Bluejacking

Bluejacking is the sending of unsolicited messages over Bluetooth to Bluetooth-enabled devices such as mobile phones, PDAs or laptop computers, sending a vCard which typically contains a message in the name field (i.e., for bluedating or bluechat) to another Bluetooth-enabled device via the OBEX protocol.

Bluetooth has a very limited range, usually around 10 metres (32.8 ft) on mobile phones, but laptops can reach up to 100 metres (328 ft) with powerful (Class 1) transmitters.

This Siemens M75 is bluejacking the Sony Ericsson K600i pictured below.

Origins

Bluejacking was reportedly first carried out between 2001 and 2003 by a Malaysian IT consultant who used his phone to advertise Ericsson to a single Nokia 7650 phone owner in a Malaysian bank.[1] He also invented the name, which he claims is an amalgam of Bluetooth and *ajack*, his username on Esato, a Sony Ericsson fan online forum. *Jacking* is, however, an extremely common shortening of "hijack', the act of taking over something.[2][3] Ajack's original posts are hard to find, but references to the exploit are common in 2003 posts.

Another user on the forum claims earlier discovery,[4] reporting a near-identical story to that attributed to *Ajack*, except they describe bluejacking 44 Nokia 7650 phones instead of one, and the location is a garage, seemingly in Denmark, rather than a Malaysian Bank. Also, the message was an insult to Nokia owners rather than a Sony Ericsson advertisement.
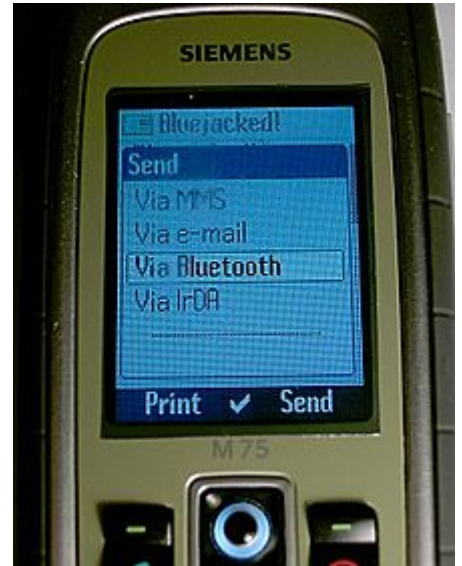
Usage

Bluejacking is usually harmless, but because bluejacked people generally don't know what has happened, they may think that their phone is malfunctioning. Usually, a bluejacker will only send a text message, but with modern phones it's possible to send images or sounds as well. Bluejacking has been used in guerrilla marketing campaigns to promote advergames.

This Sony Ericsson K600i is being bluejacked by the Siemens M75 pictured above. The text at the bottom of the screen reads "Add to contacts?" in Norwegian.

Bluejacking is also confused with Bluesnarfing, which is the way in which mobile phones are illegally hacked via Bluetooth.

Companies

BluejackQ

BlueJackQ is a website dedicated to bluejacking. The website contains a few bluejacking stories taken from the site's forum. The website also includes software that can be used for bluejacking and guides on how to bluejack which are slightly out of date but the basic principle still applies to most makes of phone. Its forum has over 4,000 registered users and 93,000 posts.[5] The website has been featured in many news articles.[6]

The forums [5] were opened on the November 13, 2003 and has been the center of BluejackQ from the start. It currently has 4 moderators and has 20 different sections available to members. The areas included information about BluejackQ, reviews of mobile phones, media players, PDAs and Miscellaneous devices, general bluejacking threads and an off-topic area. The BluejackQ podcast was first released as a test version on January 15, 2006, thus becoming the first bluejacking-related podcast. Podcasts 1, 2 and 3 featured three members of the forums.

Fictional reference in *Person of Interest*

The authentic bluejacking as described here is not the same exploit which was frequently depicted in the *Person of Interest* television series; that fictional exploit portrayed different and more invasive capabilities.

See also

- Bluebugging
- AirDrop

References

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4. [1] (https://www.esato.com/board/viewtopic.php?topic=8483&forum=2)
5. bluejackQ.com :: Index (http://www.bluejackq.com/phpbb2/index.php) Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20061005031933/http://www.bluejackq.com/phpbb2/index.php) October 5, 2006, at the Wayback Machine
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