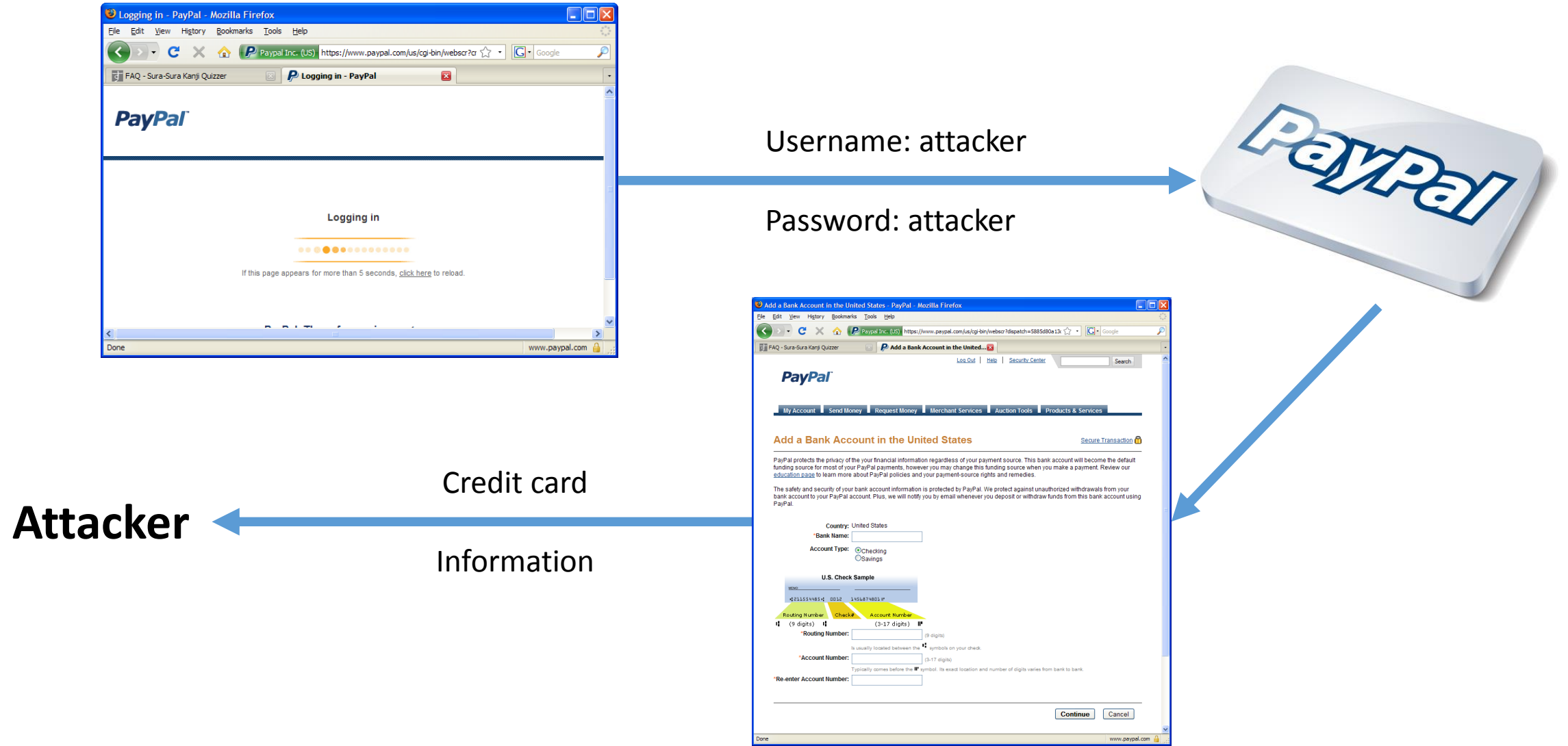
Login CSRF



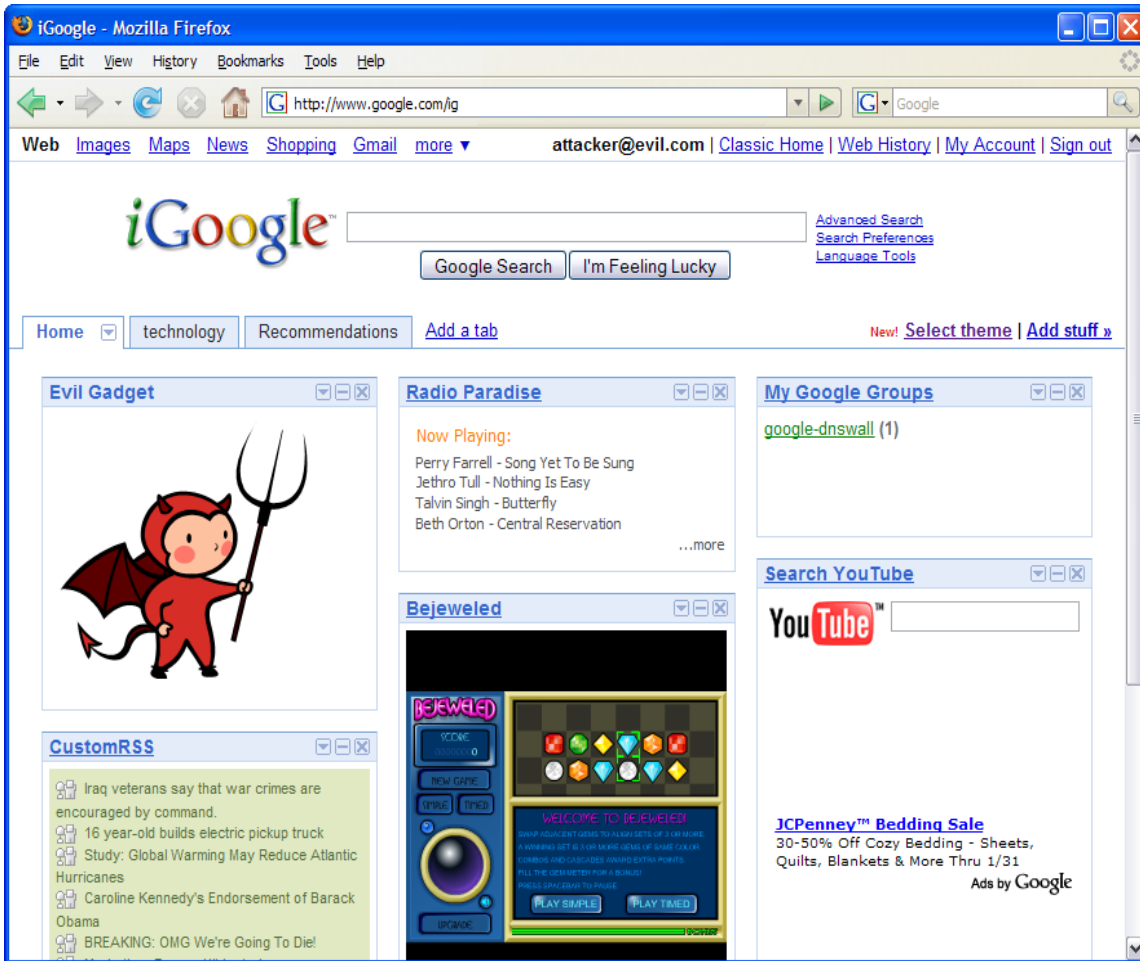
Payments Login CSRF



Payments Login CSRF

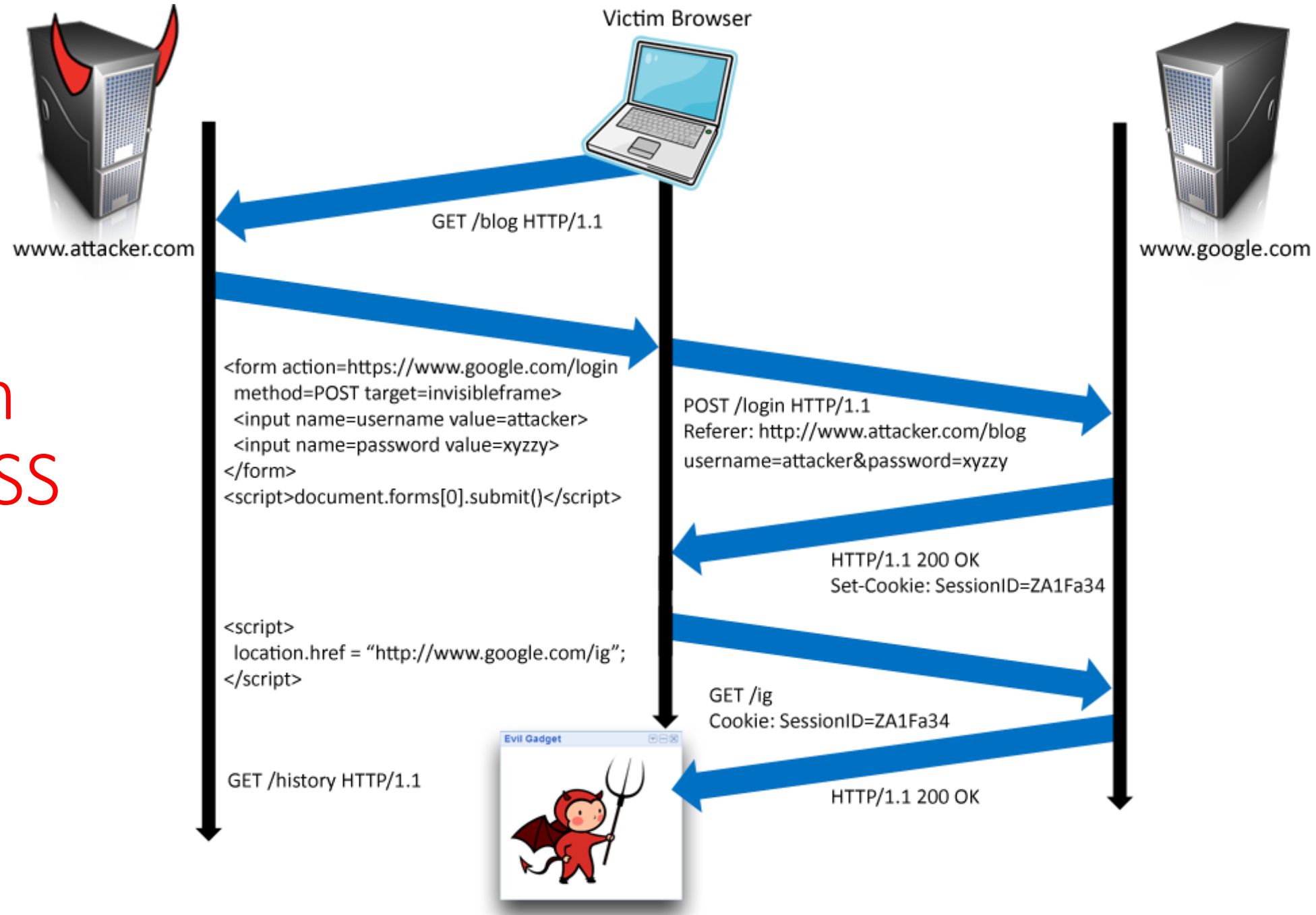


CSRF in Google



```
<iframe style="display:none"
src="http://www.google.com/setpre
fs?hl=xx-
klington&submit2=Save%20Prefer
ences%20&prev=http://www.goog
le.com/&q=&submit=
Save%20Preferences%20"></iframe>
```

Using login CSRF for XSS



How serious is the problem?

- #12 in CWE/SANS Top 25 Most Dangerous Software Errors list
- The US Department Of Homeland Security considers CSRFs attacks more dangerous than most buffer overflows
- Often overlooked, does not receive the same level of attention of other vulnerabilities
- 8th on Top 10 Web App Vulnerabilities

What?

- **Confused deputy attack** against a Web browser
- Affects sites that **rely on a user's identity**
 - Exploits the site's trust in that identity
- **Trick the user's browser into sending HTTP requests to a Target site**
- Involve HTTP requests that have side effects

