The Cyberspace Battle for Information: Combating Internet Censorship

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Abstract:
The Internet has become ubiquitous, bringing many benefits to people across the globe. Unfortunately, Internet users face threats to their security and privacy: repressive regimes deprive them of freedom of speech and open access to information, governments and corporations monitor their online behavior, advertisers collect and sell their private data, and cybercriminals hurt them financially through security breaches.

My research aims to make Internet communications more secure and privacy-preserving. In this talk, I will focus on the design, implementation, and analysis of tools that help users bypass Internet censorship. I will discuss the major challenges in building robust censorship circumvention tools, introduce two novel classes of systems that we have developed to overcome these challenges, and conclude with several directions for future research.

Bio:
Amir Houmansadr is a postdoctoral scholar at the University of Texas at Austin. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in August 2012. Amir’s research revolves around various network security and privacy problems, including Internet censorship circumvention, network traffic analysis, and anonymous communications. He has received several awards for his research, including the Best Practical Paper Award at the IEEE Symposium on Security & Privacy (Oakland) 2013.