

Re: atheros chips dangerous?

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Source: <http://www.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/FreeBSD-Security/2006-08/msg00038.html>

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Wesley Morgan wrote:

Other vendors have been totally impossible to work with.

I agree, the Atheros driver is fantastic. The driver may be "binary" in some ways, but I think we got the best of both worlds. The vendor is providing every scrap of information necessary without having to give away trade secrets, and FreeBSD got a driver authored by a developer who is probably one of the most qualified people in the world to work on it. I know I go out of my way to purchase and recommend Atheros-based wireless devices because of this.

because of this, I'm buying their hardware.

Anyone who simply makes the blanket assumption that because something is "FOSS" that it gets more peer review need only to look at some of the oldest open source projects around, such as sendmail or XFree/Xorg, to realize that security problems can persist for years without being discovered.

I know that by the mere fact of making it free it isn't automatically more secure, it needs reviews from people interest in it. But by reducing the potential number of reviewers with some type of restrictive contract doesn't help either.

Anyway, as it was commented in this case the solution was reasonable because the NDA in use is for the 802.11 PHY layer to comply with the regulatory laws, see:

<http://madwifi.org/wiki/HAL#WhyistheHALclosedsource>

freebsd-security@xxxxxxxxxxxxx mailing list
<http://lists.freebsd.org/mailman/listinfo/freebsd-security>

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