How?

- A malicious website **instructs a victims browser** to **send a particular HTTP request** to an honest site
- The request appears like a **legitimate action** performed by the user
- Leverages the victim's network connectivity and the browser's state, such as cookies
- Disrupts the integrity of the victim's session with the honest site

Differences from Cross-site scripting (XSS)?

- XSS is all about code injection
- CSRF is about making the user's browser do/request nasty things
- They exploit two different kinds of trust relationships:
 - XSS exploits the **user → site/server trust**
 - i.e., **user's browser** does whatever the **site/server** instructs it to do
 - CSRF exploits the **site/server → user's browser trust**
 - i.e., **site/server** does whatever the authenticated browser requests

Attack methods in practice

- Forging GET requests via image tags
 - Image tag with SRC attribute that points to a state changing URL
 - The URL might be obfuscated by a http redirect

```

```
- POST/PUT/DELETE requests via JavaScript form submissions
 - Attacker creates an IFRAME (or a pop-up window)

```
<iframe src="https://bank.com/fn?param=1">  
<script src="https://bank.com/fn?param=1">
```
 - The frame is filled with a HTML form
 - This form is submitted via JavaScript

```
<body onload="document.forms[0].submit()">  
<form method="POST" action="https://bank.com/fn">  
  <input type="hidden" name="sp" value="8109"/>  
</form>
```

Attack methods in practice

- Can be combined with XSS to broaden the impact
- Benefits
 - Reach machines behind a firewall
 - Confuse services relying on IP address authentication
 - Exploit websites that rely only on browser state, such as
 - Cookies or HTTP basic access authentication
 - Set cookies

Example: Breaking Applications

- Vulnerable: **digg.com**
 - Digg.com's frontpage is determined by the number of "diggs" a certain story gets
 - Using XSRF a webpage was able to cause the victim's browser to "digg" an arbitrary URL
 - The demo page "digged" itself



