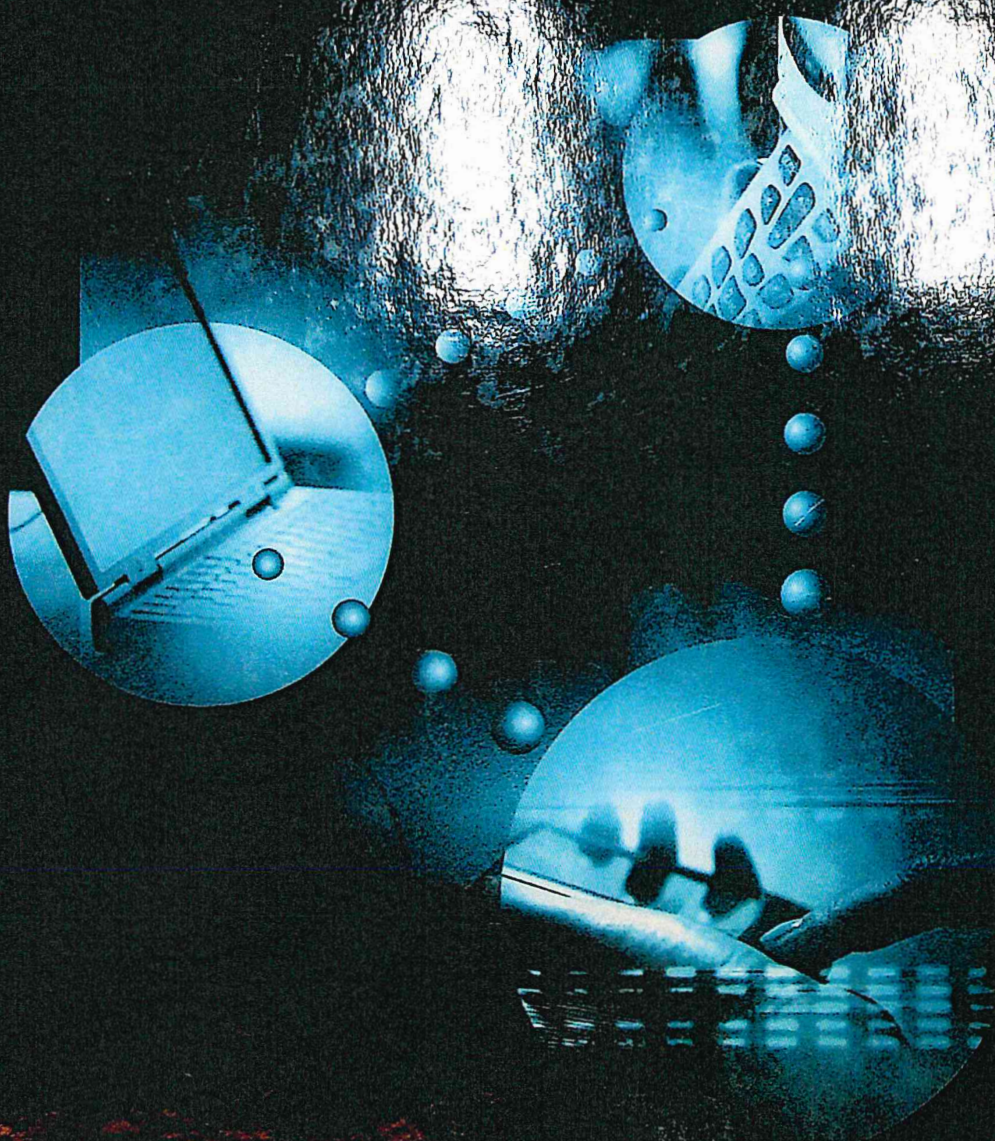


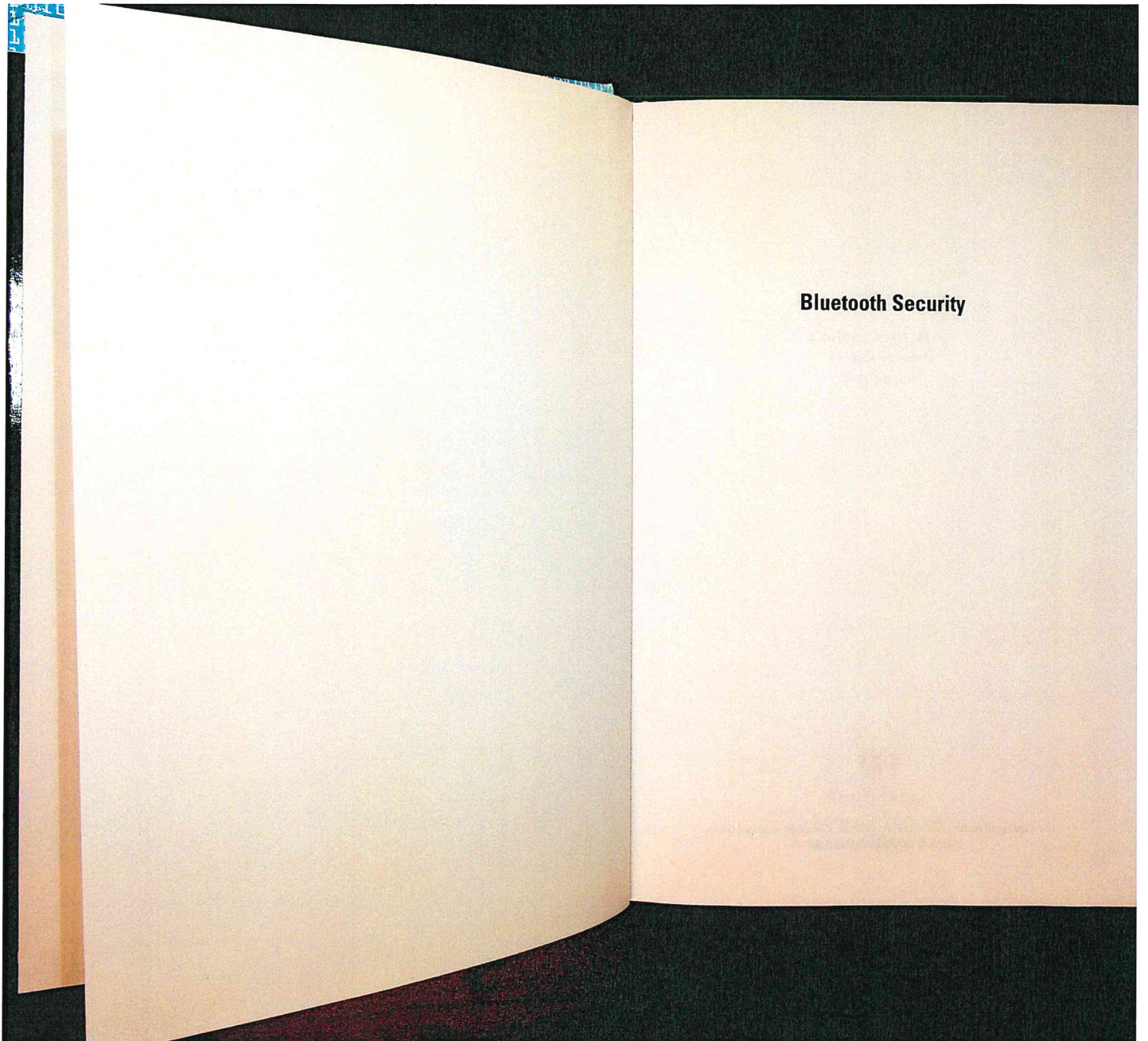
