

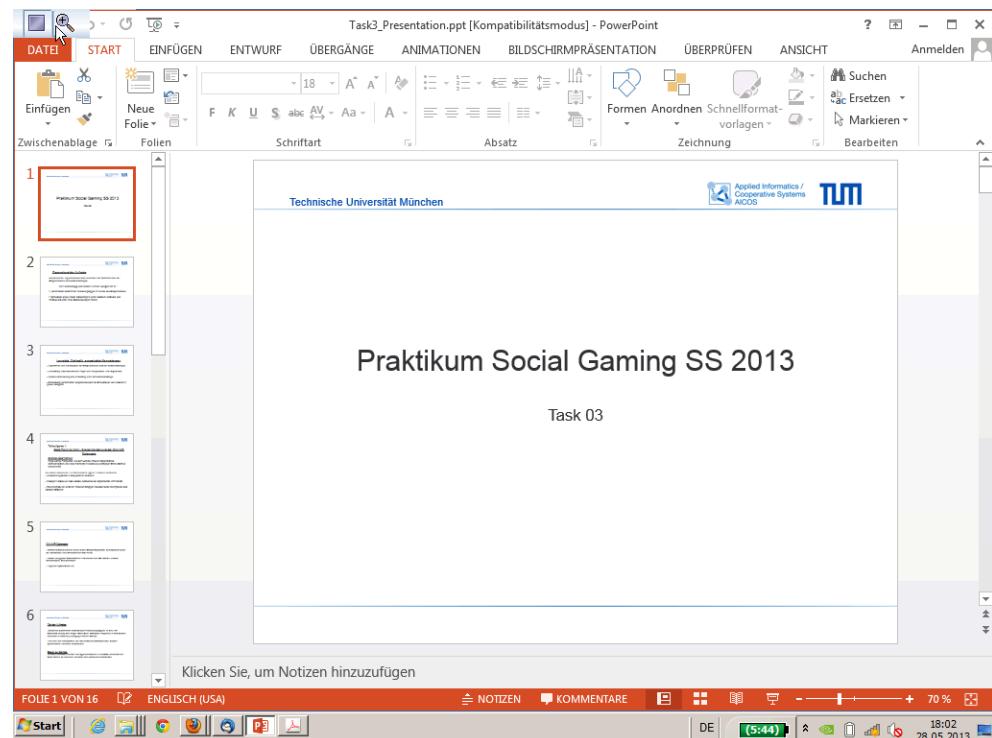
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Abstract—Gold farming is a set of illicit practices in which players in massively multiplayer online games gather and distribute virtual goods for real money. Using anonymized data from a popular online game to construct networks of characters involved in gold farming, we examine the trade networks of gold farmers, their trading affiliates, and uninvolved characters at large. Our analysis of these complex networks' connectivity, assortativity, and attack tolerance indicate that farmers exhibit distinctive behavioral signatures which are masked by brokering affiliates. Our findings are compared against a real world drug trafficking network and suggest similarities in both organizations' network structures which reflect similar effects of secrecy, resilience, and efficiency.

Keywords—dark networks, network analysis, online games, MMOG, MMORPG, EverQuest 2, gold farming, real money trade, cybercrime, deviance, scale-free, assortativity, attack tolerance

Using a combination of comprehensive, unobtrusively obtained behavioral data and methods in network analysis, we examine the coordination structures and dynamics of a dark network of one particular type of deviant activity in an MMOG.

Lernziele, Methodik, angestrebte Kompetenzen

- Algorithmen und Werkzeuge der Graphentheorie und der Netzwerkanalyse
- Umsetzung wissenschaftlicher Paper und Interpretation Ihrer Ergebnisse
- Kreative Entwicklung und Umsetzung einer Simulationsstrategie
- Entwicklung performanter Vorgehensweisen für Simulationen von Abläufen in großen Graphen