Example: Causing Financial Loss

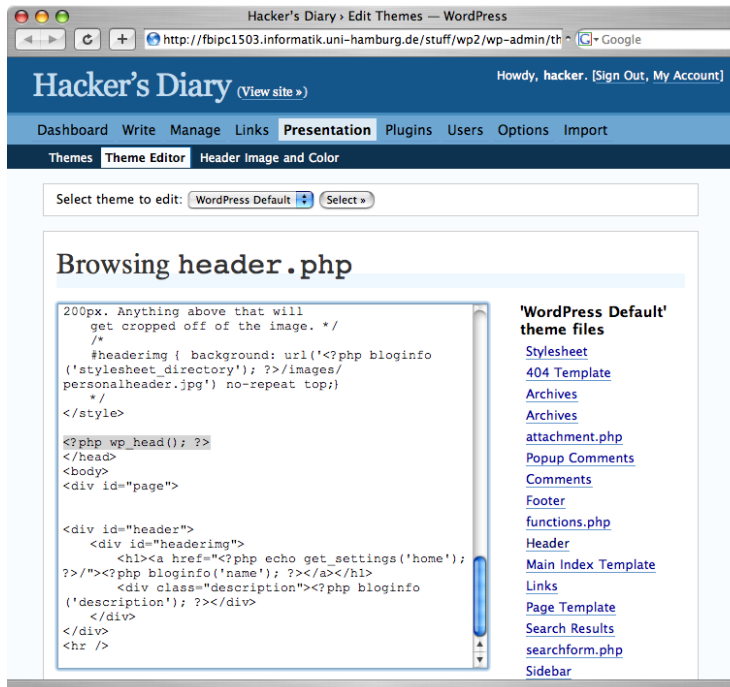
- Vulnerable: **Netflix.com**
 - Add movies to your rental queue
 - Add a movie to the top of your rental queue
 - Change the name and address on your account
 - Change the email address and password on your account (i.e., takeover your account)
 - Cancel your account (Unconfirmed/Conjectured)

```
<img src=http://www.netflix.com/AddToQueue?movieid=70011204 width="1" height="1" border="0">
```



Example: Owning the Server

- Vulnerable: **Wordpress 2.02**
 - Wordpress' theme editor was susceptible to XSRF
 - Wordpress theme-files can be php-files
 - Via XSRF an attacker could modify those files to contain arbitrary php-code



CSRF

- General problem:
 - CSRF vulnerabilities are NOT caused by programming mistakes
 - Completely correct code can be vulnerable
 - The reason for Session Riding lies within http:
 - No dedicated authentication credential
 - State-changing GET requests
 - JavaScript
- “Preventing Session Riding” is actually “fixing the protocol”

Mitigations: isn't the Same Origin Policy enough?

- The **Same Origin Policy** limits DOM access to scripts from the same “origin”
 - The same-origin policy permits scripts running on pages originating from the same site to access each other's Document Object Models (DOM) with no specific restrictions, but prevents access to DOM on different sites.
 - Same-origin policy also applies to XMLHttpRequest
- Origin = (domain name, protocol, tcp port)
- evil.com cannot read cookies from homebanking.com
- **Making requests** to other origins is allowed!

Method 1: Switch to explicit authentication

- **URL rewriting:** Session token is included in every URL
 - Attention: Token leakage via proxy-logs/referrers
 - Does not protect against local attacks
 - All URLs produced by the application contain the token
- **Form based session tokens**
 - Session token is communicated via “hidden” form fields
 - Attention: May break the “Back” button
- **Combination of explicit and implicit mechanisms**
 - e.g. Cookies AND URL-rewriting
 - Has to be supported by the used framework
 - SID-leakage may still be a problem

Method 2: Manual Protection (I)

- Reflected attacks:
 - Allow only POST requests to commit state changing requests
 - (as it was intended by the inventors of http)
 - Use one-time form tokens (nonces)
 - This assures that the POST request's origin was an HTML form that was provided by the web application in the first place
- Example:

```
<form action="submit.cgi" method="POST">  
  <input type="text" name="foo">  
  <input type="hidden" name="nonce"  
    value="xulkjsf22enbsc">  
</form>
```

Method 2: Manual Protection (II)

- Local attacks:
 - Mirror all foreign content
 - Don't allow arbitrary URLs
 - Only serve images from your own servers
 - Careful: Do not allow attackers to store arbitrary data on your computers

Method 3: Automatic protection

- NoForge [1]
 - Reverse Proxy
 - Positioned between web application and internet
 - Parses http responses and adds tokens to all internal URLs
 - Drops requests, that do not contain a token
 - Only protects applications that use cookies for session tracking
- [1] Nenad Jovanovic, Engin Kirda and Christopher Kruegel, Preventing Cross Site Request Forgery Attacks, IEEE International Conference on Security and Privacy in Communication Networks (SecureComm), Baltimore, MD, August 2006, <http://www.seclab.tuwien.ac.at/papers/noforge.pdf>

Misconceptions – Defenses That Don't Work

- Only accept POST
 - Stops simple link-based attacks (IMG, frames, etc.)
 - But hidden POST requests can be created with frames, scripts, etc...
- Referrer checking
 - Some users prohibit referrers, so you can't just require referrer headers
 - Techniques to selectively create HTTP request without referrers exist
 - Furthermore, referrers can be spoofed with Flash
- Requiring multi-step transactions
 - CSRF attack can perform each step in order
- URL Rewriting
 - General session id exposure in logs, cache, etc.

