

Exploring Darknet Marketplaces

Assignment Purpose

- Understand the difference between the surface web, the deep web, and the dark web
- Explore alternative ways of accessing the Internet and finding content
- Investigate the functioning of darknet marketplaces and the types of goods and services exchanged.

Materials Needed

- A machine connected to the Internet (preferably a laptop or desktop)
- The Brave browser with Tor enabled

Assignment

Your assignment is in two parts. For Part I, read the document “[Surface Web vs. Deep Web vs. Dark Web](#)” and answer the questions. In Part II, use the “[Brave and Tor Installation Instructions](#)” to prepare and then answer the questions. You can answer the questions directly on this page if you wish. Please follow the same standard in presenting your answers, including screenshots. Be neat. Make sure the screenshots are large enough for me to evaluate.

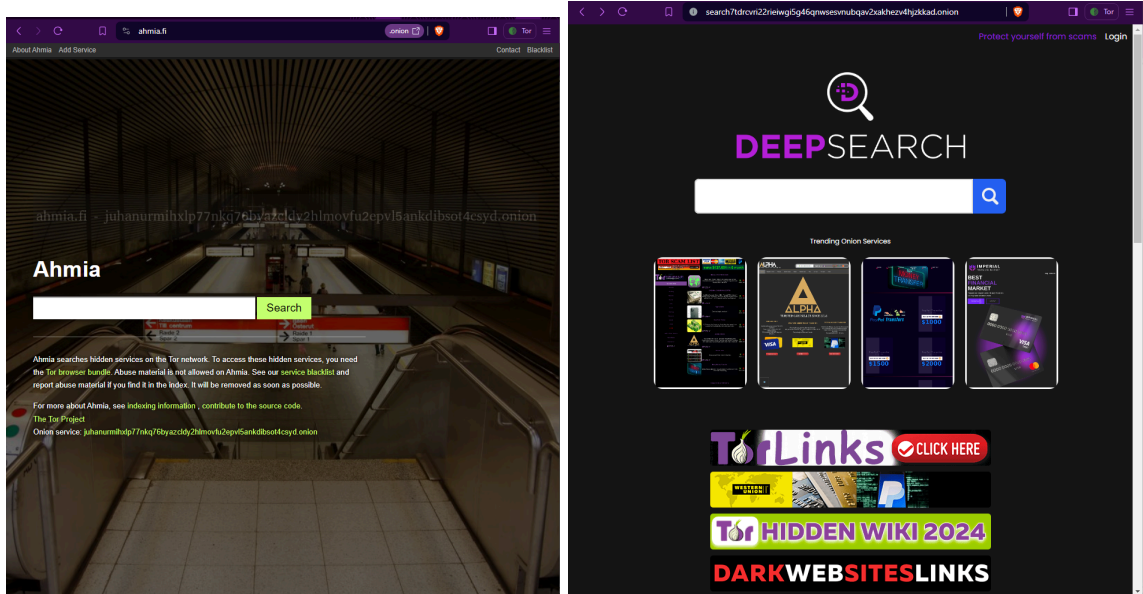
Part I

1. What is the difference between the surface web, the deep web, and the dark web? **15 pts.**
 - a. The surface web consists of statically linked web-pages which can be accessed by a standard browser.
 - b. The deep web cannot be accessed by using traditional search engines due to the nature of each website.
 - c. Most dark web pages are hosted anonymously and are encrypted.
2. What are some differences between the *users* of the surface web, deep web, and dark web? **15 pts.**
 - a. Surface level users are usually law-abiding and well-intentioned people browsing on the internet.
 - b. Users of the deep web tend to be more technologically savvy meaning that they can make it so users are required to navigate the site and create an account on the site as well.
 - c. Users on the dark web try effortlessly to remain anonymous and their behavior is commonly associated with illegal activity, like cybercrime, drugs, and money laundering to name a few.
3. What space in the digital environment likely has more content - the surface web or the deep web? **5 pts.**
 - a. Deep Web

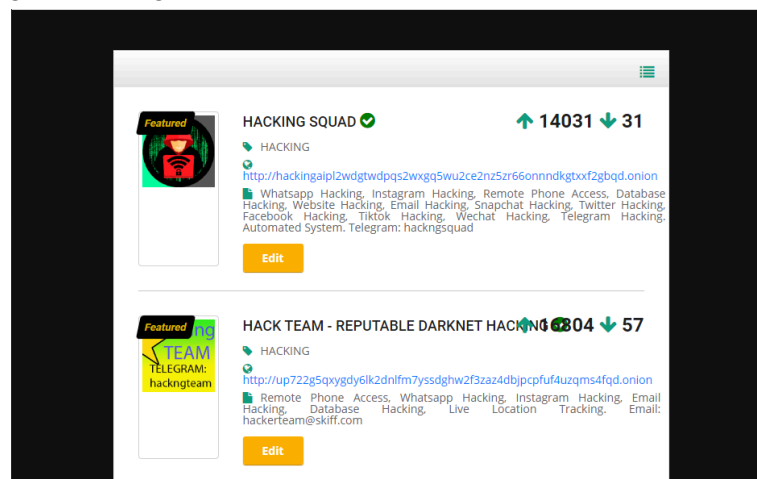
4. What are some challenges the authors discuss concerning the deep web? **15 pts.**
 - a. Navigation and searchability of the deep web

Part II

5. Take a screenshot of two different darknet markets. Include the URL ([see the example from what I believe is likely a fake site](#)). **5 pts.**



6. What are the primary goods and services typically exchanged on darknet markets? **5 pts.**
 - a. The primary goods and services that are sold on dark markets include but are not limited to; credit card and crypto scammers, identity theft, weapons and drug sales, CP and other graphic materials.
7. Darknet markets are usually organized (but not always) into subcategories of goods. Go into one of the goods categories and take a screenshot ([see example here](#)) **5 pts.**



8. Describe in a few sentences how buyers and sellers can communicate on darknet markets. You can discover this by attempting to communicate with a seller. **10 pts.**
 - a. On darknet markets, buyers and sellers typically communicate through encrypted messaging systems within the market platform itself or through secure messaging apps like Wickr or PGP-encrypted email. These communications often involve discussing product details, pricing, shipping arrangements, and any other necessary transaction information. To maintain anonymity, both parties often use pseudonyms and take precautions to protect their identities.
9. Describe in a few sentences how darknet markets operate regarding transactions and payments. You can discover this by attempting to complete a transaction. **10 pts.**
 - a. On darknet markets, transactions are typically conducted through encrypted communication channels within the platform. Buyers select products, negotiate prices, and arrange payment methods such as cryptocurrencies. Once payment is confirmed, sellers ship the products through discreet methods to maintain anonymity. The use of escrow services ensures that funds are only released to the seller upon successful delivery, providing a level of trust in the transaction process.
10. Describe four differences between searching the darknet and the surface web. **15 pts.**
 - a. Searching the darknet involves using specialized software like Tor, while the surface web is accessible through regular browsers. Darknet sites often require specific URLs or access points, whereas surface web content is indexed by search engines. Darknet browsing emphasizes anonymity and privacy, while the surface web is more open and visible. Transactions on the darknet often involve cryptocurrencies for added anonymity, unlike the surface web where traditional payment methods are common.