

Adam Mudd: from schoolboy to cyber hacker!

He was just 16 when, working alone in his bedroom at home, **Adam Mudd** created a computer program – a virus called Titanium Stresser. At 18, he started selling the program to cyber criminals worldwide and earned nearly £400,000. He caused chaos – websites crashed ‘from Greenland to New Zealand, from Russia to Chile’. All in all, because of Mudd there were 1.7 million attacks on more than 650,000 victims. These included users of Xbox Live, Minecraft, Runescape, TeamSpeak and Microsoft.



What went wrong?

Mudd comes from a comfortable home in the pretty village of Kings Langley, Hertfordshire, England. This is where he was living with his parents when he created the software. As well as selling the virus, he carried out nearly 600 attacks with it himself, with the user name **themuddfamily**. Many of these attacks were on West Herts College, where he was a student. One attack was so large that it not only crashed the network in his college, it also hit 70 other schools and colleges, including Cambridge University. Mudd explained these attacks by saying he was bullied at college and nobody helped him.

When finally arrested, aged 19, Mudd was working on his computer in his bedroom. At first, he denied doing anything wrong. Then he said the money was not important to him – it was all about status, and he wanted to make friends in the gaming community online. Mudd found it difficult to make friends outside his family. His parents were in court to support their son. However, the judge at his trial refused to free him – he said that he must be a lesson to others. Mudd will probably spend the next two years in prison.



Mudd is one of many teenage hackers. The average age of a hacker is just 17, and teenagers are behind some of the world's most notorious cyber attacks. Often the best teenage hackers get really good IT jobs in the end.