None of these approaches will sufficiently protect against CSRF!



Extra: CSRF Defenses

- CAPTCHA

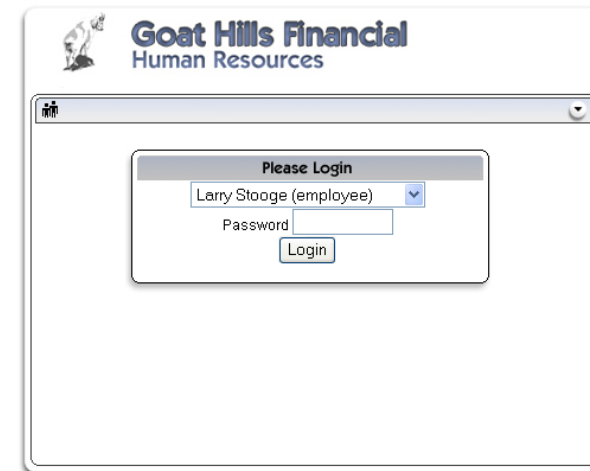
- Attacker must know CAPTCHA answer
- Assuming a secure implementation

- Re-Authentication

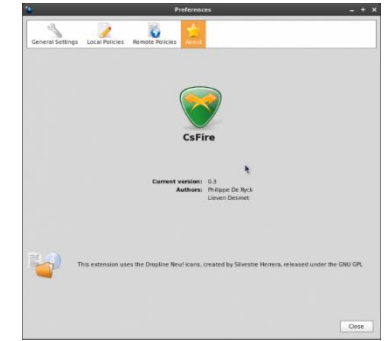
- Password Based
 - Attacker must know victims password
 - If password is known, then game over already!
- One-Time Token
 - Attacker must know current token
 - Very strong defense!

- Unique Request Tokens

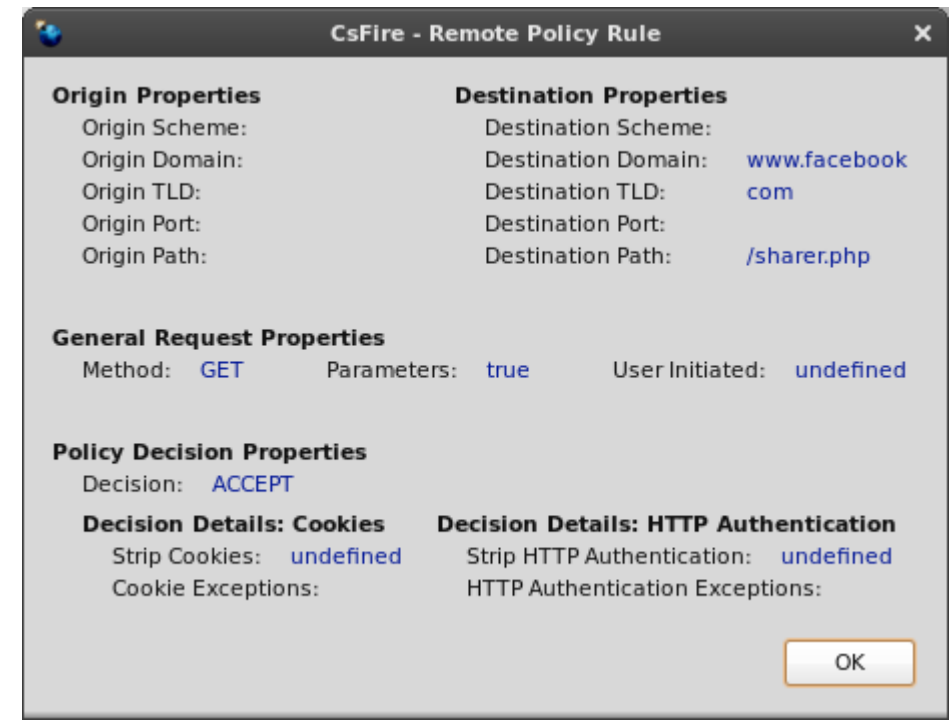
- Attacker must know unique request token for particular victim for particular session
- Assumes token is cryptographically secure and not disclosed.
 - `/accounts?auth=687965fdfaew87agrde ...`



Protection example: CeaseFire (CsFire)



- Blocking all cross-domain traffic is the most secure policy, but would degrade user experience
- CsFire is a browser plugin for Firefox that inspects the outgoing HTTP requests and decides which action to perform on them:
 - block
 - allow
 - strip authentication information