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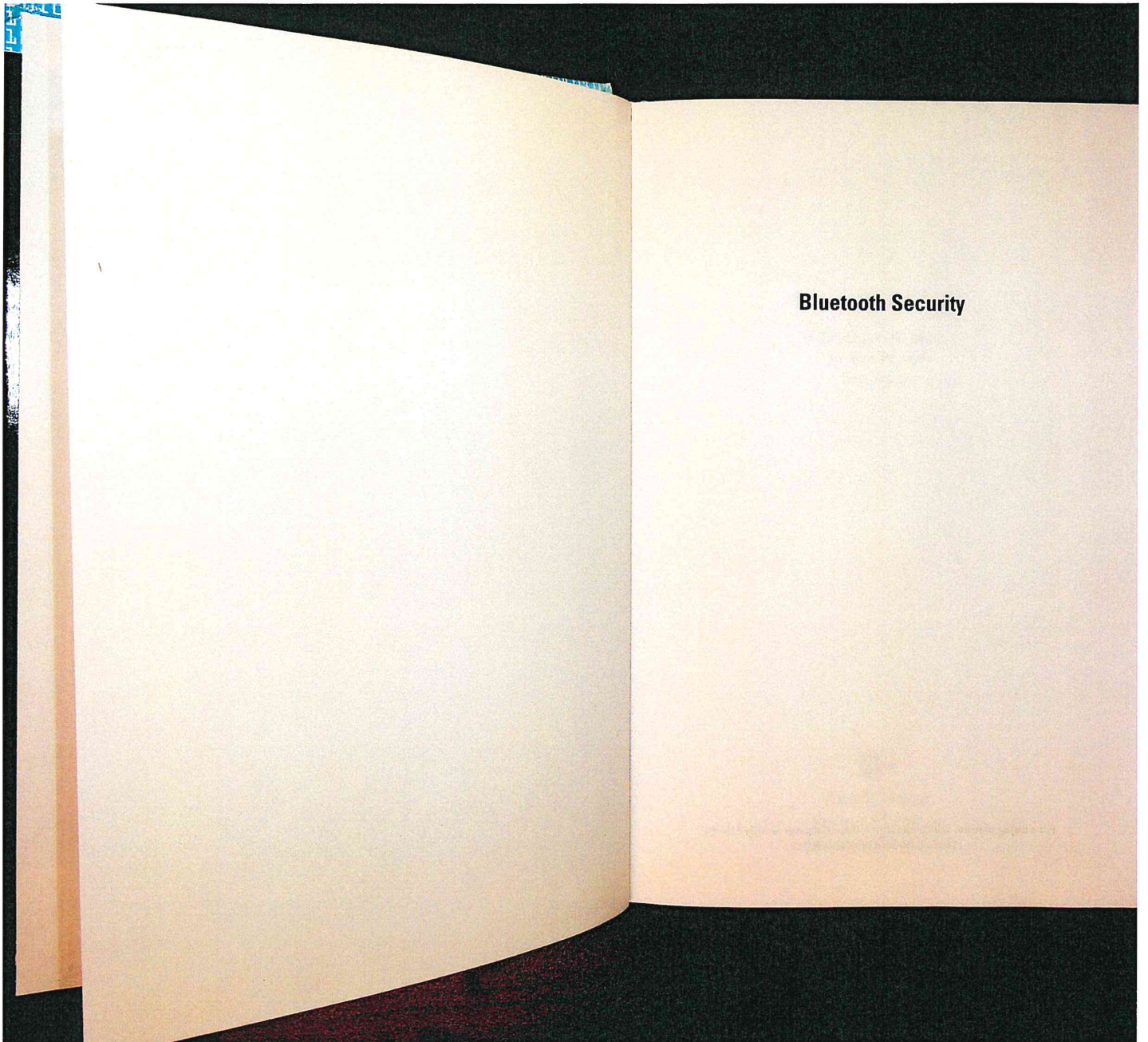
COMPUTER SECURITY SERIES

