



What Is Cyberwar?

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At a blue-ribbon Worldwide Cybersecurity Conference in Dallas from May 3 to May 5, 2010, media reports noted that some discussion focused on the use of the term "cyberwar," which is often used to refer to the activities of hackers and others who steal online secrets, disrupt computer systems and other infrastructure, and engage in financial fraud online.

Some security specialists think that the term "cyberwar" is simply the wrong word for illegal activities that amount to out-and-out theft and don't have anything to do with governments or armies. The White House's cybersecurity coordinator, Howard Schmidt, is one of them. He says "cyberwar" is an inaccurate metaphor. These people aren't engaged in a war any more than bank robbers are.

The term "cyberwar" is actually defined in online dictionaries as "an assault on electronic communication networks," and it should be limited to that meaning. As author Jeffrey Carr wrote in [Forbes in March](#), "If everything is considered a war, then you lose the ability to respond appropriately."

Crime in the Suites is authored by the [Ifrah Law Firm](#), a Washington DC-based law firm specializing in the defense of government investigations and litigation. Our client base spans many regulated industries, particularly e-business, e-commerce, government contracts, gaming and healthcare.

The commentary and cases included in this blog are contributed by Jeff Ifrah and firm associates Rachel Hirsch, Jeff Hamlin, Steven Eichorn and Sarah Coffey. These posts are edited by Jeff Ifrah and Jonathan Groner, the former managing editor of the Legal Times. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and comments!

