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*(Online News, 08/12/99 05:34 PM)*

### Hacking your way to an IT career

By Ann Harrison

ALTLANDSBERG, GERMANY -- At the first annual Chaos Communication Camp, which took place outside of Berlin last weekend ([see story](#)), hundreds of hackers and their machines filled the main hack tent exchanging information on the latest exploits and security tools. Most were young, skillful and in demand by corporate information technology departments.

The camp, which attracted some of the most talented European and American hackers, was one of the largest hacker gatherings in Europe so far this year.

David Del Torto, director of technology for security services at Deloitte & Touche in San Francisco, agreed. He noted that hackers like himself were working at all the top five auditing and accounting firms.

Del Torto presented hacker career workshops with titles such as "Take This Job and Ping It/Hacking The Corporate Ladder For Fun & Profit."

The following are some of the tips he offered hackers seeking corporate jobs:

- Write your own job description.
- Volunteer for a project in your area of expertise.
- Network with people.
- Start your own company.
- Or sign on to another start-up.

He also advised the crowd to build tools they themselves would use ("You should be customer No. 1!"), license technology when appropriate and solve problems with free software or generate it.

"When building reputation capital, it's pretty important to learn to think like the boss," he said.

In addition to his day job, Del Torto is a member of the Cypherpunks, a San Francisco-based hacking organization that produces what he calls "no-compromise" security technology.

Del Torto had advice for his Fortune 1000 brethren, too. Asked if young hackers, who may not be partial to suits and ties, are discriminated against, Del Torto recalled that Dan Farmer, author of the widely used Satan network scanning tool, was once turned down by a prospective employer who found his appearance unsettling. He urged IT managers to avoid superficial judgments and focus on the reputation of the individual. IT managers interviewing young people who "act differently" should remember when they were young, he advised.

Del Torto noted that in the relatively small community of IT security professionals, people are preceded by their reputations. He said he knows programmers who are talented, but he won't hire or recommend

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them because they don't act responsibly.

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