

# The only thing preventing them from going home was two AA batteries

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Raymond Chen

In the early 2000s, if the security representatives for Office, Windows, IIS, and Internet Explorer were all in the same Microsoft conference room, it meant either that you had walked in on a standard Microsoft security meeting, or something really bad was happening. (If they were all together not at Microsoft, then maybe you caught them on poker night.)

After Slammer, the security leads were required to carry pagers so that they could be summoned in the event of an emergency.

Yes, this was the era of pagers.

The pagers went off one Saturday morning, and the Office and Windows security representatives were called in due to an issue that potentially affected both products. They went through the usual procedure of assessing the situation, using the whiteboard to help understand the issue and plan their response to it.

The conclusion of the meeting was that this was not a security emergency after all. But before the meeting could be adjourned, someone had to take a picture of the diagrams on the whiteboard to go into the meeting notes.

As noted, this was in the era of pagers, which means it was also was not the era of smartphones.

The meeting room had a digital camera for the express purpose of taking pictures of the whiteboard. Unfortunately, the batteries were dead.

That's right: The only thing keeping the Office and Windows security representatives from going home was a camera's dead batteries.

The two representatives studied the camera. Hm, AA batteries.

They looked at each other.

They looked at their pagers.

They looked at the camera.

They looked at each other again.

Immediately and simultaneously, the Office and Windows security representatives opened their pagers, removed the single AA batteries, and put them in the digital camera.

Picture taken.

Now everybody could go home.

The MSRC representative in the room was left speechless for a moment, and then said, “I’m pretty sure the new company-wide emergency response plan does not allow for Windows and Office to *simultaneously* disable their emergency pagers!”

The Windows representative calmly replied, “We are already here. Where would you page us *to?*”

Checkmate.

Everybody went home.

**Bonus chatter:** I hope they remembered to get not only new batteries for the camera, but also a set of spare batteries so this won’t happen again.

[Raymond Chen](#)

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