Bluetooth Security



CHRISTIAN GEHRMANN • JOAKIM PERSSON • BEN SMEETS





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Bluetooth Security

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Preface

The simple wireless connectivity Bluetooth technology offers is attractive. Therefore, Bluetooth-equipped devices have found their way into quite different environments and are used for a wide range of applications. However, the security aspects must be carefully analyzed in order to decide whether Bluetooth technology indeed provides the right solution for a particular task.

Several books about Bluetooth wireless technology have been written. While these books are excellent at describing the general functionality of Bluetooth devices, they are not particularly detailed when it comes to the security-related aspects of Bluetooth technology. This book is different in this respect, since it is completely devoted to security matters.

The security features that are defined in the specification are thoroughly discussed and described in the book. Moreover, several interesting facts with respect to this are pinpointed. Specifically, both strong and weak points of Bluetooth security are identified. Additionally, we do not limit ourselves to what directly has been written in the specification. We also want to give some insight into how potential risks and security threats will affect deployment of Bluetooth technology.

This book is divided into two parts. Chapters 1 through 7 (Part I) discuss the security functionality defined on the basis of the Bluetooth version 1.2 specification. However, security is not a feature that comes alone in a system. Security only has a meaning in a certain context. Therefore, the first chapter of this book provides an overview of the Bluetooth system. The communication principles and the security-related functions in the system are covered. For the reader not familiar with security concepts and terminology, the notions and terms used in this book are explained. The security-related functions in the Bluetooth

ciphering key derived from the constrained encryption key K'_C . This key is the initial state of the ciphering engine prior to generating the overlay sequence. A summary of the different key types can be found in Table 2.1. More details on the encryption keys is given in Section 2.4.1.

2.2 Pairing and user interaction

As indicated earlier, the pairing of two devices is the procedure by which two devices establish a shared secret that they can use when they meet again. The pairing requires user interaction, for example, the entering of a pass-key.¹ See Figure 2.1(a). The Bluetooth system allows the pass-key to be 128 bits long. Such a large pass-key value would be rather user unfriendly for manual input. However, this feature allows the use of a higher level automated key agreement scheme that can “feed” the agreed pass-key into the pairing procedure. See Figure 2.1(b). The high-level key agreement scheme can be a network or *transport layer security* (TLS) protocol. Examples of such protocols are the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) protocols TLS [1] and Internet key exchange (IKE) [2].

