



# STOPPING CREDIT CARD THIEVES

After thieves hack into a business website and steal financial data — as they did with Target during the 2013 holiday season — they then casually buy and sell thousands of bundles of financial data via online forums.

Researchers analyzed nearly 2,000 online threads from 13 easily accessible web forums and discovered a network of international cybercriminals operating in a collaborative fashion to buy and sell a range of illegal financial products, including credit cards, bank account data, CVV data from credit cards and data from eBay and PayPal accounts.

The research suggests that preventing breaches of financial data requires a combination of changes:

- Corporations and financial institutions must be more transparent when their data are stolen.
- Law enforcement cannot stop credit card theft using traditional techniques because the forums are organic and collegial; eliminating the central sellers will not disrupt the networks.

- Consumers who shop from their home computers must be more aware of the dangers and take steps to protect themselves.

Other findings:

- The forums were hosted around the world; 10 were in Russian and three were in English.
- Visa and MasterCard were the most common cards for sale.
- The average advertised price for a stolen credit card or bank card number was about \$102.
- The average price of access to a hacked eBay or PayPal account was about \$27.

To read the full report “Examining the Structure, Organization, and Processes of the International Market for Stolen Data,” visit [NCJRS.gov](http://NCJRS.gov), keywords “International Market for Stolen Data.”