



Our adversaries are continuously looking for potential targets of exploitation.

Indicators that our adversaries may find useful in determining potential targets could be what we have on (and inside) our cars.

“The ideal OPSEC Practitioner should have the skills of operations, intelligence, and security analysts.

Obviously, that is rather a rare bird; only a few have been sighted.

From a practical standpoint, however, the practitioner need not be expert in all disciplines, but he must be aware of them and have access to experts.”

- Robert ‘Sam’ Fisher



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What Do Our Cars Say About Us?

There are a number of car license plates that may 'spell out' job functions, job locations, or job-specific programs. This is one indicator that our adversaries may find useful in determining potential targets.

The list of indicators goes on - post decals (no getting away from that) with rank (optional for retired persons); service-oriented stickers that indicate job function/location/level of expertise; university/college stickers and parking decals; residential parking decals or cards that hang on the rear-view mirror; bumper stickers indicating which collage/university the vehicle owner (or children) attend; bumper stickers indicating hobby preferences, political inclinations, likes and dislikes, where our elementary, junior high, high school children attend school; stickers that indicate the number and gender of children in the family. And more.

A combination of these indicators may be enough to get the attention of our adversaries so that they want to take a closer look at the outside of our cars as well as what's INSIDE our cars: cell phones, work-related documents, personal mail with home addresses, work/access badges, prescription medication (s) and...trash. Trash that could provide even more information about us or perhaps indicate weaknesses that could be used against us.

What could our adversaries learn about us by 'reading' our cars and looking inside of them?

- Where we work / what agency / which program / our specific job / level of clearance
- Where we (or our children) attend college
- Where we live
- Where our elementary, junior high, high school children attend school
- How many children we have in our family, in order of gender and age
- Where we (and our children) like to spend our 'off duty' time
- Where we stand on 'controversial' political issues
- Potential 'weaknesses' that could be exploited

Do we always keep our cars locked? We should. But as summertime is upon us, we may be more inclined to leave our windows partially open as we leave our cars unattended. And at some locations our car alarms may not be as effective a deterrent as we would want. What could our adversaries do with this opportunity to get inside our cars? Gather even more information about us certainly - "What's in YOUR glove compartment?" Clone our cell phones to get our call lists, pictures and text messages. Upload malware programs to our cell phones that can be remotely accessed allowing them to potentially listen to our conversations or track our movements via GPS. Steal (or copy) our access badges or official identification that may be used by them to gain access to government facilities and locations. And more.

Let's minimize these indicators as best we can. Let's keep our cars locked and windows rolled up. Let's take our cell phones, badges and work-related material with us when we leave our cars unattended. Let's remove from view or lock up items that contain our personal information. Let's take out the trash. Let's make it more difficult for our adversaries to gather information about us and what we do by 'reading' our cars.

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