ECE 209 AS

Project Report

Is my host spying on me?

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Introduction:

The number of surveillance devices (e.g., security cameras and microphones) available due to the proliferation of Internet-of-Things (IoT) and their ease of installation allows users to use them to secure the spaces that they live in. These devices ensure the physical security of the spaces that they are installed in. This trend can largely be attributed to the growth of IoT devices[1]. Further, wireless devices have outpaced the growth of wired devices and are set to overtake them in terms of internet traffic generated [2] [3]. This can be largely attributed to the fact that wireless devices are easier to install and can easily be integrated into the home network over Wifi. Moreover, with large improvements in battery technology, some security cameras and microphones can last as long as 2 years [4]. This means that wireless devices with long battery life allow users to simply put them anywhere they want and integrate them over the Wifi network. There is no need to connect them with bulky network wires or power cables. Leveraging this, most of the devices and sensors used in smart homes have wireless communication capabilities and long battery life which enables people to easily install them.

These devices can connect to the Wifi router or to any smartphone over Bluetooth or other wireless standards.

However, this also poses a challenge to both the safety and security of the individuals who are surrounded by these devices. An adversary may hack into one of these devices or compromise the outgoing traffic from the smart home to decipher the activities and location of the user. This sensitive

information can be used to plan physical attacks (theft/robberies) or to blackmail the people being monitored. Moreover, these devices can also be used to carry out DDoS attacks such as the Mirai botnet case [5]. To mitigate this, the users who own these devices can either limit the amount of sensitive information that these devices record either by changing their settings or place them in areas where they cannot record any compromising personal information, to begin with.

Nonetheless, the above will not hold true for cases in which the owners of these devices are the adversaries. The advent of homestay apps like Airbnb where anyone can rent out their house to travelers for a few days has pushed owners towards buying surveillance devices to ensure that their properties are safe and are being used as they expect them to be while they are rented out. Over the last few years, a large number of cases have been reported where the Airbnb hosts try to spy on the residents [6]. This problem is not just limited to apps like Airbnb but also affects motels [7], rooms aboard cruise ships [8] and have the potential to even affect well-established hotel chains where one malicious employee can bug several rooms.

As the number of IoT devices continue to proliferate, this problem is going to become more and more prominent. The current state of the art of a bug detector which is an RF receiver which can sense if the received power in a particular frequency range is above a certain threshold. The problem with such devices is that they are not reliable and can go off even when the user is using them near his mobile phone. Secondly, they are not sensitive enough for low power signals like BLE (Bluetooth Low Energy) communication. Also, they give no information about the type of device and where it is located. The host may simply have a wireless device to monitor the power consumption of his property, but to the bug detector, it would seem similar to an IP camera.

In this project, we present a technique to discover hidden sensing devices that communicate over a wireless link in a room. This method leverages some key ideas of packet sniffing, ARP spoofing and bug detectors to find out what kind of device is present and where is it sending its information. If a privacy threat is found, we also opportunistically determine what physical state triggers it and how frequently it is sharing its information.

Detecting devices on the network

Adversarial techniques that analyze the network traffic coming out of a house and inferring what IoT devices are present in the room have been explored [9] that allow the adversary to predict what the activity the user was performing at a certain point in time. However, techniques have emerged [10] that mask the network traffic which makes it harder for an adversary to determine what devices are connected to the home network.

Devices on the same network

Although these methods are effective in masking the outgoing traffic, they fail when the adversary is connected to the same access point as all other devices. IoT-Inspector [9] is one such tool that when connected to any home network, can determine what devices are on the network and how they communicate with their servers on the cloud. While one can use a similar technique to determine hidden surveillance devices in a room, they fail if these devices are not on the same network or if these devices are not transmitting continuously but save their data and send it all at once. Also, these techniques cannot determine where a particular device is hidden and what they are looking at. For example, if there is a window camera that is pointed outwards, it will not be a privacy threat for the occupants. However, if the said camera is pointing inwards, it is a big issue.

To overcome the issues mentioned above, we propose our own method, which takes advantage of received signal strength, packet spoofing and

opportunistic sensing to detect and locate all surveillance devices present in a room.

