

EuroSOUPS: Increasing International SOUPS Participation

Mike Just
Glasgow Caledonian University
<http://www.gcu.ac.uk/sec/mjust/>

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1 My Background

My name is Mike Just and I am a Lecturer (Assistant Professor) in the School of Engineering & Computing at Glasgow Caledonian University in Glasgow, Scotland (UK). At various points in my career, I have also worked at the University of Edinburgh (UK), Mazaryk University (Czech Republic), and Carleton University (Canada). I also worked for eight years for the Canadian government, and four years in the private sector.

My involvement in “SOUPS-like” research began at the 2003 CHI *Workshop on Human-Computer Interaction and Security Systems* organised by Andrew Patrick, where I presented my work on the security and usability of challenge questions that are used for the account recovery of Canadian citizens and businesses. I have continued to be active in this area with the following publications, including one at SOUPS 2009:

- K. Renaud, M. Just, “Pictures or Questions? Examining User Responses to Association-Based Authentication,” in *Proceedings of the British HCI Conference 2010*, Dundee, Scotland, September 2010.
- M. Just, D. Aspinall, “Challenging Challenge Questions: An Experimental Analysis of Authentication Technologies and User Behaviour,” *Policy and Internet Journal*: Vol. 2: Iss. 1, Article 5, 2010.
- M. Just, D. Aspinall, “Personal Choice and Challenge Questions: A Security and Usability Assessment,” in *Proceedings of the 5th ACM Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security (SOUPS) 2009*.
- M. Just, “Usable Challenge Question Authentication Systems,” in *Security and Usability: Designing Secure Systems That People Can Use*, OReilly, Laurie Faith-Cranor, Simson Garfinkel, editors, 2005.
- M. Just, “Designing and Evaluating Challenge Question Systems,” *IEEE Security & Privacy*, 2(5): 32-39 (2004). (L. Faith-Cranor, S. Garfinkel, editors).

In September 2010, I co-organised a workshop on privacy and usability methods with Tristan Henderson (University of St. Andrews), co-located with the 2010 British HCI Conference in Dundee, Scotland.¹

2 Observations and Considerations

Before presenting my thoughts on a EuroSOUPS event, I list a number of observations or assumptions. At the November workshop I hope to validate and compare these assumptions with other participants.

- SOUPS seems to receive about 50-60 submissions per year, with an acceptance rate of about 25-30%. I am unfamiliar as to the overall quality level of the rejected submissions.
- SOUPS authors have predominantly been from North America and the UK. Table 1 shows the different countries represented on the accepted papers for each of the last three SOUPS.
- The November EuroSOUPS workshop Organising Committee included only members from North America and the UK (i.e., there was no representation from mainland Europe).
- Some papers or activities appear at other venues that are dedicated to either security or usability.
 - Usability: CHI, British HCI, NordiCHI, ...
 - Security: ACM CCS, ESORICS, NSPW, Usenix Security, ...
- There isn’t an existing conference dedicated to security/privacy/usability, outside of SOUPS.

¹<http://scone.cs.st-andrews.ac.uk/pump2010/>

Country	SOUPS 2008	SOUPS 2009	SOUPS 2010	Total
US	6	9	7	22
UK	3	3	4	9
Canada	3	1	3	7
India	0	0	2	2
Switzerland	0	0	2	2
Germany	0	1	1	2
Ireland	0	0	1	1
Finland	0	0	1	1
Israel	0	1	0	1
Japan	1	0	0	1

Table 1: Country-specific representation on SOUPS papers

Given the above observations, I would think that it would be desirable to maintain *at least 50* submissions per SOUPS conference. Even if some of the rejected SOUPS papers would be suitable for a smaller workshop, additional sources of submissions need to be found. In my mind, it comes down to a question of whether there is enough (currently “scattered”) research work taking place to support two SOUPS-like events?

From these considerations, one can construct three broad paths that might be taken: (i) Wait to create a EuroSOUPS workshop or conference. In the meantime, continue to build the reputation of SOUPS, and use other (security or HCI specific) venues to publish papers; or (ii) Organise a workshop that is co-located with a popular European (security or HCI) conference, or (iii) Organise EuroSOUPS conference.

In my opinion, it’s worth trying to initiate a second SOUPS-like conference. Though I don’t believe that the latter two options above would immediately succeed on their own. If the purpose of a “EuroSOUPS” workshop or conference is to bring together existing research groups that are not yet engaged with SOUPS, I believe that we would best leverage the (predominantly North American) success of SOUPS (i.e., reputation and publication) to encourage the involvement of the European community.

3 EuroSOUPS Proposal

My proposal combines the three options above, in a manner that is intended to meet the following goal

Goal: To better coordinate SOUPS-like research that is not currently present at the SOUPS conference.

To do this, I don’t think that we should simply rush to create a European conference counterpart to SOUPS, nor do I think that it would be effective to take the route of a workshop for several years. I believe that we should work towards a EuroSOUPS conference by leveraging the current reputation of SOUPS. My proposal centres on **holding SOUPS 2012 in Europe** and includes the following broad components:

1. 2011: Hold a EuroSOUPS workshop in Europe in 2011 (with published papers), preferably alongside a larger, reputable conference, e.g., ESORICS (Sept 2011).
2. 2012: Hold SOUPS 2012 conference in Europe (i.e., no SOUPS in North America in 2012).
3. 2013: Hold a EuroSOUPS 2013 conference in Europe, with the SOUPS 2013 conference returning to North America.

To ensure success, there should be European representation (beyond UK) on the EuroSOUPS 2011 workshop and SOUPS 2012 conference committees, a European invited talk, and SOUPS 2012 should be hosted in a city that is easy to get to, and has an existing reputation for SOUPS-like research, e.g., London, Newcastle, Glasgow. Of course, there are numerous other details and considerations that I look forward to discussing at the workshop.