XSecure: Machine Learning Based Phishing Malware Detection

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Abstract: Phishing is a type of online social engineering attack that aims to steal a person's digital identity by impersonating a legitimate entity [1]. The hacker transmits a signal or a message through an email or a link embedded in that email, chat, social media post, or other channel with a link to a malicious site which captures users' private and sensitive information We're focusing and focusing our efforts on establishing a system for URL analysis and classification in order to prevent phishing assaults and cybercrime. The needs and obstacles for implementing Malicious URL Detection as a service for real-world cybersecurity applications are highlighted in this document. So, malware website detection is the need of today's internet platform and applications of malware detection should be user-friendly and easily accessible to all users.

Keywords: Malicious URL Detection; feature classification; feature extraction; logistic regression; random forest

I. INTRODUCTION

Hackers regularly employ spam and phishing to get users to visit malicious URLs, after which Trojans are installed on the victims' systems or sensitive data is exposed. Harmful URL detection technologies can help users discover and avoid malicious URLs and prevent them from being attacked by malicious URLs. Blacklist-based In the past, methods for detecting phishing Websites are utilized. There are a few significant advantages to this strategy. It's quick, has a low rate of false positives, and is simple to use.

To identify malicious URLs, researchers used a machine learning technique. These methods frequently require manual extraction of the features, and to avoid detection attackers can redesign the features. Developing a more effective malicious URL detection model has become a research priority in today's complicated network environment.

This paper provides a strategy for detecting fraudulent URLs that is based on a logistic regression model using machine learning techniques. This machine Learning security solution, supports an always on detection system, Django framework is used for the backend and simple HTML, CSS used for frontend and designing the pages.

Our contributions and advances in this study are as follows:

- (1) This paper explains how to apply a model for detecting fraudulent URLs that is based on a Logistic Regression Model.
- (2) The features are taken from the URL sequence during the feature extraction and representation step [4]. The identified and extracted characteristics are transferred into a vector, which is then processed immediately by machine learning to learn the classification model. Extracting features like "@" in the URL can redirect you to some other malicious website so if there is an "@" in the URL link the trained model will detect the website as malicious.
- (3) We conducted several comparison tests to demonstrate the practicality of the paradigm described in this study. We do six contrast tests with the embedding approach such as status Alexa index, status abnormal URL, status domain age. status redirects, status prefix suffix, status '@': not applicable. If either of these has a false status then it means the website is not safe for browsing.

II. RELATED WORK

A. Signature based Malicious URL

Detection For a long time, researchers have been researching and applying signature [6] sets to detect bad URLs. Lists of known harmful URLs are typically used in the bulk of these investigations. When a new URL is visited, a database query is done [14,15]. If a URL appears in the list of blacklisted URLs, it is harmful and will raise an alert or warning; otherwise, URLs are regarded safe. The primary problem of this [8,9] technique is that new malicious URLs that are not included in the given list would be exceedingly difficult to detect.

B. Machine Learning based Malicious URL Detection

supervised learning, unsupervised learning, and semi-supervised learning are three types of machine learning algorithms that may be used to detect harmful URLs [13,16]. The detecting algorithms are based on URL behaviors. Based on machine learning methods, [2,4,5] analyses a variety of harmful URL systems. Machine learning methods such as SVM, Logistic Regression, Naive Bayes, Decision Trees, Random Forest, and others include SVM, Logistic Regression, Naive Bayes, Decision Trees, Random Forest, and others. This article uses the Logistic Regression

Model. The experimental results will demonstrate the algorithm's accuracy with various parameter configurations.

URL properties and behaviors may be classified into two categories: static and dynamic. In their works [12, 13, 19], authors presented Lexical, Content, Host, and Popularity-based approaches for evaluating and extracting static behavior of URLs. As machine learning algorithms, these experiments employed online learning algorithms and SVM. [21, 22] use dynamic URL operations to identify malicious URLs. Character and semantic groups, as well as the Abnormal group in websites and the Host-based group; the Correlated group [24], are all explored [8].