Possible scenarios

Depending upon the type of Wifi network, a user may have one of the following 4 types of access to it:

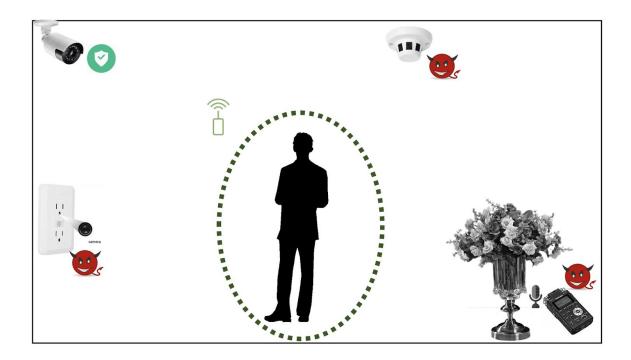
- 1. Open network: The network is open and anyone can look it up in the list of available networks and connect to it. They do not require any authentication.
- 2. Open network with web login: The network is similar to an open network but the user needs to login in through a web browser via some method (like a pin that is sent to his/her phone number)
- 3. Closed network with a password: The network is password protected but the host has given the password to the user. This case is similar to that of an open network.
- 4. Closed network: Either the user does not have the password to this network or this is an open network but only certain MAC address can connect to it or both.
- 5. Hidden network: There may be a hidden wifi network whose SSID is not visible on the list of available networks. Although these networks exist, it is very difficult to detect them using current tools. Hence we will use USRP for these cases.

Adversary Model

Based on the above possible cases, the adversary may have connected the hidden devices to the wifi in the following ways:

- The operator of the building or a 3rd party
- The adversary needs real-time access to information coming out of the room.

The adversary is using wireless devices to spy on the user.



Hardware

In this work, we propose a varying set of hardware that one can make use of. This largely depends upon the adversary model as well as the amount of information the user wants to extract the adversarial devices.

- Laptop/Mobile: In our work, we have used a laptop running Wireshark, which is a network sniffing tool. There are similar apps available for smartphones too. It is not unfair to expect people to have either one of the two devices with them in today's day and age.
- USRP: a type of software-defined radio manufactured by Ettus Research. We are using the B205i-mini model.
- Ubertooth One: Software defined radio for Bluetooth packet sniffing.





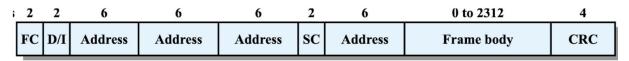


Software:

- Wireshark: Used for packet analysis
- Pyshark: Python library based on tshark which is a terminal based wireshark utility
- GNU Radio: is a free & open-source software development toolkit that provides signal processing blocks to implement software radios.

Wifi Packet:

Wifi Packet

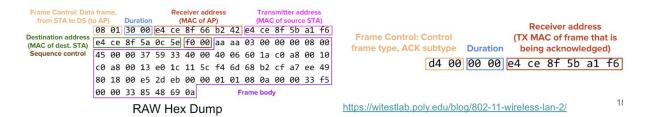


FC = Frame control

D/I = Duration/connection ID

SC = Sequence control

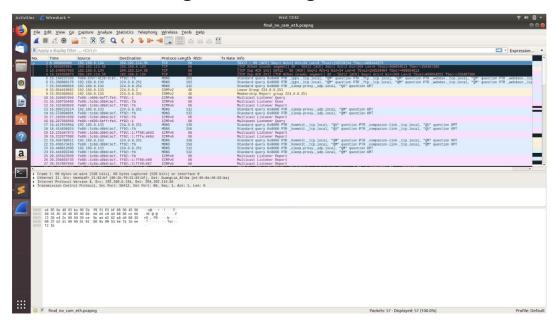
Figure 1: IEEE 802.11 MAC frame format. Image from William Stallings "Data and Computer Communications".



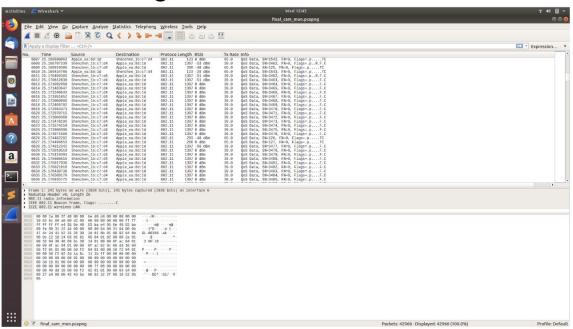
Ways to sniff wifi packets:

- Wireshark packet sniffing using Wifi card in the laptop-
 - a large number of TCP/UDP packets show the presence of a video recorder.
 - Mac address lookup
 - Reverse DNS lookup
 - o It has two modes:
 - Managed mode: when the laptop is connected to a wifi network and we can only listen to the traffic in that frequency range
 - Monitor: when we want to sniff all traffic in a given frequency range
- USRP used as a wifi receiver.
 - Wifi receiver that can sniff packets in 2.4 and 5 GHz frequencies
 - Converted the received data into Wireshark readable format
 - Mac address lookup

