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GAMING

Hacker releases PlayStation 3 root key

By Emil Protalinski, TechSpot.com
Published: January 3, 2011, 10:14 PM EST

Hacker George Hotz, also known as [GeoHot](#), has posted what he claims to be the PlayStation 3 root key, which is used for code signing games. GeoHot, who is known for helping crack the iPhone, has not only found the key, which groups have claimed in the past, but he has posted it to the public.



The root key lets the PS3 know that a piece of software is legitimate. If other hackers start using it (and it is indeed the real one), the key will let them make custom software or easily use pirated games. It will make it possible to run homebrew without the need for psjailbreak-style USB-devices. It also provides hope for those at firmware version 3.55 that have no way of downgrading.

The key cannot be changed without hardware modifications (firmware updates are not enough), and even doing so would render current software inoperable. In short, Sony will have a hard time fighting hacks developed with this key. The company has yet to issue a statement regarding the news; there are likely quite a number of people currently working overtime to figure out the implications of the key being available for the world to see.

19 comments

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slh28 on January 4, 2011 12:55 AM
Apple/Sony/Microsoft or somebody seriously needs to hire this guy.
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realista69 on January 4, 2011
Wow, lets all hack the PS3!!!

1:17 AM

Like now, go on, go.

..onnn...

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benny26

on January 4, 2011
3:37 AM

Damn. Why am i not rich enough to have the confidence to experiment with this sort of stuff...Mind, i hardly play the PS3 anyway. 😊

Still a quality piece of hardware though.

[Reply](#) | [Quote](#)

Guest

on January 4, 2011
4:37 AM

this turd should be sent to a Chinese "re-education" camp !

[Reply](#) | [Quote](#)

mosu

on January 4, 2011
6:25 AM

It's OK for big companies like Sony to get kicked now and then, to remind them that they grow on people's money. BTW, GeoHot's name "Hotz" means thief in romanian. Good luck and a happy new year 2011 to all!

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edison5do

on January 4, 2011
6:56 AM

Well, this will hurt the developers butget, But it will boost Sny PS3 Sales like a Sky Rocket, just like when PS2 got hacked.

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burty117

on January 4, 2011
8:09 AM

It was only a matter of time I guess, just like the master key to HDCP protection for Blu-Rays.

Again i'm not standing up for Piracy or anything but people will always find a way round DRM systems if it locks the machine down too much such as this stops home brew software. If I had bought a PS3 and wanted to create and test my own home brew game on the platform I would be slightly peeved that the machine I bought was locked down.

I wonder if this will have a knock-on effect with game prices possibly going down?

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9Nails

on January 4, 2011
10:09 AM

Again, this is a reminder why DRM only hurts the honest people. People who want to bypass your rights management can and will do so. But the honest majority of us suffer through rights restrictions.

[Reply](#) | [Quote](#)

Guest

on January 5, 2011
5:15 AM

Either you are a corporate puppet, or you have no imagination what so ever! You seem to be a bitter and angry nancy man

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trillionsin

on January 5, 2011
10:03 AM

Would anyone be willing to fill me in on why you would need this anyways????

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3dcgmodeler

on January 5, 2011
10:52 AM

cool..... now to play the right way yahooo
It worked..... 😊

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Guest

on January 5, 2011
11:27 AM

I do think if Sony didn't removed linux, they would not of incurred the wrath of the hacker community.
I blame Sony over-reaction that lead to this situation.

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Leeky

on January 5, 2011
11:29 AM

Would anyone be willing to fill me in on why you would need this anyways????

My understanding is to be able to play non-genuine discs with your PS3 (copies of originals you own perhaps?), though I guess that also means illegal copies of games could also be played with the root key mod as well.

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trillionsinon January 5, 2011
11:37 AM

Leeky said:

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Thanks, I appreciate that. I didnt realize thats what this allowed.. guess I didnt read the article very well. Thank you for spelling it out for me.

Some friends were talking about making their newer PS3's play older games such as PS2/PS. But I dont think that this allows that to happen, as reading the older discs is actually a hardware issue. Right?

[Reply](#) | [Quote](#)**Guest**on January 5, 2011
12:32 PM

The main intention of the original hackers was to be able to run Linux on the machine, which has a rather cool vector processor useful for scientific and commercial work as well as hobbyist stuff. The original ps3 sold with this option as "other OS" and people who where not interested in games bought it for this, but they did not include it on the new ps3 slim. This limitation was artificial and when someone tried to bypass it on the slim they removed the feature from the original retroactively via an update. The home brew and developer community got to work to reapply this feature by other means and the piracy opportunities where simply an unimportant (to them) side effect. Piracy is however easier than re-creating the other OS feature and it will be a few weeks/moths before this is completed enough to be done by home users.

[Reply](#) | [Quote](#)**yRaz**on January 5, 2011
12:52 PM

I wont buy a PS3, it has so much potential...If people want to BUY a PS3 and install linux or windows on it, they should be aloud too. It's just another computer with proprietary hardware and more DRM than sense.

Here is a good idea for stopping piracy, make games WORTH buying. If they aren't worth buying, adjust the price accordingly. I feel bad for the people paid for black ops at full price. That is not a \$60 game. It's more like a \$30 game...I Probably wouldn't play it even if I got it for free.

[Reply](#) | [Quote](#)**biggabarr**on January 5, 2011
4:23 PM

don't be fooled its not about piracy or any other illegal stuff, its about making more money off console sales for sony every body wins when there is a hack system like ps3 companies starts to develop programs and hardware for modification and ps3 is getting old now , there will be a replacement for it soon so why not release the keys .

its only fair for those folks who buy genuine games to have a back up, just in the event you scratch the disc.

[Reply](#) | [Quote](#)**Guest**on January 6, 2011
2:13 AM

i spotted this because i was looking to see if anyone had got around sony removing my unix from my ps3 .. if sony had not been an *ss by removing other os then i guess this would not have happened .. karma .. no sympathy ..

[Reply](#) | [Quote](#)**Guest**on January 6, 2011
7:53 PM

lol nice... get on...

now!!!

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