

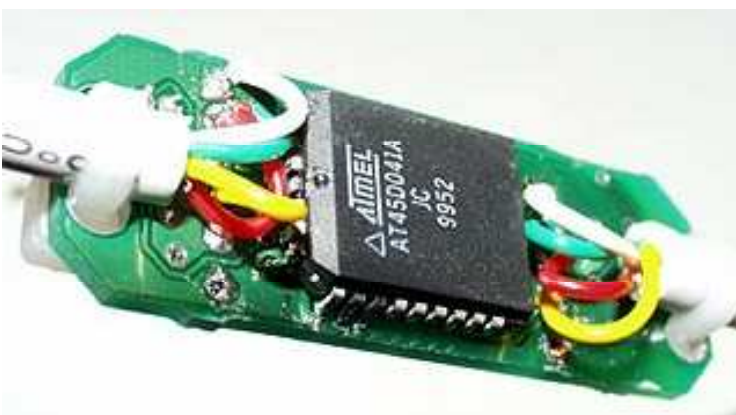
I was opening up my almost brand new Dell 600m laptop, to replace a broken PCMCIA slot riser on the motherboard. As soon as I got the keyboard off, I noticed a small cable running from the keyboard connection underneath a piece of metal protecting the motherboard.



I figured "No Big Deal", and continued with the disassembly. But when I got the metal panels off, I saw a small white heatshrink-wrapped package. Being ever-curious, I sliced the heatshrink open. I found a little circuit board inside.



Being an EE by trade, this piqued my curiosity considerably. On one side of the board, one Atmel AT45D041A four megabit Flash memory chip.



On the other side, one Microchip Technology PIC16F876 Programmable Interrupt Controller, along with a little Fairchild Semiconductor CD4066BCM quad bilateral switch.





Looking further, I saw that the other end of the cable was connected to the integrated ethernet board.

What could this mean? I called Dell tech support about it, and they said, and I quote, "The integrated service tag identifier is there for assisting customers in the event of lost or misplaced personal information." He then hung up.

A little more research, and I found that that board spliced in between the keyboard and the ethernet chip is little more than a Keyghost **hardware keylogger**.

The reasons Dell would put this in their laptops can only be left up to your imagination. It would be very impractical to hand-analyze the logs, and very CPU-intensive to do so on a computer for every person that purchased a dell laptop. Why are these keyloggers here? I recently almost found out.

Calling Dell back, they told me to call the Department of Homeland Security. Calling the DHS, they told me to submit a Freedom of Information act request to them with my questions. And I just now received a reply.



Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs



Homeland Security

JUN 7 2005

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

We have reviewed your Freedom of Information Act request, and have found that the requested records are exempt from being disclosed under FOIA. The decision to withhold this information may be appealed in writing to the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. Any appeal should include the reasons for reconsideration, a copy of this letter, and should be postmarked no later than 60 days from the date of this letter.

If you have any questions, please contact [REDACTED] at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

Johnny Rosner
Disclosure Specialist

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