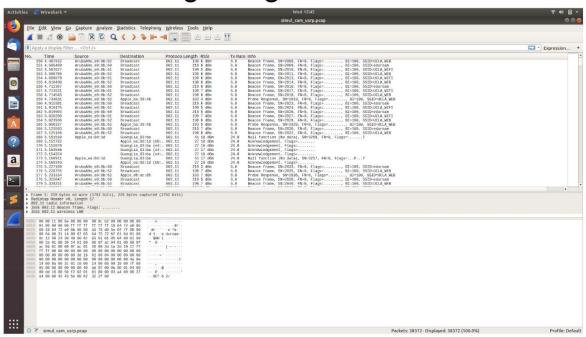
Packet Sniffing in managed mode



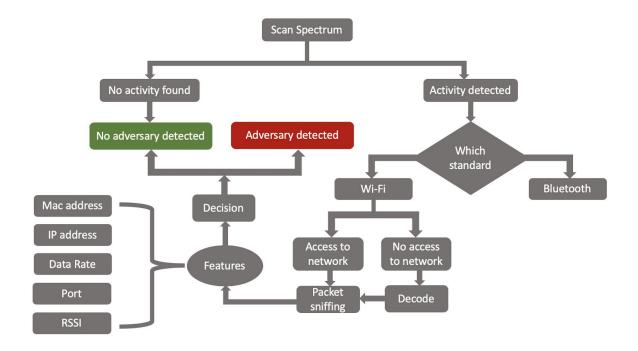
Packet sniffing in monitor mode



Packet sniffing using USRP



Proposed algorithm for wifi detection

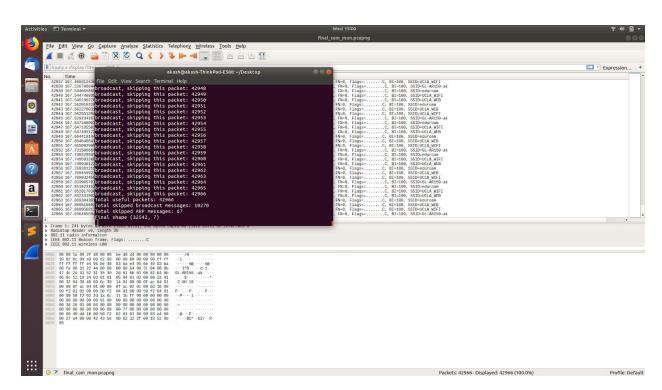


Features:

- Mac Address: You can know about the manufacture of a device
- RSSI: You can find out if you're moving closer to the device or not
- **Data Rate:** Cannot use this because access points can dynamically adjust their data rate to match channel conditions.
- **Bits sent per packet:** If we sum all bits sent by a particular device over time, we can know about how much traffic it has generated.

The tool:

- 1. We iterate over all the packets sent and find out how much traffic has been generated by a particular device.
- 2. Then we plot the transmitter and receiver with highest traffic generated and received.



3. The list of top transmitters:

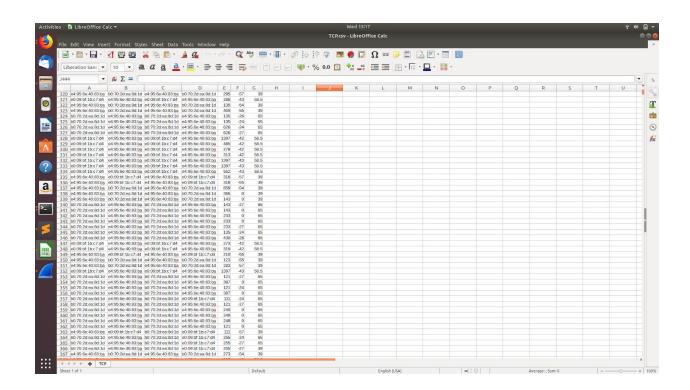


4. The list of top receivers:



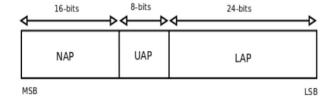
83:ba -> Access Point C7:d4 -> Camera 8d:1d -> Iphone

5. We also save these statistics to a csv file:



Bluetooth Sniffing

Bluetooth Address - 48 bits



- LAP: Lower Address Part -> Transmitted with every packet
- Upper Address Part -> Only transmitted during handshake
- Non significant Address Part -> ignored during initial connection

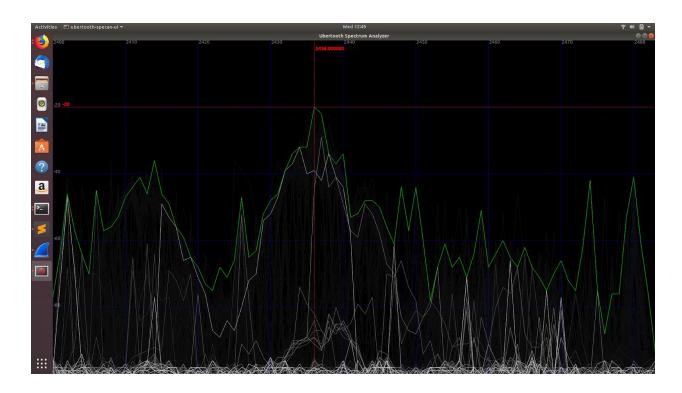
The three parts of a Bluetooth MAC address.