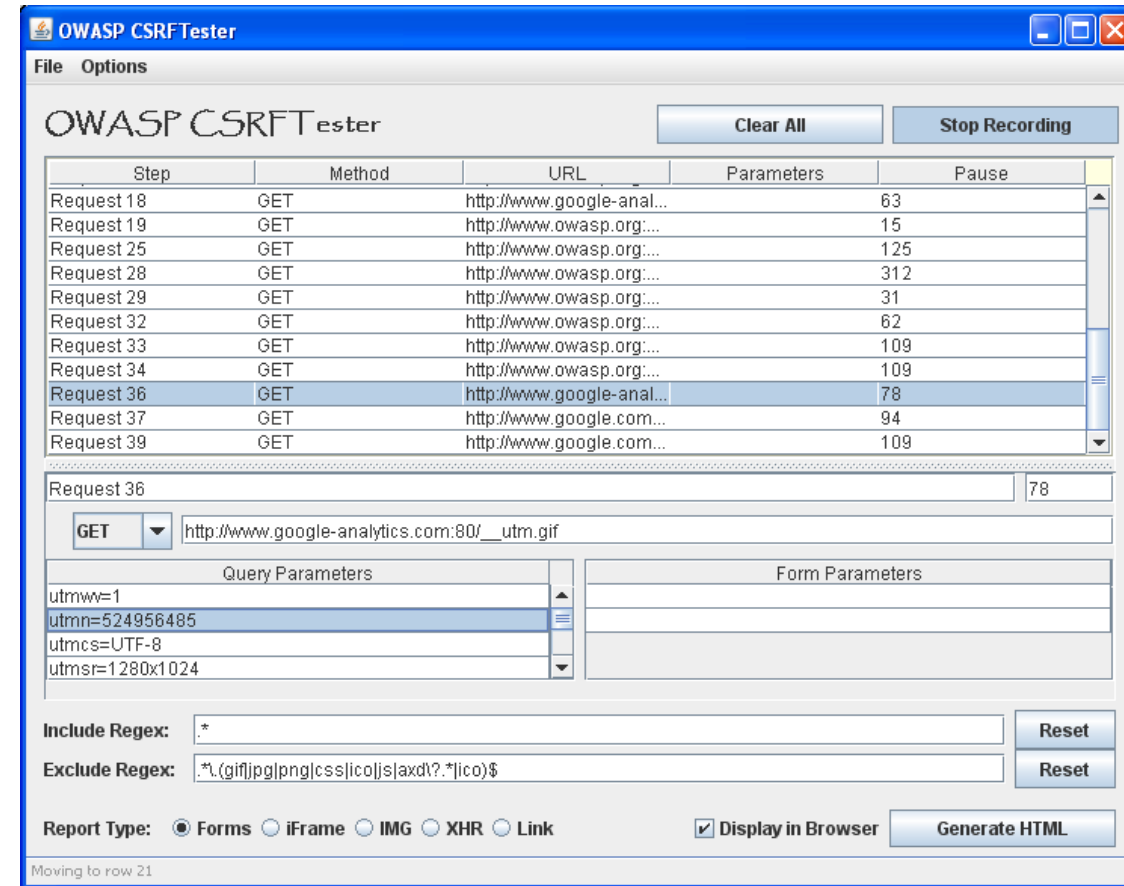


CsFire: default policy and remarks

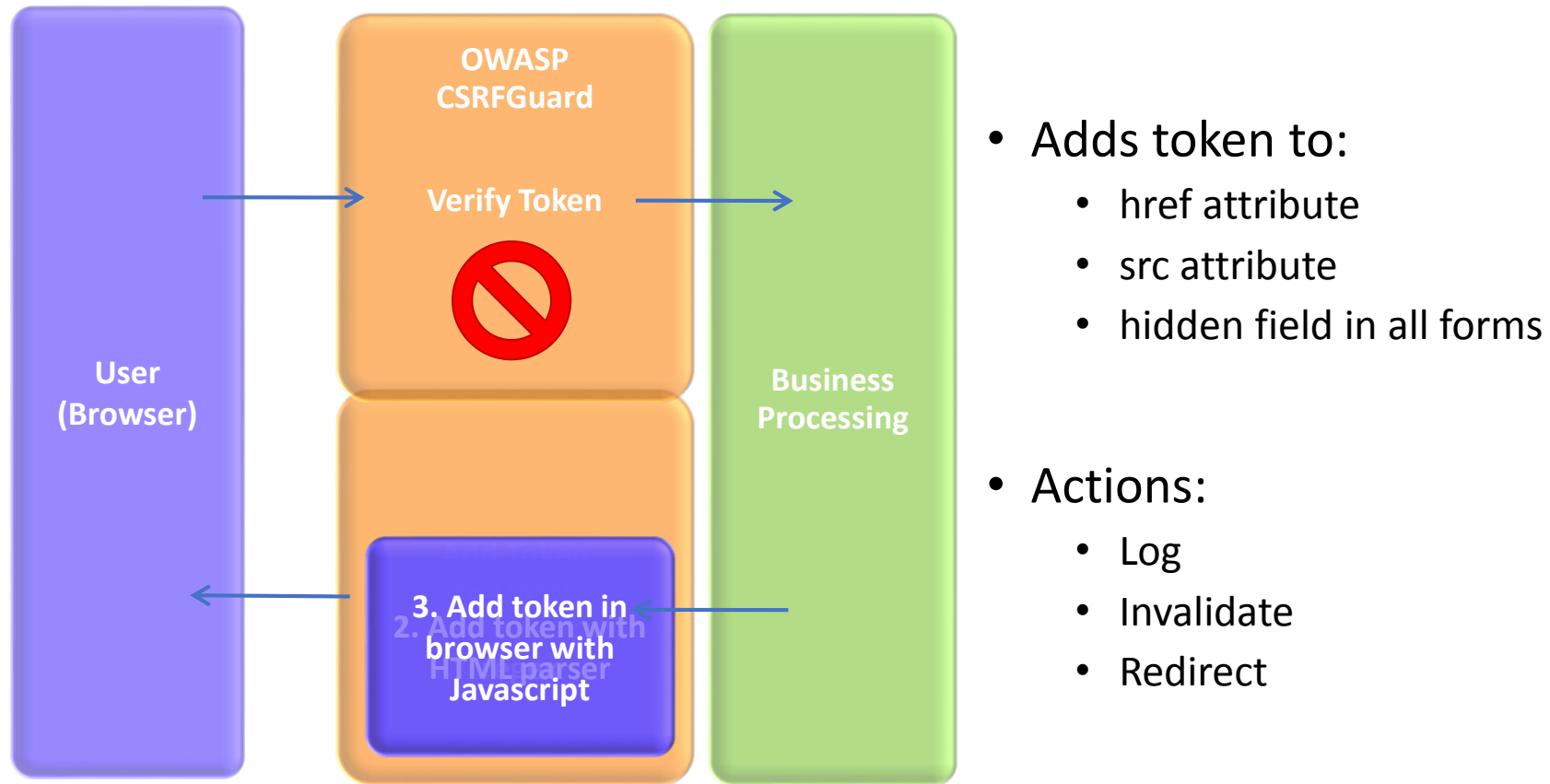
- **POST:** always strip
- **GET:** accept if it is user initiated and with no parameters, strip otherwise
- Does not alter the user experience when it comes to AJAX or Single Sign On
- Can be inadequate on mashup sites relying on implicit authentication to construct their content

CSRF testing tool: OWASP CSRFTester

- Test your applications for CSRF
 - Record and replay transactions
 - Tune the recorded test case
 - Run test case with exported HTML document
- Test case alternatives
 - Auto-Posting Forms
 - Evil iFrame
 - IMG Tag
 - XMLHttpRequest
 - Link