C. Malicious URL Detection Tools

- URL Void: Program that employs multiple engines and domain blacklists. Some URL Void instances are Google SafeBrowsing, Norton SafeWeb, and MyWOT. The Void URL tool has the benefit of being simple to use and range of other testing services.
- UnMask Parasites: Unmask Parasites is a URL testing tool that parses HTML codes, notably external links, iframes, and JavaScript, and downloads specified URLs. This tool has the benefit of rapidly and reliably detecting iframes.
- Comodo Site Inspector: This is a program that can identify malware and security flaws. Users may verify URLs, and webmasters can set up daily checks by downloading all of the sites they specify. and execute them in a sandboxed browser environment
- Other tools: Norton Safe Web, Sucuri, Virus Total, Site Advisor, Browser Defender and Google Safe Browsing Diagnostic are among the tools available. According to the investigation and assessment of harmful URL detection tools described above, the majority of existing malicious URL detection programs [16] are signature-based URL detection systems.

Paper Title	Methodology Proposed	The Problem Discussed	Main Points: Affirmative & Negative	Network Security Strong/Weak Also Named Security Schemes Applied	Technology
[26]	This study provides a natural language processing-based approach for detecting malicious URLs. On blacklist words, we employ features such as word vector representation derived using Global Vector for Word Representation (GloVe), statistical cues, and n-gram.	the most common techniques	ANN architecture is proposed. The paper highlights the benefits of using Artificial Neural Network in today's research machine learning projects.	use any network security	
[27]	Support Algorithmic Vector Machine is utilized in this study to achieve autonomous learning and build the classifier; classification through TF-IDF is used to process the data, and after normalization and standardization, the feature matrix of the gathered URL data is obtained and saved in the sparse matrix	Internet reliant, concerns regarding security of the network have grown in prominence and increment of bad malicious websites have also emerged. To	The system clusters and reduces the dimensionality of the retrieved features using the K-Means and TSVD algorithms. In terms of sparse matrix processing, the K-Means approach outperforms the TSVD technique, moreover excessive data dimensions raise the model's complexity.	frameworks for this system,	SVM detection model
[28]	This paper proposes the use of a malware identification method that examines the URLs browsed by a programmable automation bot to detect malware.	diversity have increased dramatically on mobile networks, posing a substantial threat to	In addition, we do extensive tests to compare the suggested method to others and confirm the detection model's validity. The results of the tests reveal that our approach detects malware reliably and quickly. Not only it can detect malware detected over the course of a year, but also helps in detect potentially malicious programs in 3rd-party application stores.	precautions mentioned in the	multi-view neural network
[29]	The paper investigates the darknet's URL addresses and presents an artificial neural	activities, mostly takes help of	The paper employs an artificial neural network to detect darknet URLs by extracting a numeric vector from the URL.		Artificial Neural network

	network-based solution for darknet URL recognition.	relationship between two sides of cl communication from being ca leaked. Because the IP addresses in	JRL length numeric vector can be changed on the fly, and the URL content can be restored in part. Varied lengths of numeric vector of URL can have different categorization effects at the same time.	•	
[30]	Paper adopts machine-learning method and uses passive DNS as the analytical data to construct a malicious domain name classification detection model.	dangerous, the area of threats with not the scope it possesses are accontinuously growing, with the natuse of traditional reputation W systems and reverse engineering continuously growing.	word vector using the Word2ec model. This solution is completely different from the previous detection schemes, which based on user	N/A	word vector tool Word2vec
[31]	This paper proposes a model to develop a method that can detect phishing attacks by just using only nine lexical features. Various machine learning classifiers were tried, with the Random Forest (RF) classifier achieving the greatest accuracy of 99.57 percent.	seems very appealing and planthentic to the users. When user no enters their credentials, these are very redirected to the attackers.	Anti-phishing system that can detect phishing URLs in real-time without the need for any third-party data and with a very fast response time. The proposed approach is incapable of detecting harmful material contained in small short URLs.	scheme is proposed or used in	

[32] The proposed methodology analyses lexical features such as URL and domain length, URL encoding, number of special characters or malicious IP addresses as well as hostbased features like page rank and domain lifespan, to find maliciousness or beingness of the email

biggest issues with blacklists is that they don't detect phishing URLs in real time.

