

Man outsources his own job to China

SAN FRANCISCO, USA: A software engineer known only as Bob is a modern workplace legend after word spread on Thursday (17 January) that he had secretly outsourced his job to an engineer in China and sat at his desk watching cat videos.

The tale of Bob blazed across the Internet after being told in a Verizon security team blog post about the most "memorable" case investigators handled last year. What started as a look into a mysterious secure connection from China to a US-based company's network ended with the discovery that a worker was idling away time at his desk while a Chinese consulting firm did his job at a fraction of his salary.

Evidence even suggested he had the same scam going at other companies, according to the blog post by Andrew Valentine of the Verizon RISK Team.

"All told, it looked like he earned several hundred thousand dollars a year, and only had to pay the Chinese consulting firm about fifty grand annually," Valentine said. "The best part? For the last several years in a row he received excellent remarks. His code was clean, well-written, and submitted in a timely fashion."

Bob's quarterly performance reviews consistently described him as "the best developer in the building," according to Valentine. Bob provided secure access to his company's network so Chinese consultants could work on computer code while he was at his desk, giving the appearance he was doing his job, the investigation determined.

Examination of Web browsing history showed that a typical work day for Bob consisted of surfing Reddit and watching cat videos online before going to lunch. He spent afternoons at online commerce site eBay as well as social networks Facebook and LinkedIn, and then end his "work" days with an email updating bosses on projects, Valentine said.

Verizon did not identify the company or the worker, describing him as an inoffensive, quiet family man in his mid-40s who had been with the company a long time and whom "you wouldn't look at twice in an elevator."

Source: *AFP* via I-Net Bridge