

# Writing a successful proposal: the NoAH approach

NoAH: A Network of Affined Honeypots

Evangelos Markatos, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor

Institute of Computer Science (ICS)  
Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas (FORTH)  
Crete, Greece



Evangelos Markatos, FORTH

# Roadmap of the Talk

## NoAH: A Network of Affined Honeypots

- Steps of this talk
  - An idea for a proposal
  - Gather the consortium
  - Write the proposal
  - Wait for the results
  - Negotiate



# Step 1: The NoAH Idea



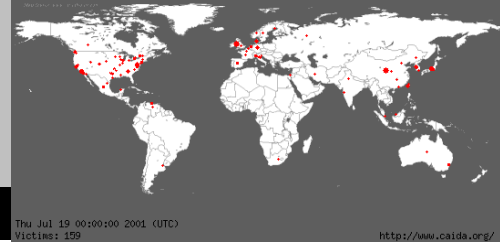
## NoAH: A Network of Affined Honeypots

- **Cyberattacks** continue to plague the Internet
  - Viruses – email attachments
  - Worms: self-replicating programs
  - Keyboard loggers:
    - They record every key punch
    - They steal bank accounts, passwords, credit card numbers
- The problem is **much larger than any single organization** can solve



# Step 1: The NoAH Idea

## NoAH: A Network of Affined Honeypots



- We need a distributed **Infrastructure** of **honeypots** to help us solve the problem
- Honeypots are “**undercover**” **computers** that do nothing
  - they wait to be attacked
- Attackers are attacked to the “honey”
  - Easily compromised computers
- Once attacked they start gathering information
  - about the attacker’s methods and motives



# Step 2: Assemble the Consortium

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- We selected **hard working** Partners who really cared about NoAH
- 8 partners in total from 5 countries
- 5 partners have been **collaborators in previous EU projects** (FORTH, TERENA, VU, FORTHnet, ALCATEL)
- One of them was a **collaborator in national projects** (Virtual Trip)
- Two were **new partners** (ETHZ, DFN-CERT)
- All of them are leaders in their field of work

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# Step 3: Write the proposal (I): The people

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- The writing team: 9-11 people
  - Two major writers
    - Which wrote most of the text
  - Seven-Nine additional writers
    - Who wrote small parts of the proposal



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# Write the proposal (I): The tools

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Goal: Enable Parallel Writing of the Proposal by geographically distributed people

– **LaTeX**:

- Each section of the proposal can be a different file
- Enables parallel writing of different sections

– **CVS**: resource control tool: enables people to

- **checkout** the most recent version of the proposal
- **check in** their changes
- from anywhere on the Internet

– **Excel**: for the financial tables

- **Excel2latex** converter to include the tables in LaTeX

– **Xfig**: for the Gantt chart

– **Dia**: for the Pert Diagram



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# Writing of the proposal (II): the mechanisms

## NoAH: A Network of Affined Honeypots

- Five day retreat (in Egypt):
  - Took five days off in a Hotel to write the major draft of the proposal
  - Good coffee, Good food
  - No Telephones – No Internet – No Interruptions
  - We were living, breathing, thinking, and sleeping of NoAH
    - Ohh, by the way we saw the pyramids as well
- Last week writing spree
  - 5 people were available every day (and most of the night) to write text, prepare figures, search the literature, etc.





# How much did it cost?

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- Man power (for the coordinator)
  - 2 person-months of full-time work
    - Proposal writing and coordination
  - 2 person-weeks of administrative work
    - to coordinate the filling-up of the forms
- Travel
  - One trip to Amsterdam
- Email
  - 500 send/received email messages
  - as many as 20 messages in a single day



# Schedule

## NoAH: A Network of Affined Honeypots

- 25/12/03 Wrote **pre-proposal**
- 30/12/03 **Invitations** to partners
- 26/1/04 Secured **support of key US player**
- 6/2/04 First Proposal **Draft** Circulated
- 10/2/04 Consortium Meeting in AMS
- 18/2/04 Egypt **retreat** for proposal writing
- 29/2-3/3/04 Assembled a party of five who
  - wrote text, prepared figures, searched literature
  - and made the final version of the proposal
- 4/3/04 NoAH submitted



# Then, what?

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- Wait.....
- until 11/06 when we received a positive evaluation
- July 28<sup>th</sup> we were invited for negotiations



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# The Negotiations

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- Prepare the Technical Annex
  - Reformatting
  - Addressing the reviewers comments
  - Incorporate a 25% budget reduction
- Meeting in Brussels
- Prepare second version of the TA
- Finish the negotiations



# How much did the negotiations it cost?

## NoAH: A Network of Affined Honeypots

- Man power:
  - 3 person weeks of writing/negotiating
  - 2 person weeks of administrative work
- Travel
  - One trip to Brussels



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# Was it worth it?

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- Was it worth the time?
  - Every minute of it! It was fun!
- Was it worth the money?
  - Every cent of it!
- Would I do it again?
  - Absolutely!



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