Blacklists may be in the form of IP The webpage's rank is determined by host. There is no such network Host based and lexical based addresses or websites used by based factors such as page rank. Phishing security technique presented or email filters and block the users web pages have a limited lifespan and a employed in this article. through an available list of IP less age domain. As a result, they have an addresses or websites. One of the extremely low page rank or none at all.

features Bayes classifier adapted in spam filters

The approaches used in this work were a mix of both linear non-linear and spatial transformations. For linear, a two-stage distance metric was designed. The Nystrom technique was employed for kernel approximation in nonlinear transformations. with updated distance metric.

maliciousness. On the other side, content-based classification tries to detect potentially hazardous by analyzing websites contents or layouts of the pages. NYS-DML). Using offer alternate content to the unknown. auditing institutions and the general public. To different search engines the contents of the fake sites would appear normal and the malicious content can't be detected

In real time, blacklisting tactics This research develops new features that Network Security strong and Linear as well as Non-linear are unable to detect a website's untangle the linear and non-linear relationships between characteristics in hazardous URLs data using five space transformation models (singular value decomposition, distance metric learning, the Nystrom techniques, DML-NYS, and

looking-up Linear correlations between features and programming tools, fraudulent manually picked attributes may not be sites can recognize the IPs of important to the classification job because search engine crawlers and the importance/weight of each feature, as auditing organizations, and then well as the scales of the features, are

Variational Auto-Encoder space (VAE) was introduced as a methods representation learning method for network security tasks.

transformation

[34]	This study proposes a light-weighted technique that simply considers the URL's lexical properties. The results reveal that the Random Forest (RF) classifier is more accurate than the other classifiers.		Only from the URL, a minimum set of ideal features is extracted, which decreases execution time and data consumption. There is no classifier that outperforms other classifiers in terms of efficiency, accuracy or execution time.	security technique presented or	Logistic Regression (LR), Nave Bayes (NB), Support Vector Classification (SVC), Random Forest (RF) and K- Nearest Neighbors (k-NN))
[35]	This research offers a unique malicious domain identification model based on unsupervised learning, and builds a domain detection which is malicious approach employing the autoencoder solely using benign domains provided during model training, resulting in a 99 percent detection accuracy and F1 score.	Neural networks were used in context of supervised learning, which necessitated a vast amount of training data as well as significant data gathering and labelling burdens.	The accuracy and F1 score of the architecture model remained near 0.99. With only a modest quantity of training data, the model can frame out common patterns of benign domains. The detection model is unable to determine the malicious domain's sources.	security scheme is proposed or	
[36]	They use a variety of ways to thoroughly examine the models' performance. After the algorithms were changed and using the F1 score to measure performance, the result increases considerably from 0.14 to around 0.90. Using the ultimate well-trained model, we can correctly predict the safety of any URLs on the	Not all URLs are completely safe. We must exercise caution while clicking on those URLs, as you may unintentionally enter some hazardous URLs. With the recent outbreak of COVID-19, an increasing number of people have been forced to stay at home. To keep up with what's going on outside, the majority of them	As Internet traffic rose during the COVID-19 pandemic, hackers exploited malicious URLs to attack Internet users and steal their information. I use machine learning to develop a high-performing prediction model to discover them.	N/A	Fine Tuned Classification Model

	Internet, protecting our personal information and data.	utilize their technical devices to access the Internet.			
[37]	To detect hazardous URLs, this study recommends Using a Convolutional Neural Network with Multiple Layers (CNN). One layer of CNN was studied initially in the suggested model. Following that, a two-layer CNN will be used to boost accuracy. The accuracy of detecting bogus websites rises from 89 percent to 91 percent when two layers of CNN are added in the algorithm.	Most of the time, people trust the website and input personal information without considering if it is genuine or not. A malicious website can be used by cybercriminals to launch ransomware attacks, steal passwords, and commit financial fraud. At the Centre of these cybercriminal operations is the social engineering-based Phishing attack.	CNINI 1 AC	N/A	Multilayer CNN
[38]	The proposed technique proved successful in exposing the patterns of different types of fraudulent domain names in groupings. It outperformed previous methods, and gave a clearer view of the data's common patterns when used to evaluate a blacklisted collection of URLs in a genuine business network.	Monitoring the URL list in network traffic data might reveal anomalous behavior. Malware is commonly transmitted through email and rogue websites.	It dynamically visualizes the dynamism of the attack pattern. It contributes to a damaging website ecology by reducing the number of black listings. It leverages open-source threat information to validate the risk level and damaging category.	N/A	Blacklist and malicious URL extension with FQDNs
[39]	The author of this paper has created a strong foundation for swiftly and automatically	A phishing attack impersonates a trustworthy third party in order to get sensitive information from a	They've laid down a solid foundation for detecting phishing URLs automatically. To deal with the limitless increase of URL space, they employed online learning.	N/A	Lexical, Host Based, Domain WHOIS Based, and GeoIP Based Features.