There are two kinds of pass-keys in Bluetooth terminology: the *variable* pass-key and the *fixed* pass-key. The first type represents a pass-key that can be arbitrarily chosen at the pairing instance. This requires that some form of user interaction takes place in order to feed the Bluetooth device with the appropriate pass-key value. This interaction is most likely accomplished using a keyboard or numerical keypad. An example of a typical device with a variable pass-key is the mobile phone. In contrast, the fixed pass-key cannot be chosen arbitrarily when it is needed. Instead, a predetermined value must be used. This type of pass-key is used when there is no user interface to input a value to the Bluetooth

Table 2.1
Overview of Key Types

Purpose	Semipermanent		Temporary	
Authentication key generation	Unit key	Combination key	Initialization key	Master key
Ciphering			Encryption key Constrained encryption key	Payload key

1. In the Bluetooth specification, one sometimes uses the term personal identification number (PIN).

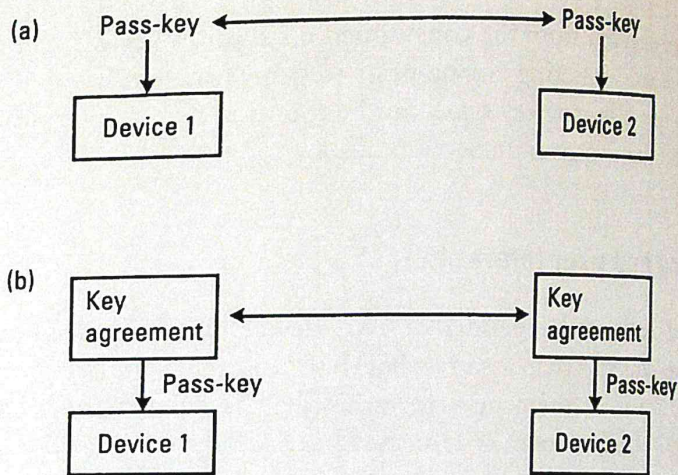


Figure 2.1 (a) Pairing through manual user interaction, and (b) pairing through separate key agreement protocol.

device. Clearly, for a pairing to work, only one device can have a fixed pass-key (unless, of course, both devices happen to have the same fixed pass-key). Examples of devices in need of fixed pass-keys are Bluetooth-enabled mice and headsets. These gadgets come with a factory preset pass-key when delivered to the customer.

Note that a fixed pass-key need not be “fixed” in the sense that it can never be changed. Preferably, the user is allowed to change the fixed pass-key in some way. In some scenarios, a wired connection could be used, for example, by plugging in an external keyboard and changing the pass-key. This is only feasible if it is difficult for anyone but the rightful owner to have physical access to the Bluetooth device in question. More interesting is to allow the change over Bluetooth using an already paired device (equipped with the necessary user interface) over a *secure connection*. This implies that the user connects to the device with a fixed pass-key, authenticates itself, and requests the link to be encrypted before a fresh pass-key value can be sent to the remote device. The new value replaces the old one and becomes the fixed pass-key to use in subsequent pairings. In Chapter 3 we will come back to the details of the pairing procedure.

2.3 Authentication

A Bluetooth device in a connectable state accepts connection requests from other devices. This means that there is a risk that a connectable device is connected to and attacked by a malicious device. Obvious, this can be avoided by never entering a connectable state. On the other hand, that implies that no Bluetooth connections at all can be established. Accordingly, there is a need to

This first-of-its-kind book, written by expert authors who actively contribute to the evolution of Bluetooth specifications, provides an overview and detailed descriptions of all the security functions and features of this standard's latest core release. After categorizing all the security issues involved in ad hoc networking, this hands-on volume explains how to design a highly secure Bluetooth system and implement security enhancements. The book also helps practitioners fully understand the main security risks involved with introducing Bluetooth-based communications in their applications.

This cutting-edge resource describes the most significant attacks on Bluetooth security mechanisms and their implementations, demonstrating how some of these known weaknesses can be avoided with appropriate defensive measures. The book presents concrete examples of how to design security solutions for some Bluetooth applications and systems built on these applications. Professionals find real-world case studies, including technical algorithms, mechanisms and protocols, and security architectures. These architectures offer valuable guidelines for use in building Bluetooth and non-Bluetooth-specific security mechanisms.

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