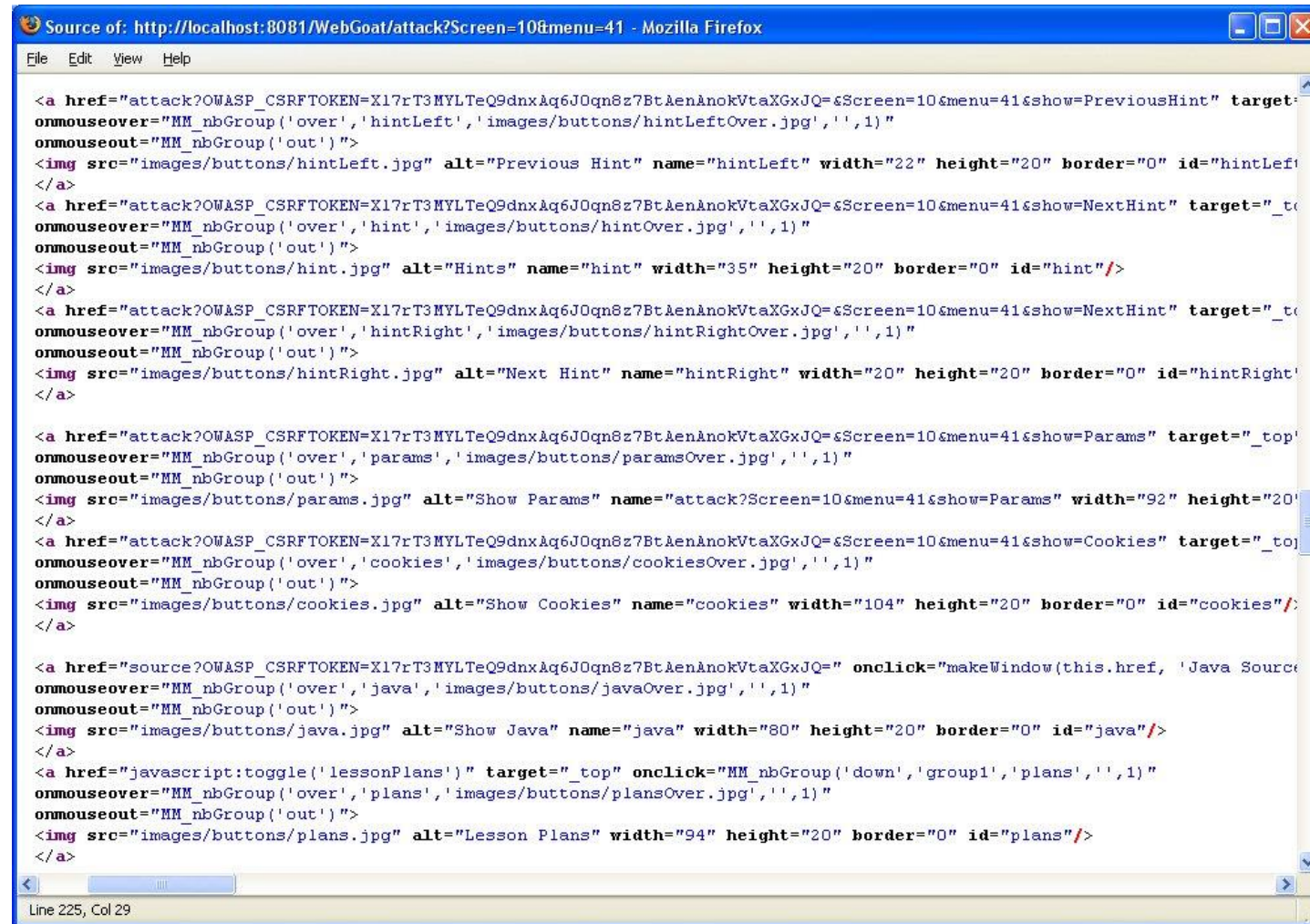


New Tool: OWASP CSRFGuard 2.0



<http://www.owasp.org/index.php/CSRFGuard>

DEMO: OWASP CSRFGuard 2.0



```
Source of: http://localhost:8081/WebGoat/attack?Screen=10&menu=41 - Mozilla Firefox
File Edit View Help

<a href="attack?OWASP_CSRFTOKEN=X17rT3MYLTQ9dnxAq6J0qn8z7BtAenAnokVtaXGxJQ=&Screen=10&menu=41&show=PreviousHint" target="_top"
onmouseover="MM_nbGroup('over','hintLeft','images/buttons/hintLeftOver.jpg','','1)"
onmouseout="MM_nbGroup('out')">

</a>
<a href="attack?OWASP_CSRFTOKEN=X17rT3MYLTQ9dnxAq6J0qn8z7BtAenAnokVtaXGxJQ=&Screen=10&menu=41&show=NextHint" target="_top"
onmouseover="MM_nbGroup('over','hint','images/buttons/hintOver.jpg','','1)"
onmouseout="MM_nbGroup('out')">

</a>
<a href="attack?OWASP_CSRFTOKEN=X17rT3MYLTQ9dnxAq6J0qn8z7BtAenAnokVtaXGxJQ=&Screen=10&menu=41&show=NextHint" target="_top"
onmouseover="MM_nbGroup('over','hintRight','images/buttons/hintRightOver.jpg','','1)"
onmouseout="MM_nbGroup('out')">

</a>

<a href="attack?OWASP_CSRFTOKEN=X17rT3MYLTQ9dnxAq6J0qn8z7BtAenAnokVtaXGxJQ=&Screen=10&menu=41&show=Params" target="_top"
onmouseover="MM_nbGroup('over','params','images/buttons/paramsOver.jpg','','1)"
onmouseout="MM_nbGroup('out')">

</a>
<a href="attack?OWASP_CSRFTOKEN=X17rT3MYLTQ9dnxAq6J0qn8z7BtAenAnokVtaXGxJQ=&Screen=10&menu=41&show=Cookies" target="_top"
onmouseover="MM_nbGroup('over','cookies','images/buttons/cookiesOver.jpg','','1)"
onmouseout="MM_nbGroup('out')">

</a>

<a href="source?OWASP_CSRFTOKEN=X17rT3MYLTQ9dnxAq6J0qn8z7BtAenAnokVtaXGxJQ=" onclick="makeWindow(this.href, 'Java Source Code', 'java', 'images/buttons/javaOver.jpg','','1)"
onmouseover="MM_nbGroup('over','java','images/buttons/javaOver.jpg','','1)"
onmouseout="MM_nbGroup('out')">

</a>
<a href="javascript:toggle('lessonPlans')" target="_top" onclick="MM_nbGroup('down','group1','plans','','1)"
onmouseover="MM_nbGroup('over','plans','images/buttons/plansOver.jpg','','1)"
onmouseout="MM_nbGroup('out')">

</a>
```

Line 225, Col 29

Similar Implementations

- PHP CSRFGuard
 - PHP Implementation of CSRFGuard
 - http://www.owasp.org/index.php/PHP_CSRF_Guard
- JSCK
 - PHP & JavaScript implementation
 - <http://www.thespanner.co.uk/2007/10/19/jsck/>