	detecting phishing URLs. They tested their method on an actual dataset and were able to reach an accuracy of 87 percent in real-time.	victim. In such an attack, users are typically routed to a fake website that appears to be legitimate. The URL of the phishing website is frequently communicated by email or instant messaging.		
[40]	The research suggests employing to discover harmful Uniform Resource Locators, researchers used a convolution neural network and a Recurrent Neural Network with Extended Present Moment Memory as models. A recurrent neural network with extended short-term memory achieved the highest accuracy of roughly 98 percent for categorizing phishing Uniform Resources.	are widely used to aid certain	Deep learning methods such as RNN and N/A RNN-LSTM are preferred to AI approaches since they may give outstanding component portrayal utilizing only raw URLs as data.	RNN and RNN-LSTM models

Paper Title	Strong Point	Weak Point	Future Work for Scope
[26]		mention the challenges faced in implementing on the	The different architectures that improve the efficiency and performance of system even further.
[28]	·	the URL using some protocol other than HTTP in the	Encrypted communication over the traffic and other protocols, we're considering creating a solution of identifying malicious traffic over the network utilizing other protocol other than HTTP which gives advantage of using API of VPN to give us full access over their network traffic. Before transferring traffic for analysis purposes for maliciousness behavior detection, a gateway forwarder forwards the packets in a secure manner via VPN interface with payload data on the traditional socket interface. By this method, one can deal with the challenge of malware detection with ambiguous fully traffic.
[27]	optimize the text properties of URL addresses. When given a good classification effect, TF-IDF	a broader scope to work with at the same time needs larger datasets to produce greater efficiency of results,	There are still vector features that can be added to feature vector selection, and additional techniques to be featured extracted. The new ones can be added in the future, and alternative feature extraction methods can be tried to improve the identification and the system's detection rate.
[29]	This research employs an artificial neural network to detect darknet URLs by extracting a numeric vector from them. The adjustments in URL's numeric vector length and extracting partially content from the URL. Different lengths of URL numeric vectors can have varying classification impacts at the same time.		The article only uses an ANN model and does not look into the effects of other network models like CNN, RNN, long short-term memory, or transform models on detection outcomes. These studies will be carried out in the future.
[30]	This solution is completely different from the previous detection schemes, which based on user access logs or web content. We organize the domain name records in the passive DNS by time and user IP, and then use the deep learning mechanism to embed the domain name into the vector space	The Model Accuracy is not quite good enough	There's still a lot of space for growth in the attenuation effect of the time dimension. Therefore, we can consider combining multiple classification modes or to use the popular LSTM model in deep learning to classify

[31]	features based on the lexical aspects of URLs,	Lexically different URLs from the nine features used cannot be detected as malicious. Haven't discuss in detail what future work will be done and by using which methods and technology	Use of more sophisticated based lexical features of URLs and using more advanced algorithms.
[32]	Use of lexical features as well as host-based features like page rank and domain age.	Haven't discuss what work will be done in the future and what additional methods can be used.	NA
[33]			Based on the features of the URLs, classifiers can be improved achieving less training time and higher accuracy. To investigate unique features of URLs embedded in graphical QR codes and to eliminate QR code fraud detection.
[34]		compared to the other classifiers, although KNN performs better in terms of execution.	The research will be expanded in the future using newer feature datasets and the application of reduction techniques to minimize execution time and improve accuracy.
[35]	Despite being trained with a tiny training set, the model maintains its detection performance. As a result, the model reduces the time spent accumulating training datasets.		Future research could lead to a better feature extraction and representation that can describe the origins of malicious sites
[36]	They use variety of characteristics to train and evaluate the model as well as optimize hyperparameters. The F1 score is close to 0.92, and the model's accuracy is 97 percent. To aid consumers in spotting bogus URLs, the concept might be implemented as software or browser extensions.		The many characteristics that boost the system's efficiency and performance even further.
[37]		number of layers, the number of kernels, the size of the kernels and the optimizer may all be changed.	It may be compared against standard to see if the automated feature extraction-based deep learning model is applicable, use machine learning-based classification models like Random Forest, Naive Bayes, Support Vector Machine, Logistic Regression, and others.