79 channels of 1 MHz each

1600 hops a second in pseudo random manner

How to get UAP: Header Error Check (HEC): UAP + Header Bytes

1. We use Ubertooth One to scan the spectrum for Bluetooth transmissions:



2. If a transmission is found, we passive listen to all Bluetooth packets being sent:

```
00
                             akash@akash-ThinkPad-E580: ~
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
systime=1560369040 ch=58 LAP=e68655 err=0 clkn=295937 clk_offset=4840 s=-53 n=-5
5 snr=2
systime=1560369041 ch=21 LAP=5b6331 err=0 clkn=299347 clk offset=5240 s=-55 n=-5
systime=1560369042 ch=57 LAP=a74ab0 err=2 clkn=300761 clk_offset=4215 s=-57 n=-5
5 snr=-2
systime=1560369043 ch=52 LAP=5b6331 err=0 clkn=304139 clk_offset=5523 s=-54 n=-5
systime=1560369043 ch= 7 LAP=a74ab0 err=0 clkn=305013 clk_offset=4652 s=-51 n=-5
5 snr=4
systime=1560369044 ch=51 LAP=a74ab0 err=2 clkn=308957 clk_offset=5051 s=-63 n=-5
5 snr=-8
systime=1560369045 ch=61 LAP=5b6331 err=2 clkn=312125 clk_offset=6051 s=-53 n=-5
5 snr=2
systime=1560369046 ch= 5 LAP=a74ab0 err=0 clkn=314397 clk_offset=5582 s=-50 n=-5
5 snr=5
systime=1560369047 ch=56 LAP=a74ab0 err=1 clkn=315561 clk_offset=5700 s=-61 n=-5
5 snr=-6
systime=1560369047 ch=62 LAP=a74ab0 err=0 clkn=317497 clk_offset=5893 s=-56 n=-5
5 snr=-1
systime=1560369047 ch=17 LAP=e68655 err=0 clkn=318333 clk_of<u>fset=5911 s=-54 n=-5</u>
5 snr=1
```

3. Then we enter a survey mode and find BR address all devices that are transmitting:

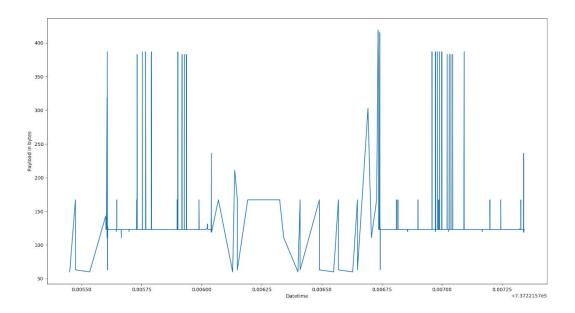
```
00
                             akash@akash-ThinkPad-E580: ~
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
snr=4
systime=1560369151 ch=14 LAP=a74ab0 err=0 clkn=75387 clk_offset=3840 s=-59 n=-55
snr=-4
systime=1560369151 ch=18 LAP=a74ab0 err=0 clkn=76625 clk_offset=3995 s=-64 n=-55
systime=1560369151 ch= 5 LAP=a74ab0 err=0 clkn=77523 clk_offset=4040 s=-63 n=-55
systime=1560369151 ch= 5 LAP=a74ab0 err=1 clkn=77525 clk_offset=4070 s=-54 n=-55
systime=1560369152 ch=69 LAP=a74ab0 err=0 clkn=77771 clk_offset=4072 s=-51 n=-55
systime=1560369152 ch=54 LAP=a74ab0 err=0 clkn=78029 clk_offset=4129 s=-58 n=-55
systime=1560369152 ch= 7 LAP=a74ab0 err=0 clkn=78203 clk_offset=4122 s=-40 n=-55
snr=15
systime=1560369152 ch=71 LAP=a74ab0 err=0 clkn=78459 clk offset=4139 s=-49 n=-55
systime=1560369152 ch=73 LAP=a74ab0 err=0 clkn=79063 clk_offset=4192 s=-53 n=-55
snr=2
Survey Results
??:??:89:A7:4A:B0
??:??:??:E6:86:55
??:??:??:5B:63:31
akash@akash-ThinkPad-E580:~$
```

Localization:

- The user walks in a room with the USRP
- We are filtering packets by mac address
- Increase in received power: moving closer to the device
- The decrease in received power: moving away from the device
- Packets being sent when the user crosses a particular region further helps in recognizing the device.

Monitoring your own devices:

Suppose you buy a device and you want to monitor when it is active, you can use our tool to plot its statistics over time like the one shown below:



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