

Matt Thomlinson

General Manager, Trustworthy Computing Security



Matt Thomlinson is General Manager of Product Security at Microsoft and leads the Microsoft Security Engineering Center (MSEC), the Microsoft Security Response Center (MSRC) and Global Security Strategy & Diplomacy (GSSD). His teams are responsible for proactively implementing training, tools and processes of the Security Development Lifecycle (SDL) to improve the security of Microsoft products. As such, Matt is responsible for assessing the threat and assuring the security of Microsoft products and services from their inception, during development and throughout their supported life.

Matt built Microsoft's security research group to further security science, improve the security of our products and develop fundamentally new methods to mitigate security vulnerabilities, this became MSEC. Once a founding member of the MSRC, he now owns all aspects of Microsoft's security response and communications, from the triage of new vulnerabilities, through the management of Product Group solutions, to responding to vulnerability exploitation emergencies and driving incident postmortems. As well as the technical investigation of vulnerabilities and malware, Matt's teams work closely with the many communities involved in software security, ranging from researchers, through Law Enforcement to Governments. His recently established GSSD team is responsible for tracking and responding to legislation and advancing government information assurance relationships.

In his 15 years at Microsoft, Matt has built and led many security engineering efforts with large customer impact. Matt led various development teams building Operating System infrastructure, most recently in Windows Security during the development of Windows Server 2003, Windows XP and Windows 2000. In 2003, he directed the creation of Windows XP Service Pack 2, which was the first significant security improvement of the Windows client platform. Later he built and led the Secure Windows Initiative (SWI) team during the design, implementation & release of Windows Vista. His SWI team drove the security assurance plan as well as hardening the platform even further through the addition of defense-in-depth exploit mitigation techniques, such as heap hardening and Address Space Layout Randomization (ASLR).

In his early career, Matt's specialism was in cryptography and protocols, so he started out as a developer working on CryptoAPI and Certificate Server, and contributed security functionality to various early versions of IE.

Matt is named as inventor or co-inventor on over 15 patents on technologies ranging from secure secret storage and random number generators to vulnerability mitigation techniques, and is named on 5 pending applications. He is a Seattle native and holds both Master's and Bachelor's degrees in Electrical Engineering from the University of Washington.