

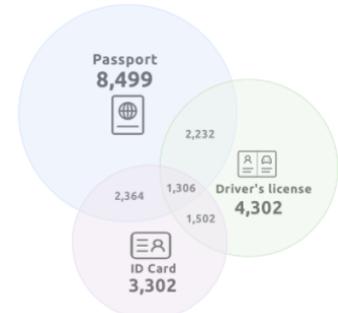
DarkCloud & Identity Fraud

Before we started

Identity fraud has become a serious problem. Fake identification documents are abundantly present and readily available on the Darknet. This has resulted in most Darknet markets establishing a separate category dedicated solely to the illegal trade of identification documents – passports, driver’s licences, ID cards, etc. Darknet information in this area can be very valuable for a government’s approach in combatting illegal immigration. Web-IQ decided to take a closer look and explore identity fraud on the Darknet and Darknet Markets.

What did we do?

Without setting up additional targeted crawls, we wanted to see what we can get out of our DarkCloud dataset related to identity fraud. We defined some questions that would help us map identity fraud on the Darknet. The first step was to do some general queries on what is being offered on the Darknet to get an idea of the size, the different types of identification documents, and the way in which they are offered. Moreover, we were curious to see whether we could find out how vendors get a hold of these documents and what they need from buyers.



The number of advertisements on 13 Darknet markets offering one or more types of identity documents

Findings

Using the DarkCloud dataset that is available right now, we were able to find out:

- which types of identification documents are offered on the Darknet (passport, driving licence, ID card) and the distribution;
- that ‘real’ (donor, cloned or stolen) passports are extremely valuable and therefore most wanted;
- that real passports are very difficult to forge, which leaves a lot of room for scammers. The majority of advertisements are fakes, but certainly not all of them;
- in some cases, vendors tell how they are able to get a hold of their merchandise, which adds to their reliability;
- ID related ads make up the largest share of ads on Point Market, with more than 8% of total ads referring to identification documents.

Exploration options

The previously mentioned findings can be explored further as well as other related topics we did not touch upon yet. A few examples:

Set up crawlers targeting specific Darknet sites, markets, vendors, and forums to get an even more detailed view;

Use our network graph to look for relations between vendors, advertisements, forum posts, bitcoin addresses and more (see left);

Set up an alert when a certain keyword or combination of keywords (e.g. Italian passport) is found by the crawler;

Get a notification when a certain vendor posts a new advertisement;

Research what people say about how to ship goods without authorities noticing;

See the effect of new document technology on Darknet Market trade.