[38]	unfamiliar website or URL that is grouped in a	On the basis of the obtained groupings, no clustering or community analysis was attempted. Other security visualization techniques to properly portray distinct harmful patterns were not used.	•
[39]		page network traffic, bag of words, black list presence,	It should add time-varying URL characteristics in the future.
[40]	They are able to provide assurance. Based on their findings, they think that vindictive URL recognition powered on AI and deep learning can replace boycotting and traditional articulation approaches in discovery frameworks.	included.	It should turn their technique into a module for use in a web application

III. METHODOLOGY

There are two steps to this model: training and detection.

a) Extraction Phase & Training stage:

For detection of malicious URLs, both malicious and legitimate URLs must be collected. From Kaggle, we obtained a large dataset constituting around more than 4,00,000+ URLs. We gathered around this large dataset of training the model as powerful so that it can give correct results as possible.

Now here comes the feature Extraction step, where the URL is further broken down into the matching 11 listed below protocols and then maintain a vector array to which the match is there If it matches the tokens, it will list the certain token as -1 or otherwise as 1. After those 11 protocols columns there is another column of Result which tell -1 for Malware and 1 for Legitimate URL

These comprised vectors are dumped in CSV format and then it get feeded to the training phase as an input for algorithm. The main comprised tokens are

- 1. URL Length: Lengthy URL makes it ambiguous for the user to check, the user only checks for the main domain and let it go the other path
- 2. Contain @ Symbols: Most of the time, it happens like '@' is there in the URL and no one notices as the browser normally executes the link after '@' symbol
- 3. Two and Three-Tier Subdomains: Normally URL do not have more than 3 domains under the main name embedded in the URL
- 4. Suffix & Prefix Separated Domain: Legitimate URLs rarely contain the dash (-) sign. To make a phishing website look like a legitimate website, prefixes or suffixes separated by (-) might be added.
- 5. IP address in the URL: To deceive users and steal important information, an IP address can be substituted for the domain name.
- 6. '//' makes Redirection: It is possible to determine whether there is any unneeded redirection to other websites by looking at the placement of the '//' in the URL.

- 7. URL Shortening: Shortening of "URL" refers to a technology in use on the "World Wide Web." that allows a URL to be significantly reduced in length while still directing to the desired web page.
- 8. Https Webapp: This token can be used by attackers to deceive users.
- 9. Traffic Control Web: The popularity or ranking of a website influence whether it is a phishing website or not.
- 10. Domain Life Period: Phishing websites usually only exist for a short time. Some respectable websites are active for at least 6 months, while the majority are active for at least a year.
- 11. Database Records: Check whether the URL is listed in the phishing URL lists supplied by Phish Tank and others.

b) Detection phase:

Following feature extraction, the algorithm receives the processed data set as input, and their results are compared.

After Successful training of the system, the later part which has been left off that is 10% is used to test the accuracy and precision of the model's algorithm

The input to the machine learning algorithms comes from CSV files for both training and testing, with training accounting for 90% of the total URLs in the data set and testing accounting for 10%.

The algorithms used are random forest and logistic regression.

Each input URL is subjected to the detection phase. The attribute extraction method will be performed first on the URL. These characteristics are then given into the classifier, which decides if the URL is legitimate or malicious.

IV. RESULT

We have tested this application for suspected URLs published on phish tank and tailed results with Google's Safe Browsing technology.

1. Alexa Ranking:

With Alexa ranking we are getting the ranking of that specific URL whenever it is searched: Lower the rank more the probability of being legitimate.

Higher the rank the more the probability of being Malicious.

2. Domain registration:

We have marked URLs with registration time of more than 6 months as safe. URLs must qualify for at least one category to be safe either it should have domain registration with more than 6 months registration or it should have lower Alexa ranking.

3. Dataset of Malicious and Non-Malicious URL [17]:

400,000+ URLs tagged data source The safe URLs account for 83 percent of all URLs in our database, whereas the harmful URLs account for 17 percent. Two subsets of the above-mentioned dataset of both safe and malicious URLs have been created. The dataset is utilized for training around 80% of the time, with the remaining 20% being used for testing. For our machine learning approach, we used a number of classifiers, trained the model on those classifiers and obtained different results [23]. Specifically, we have used Logistic Regression (LR) and Random Forest classifier. We then calculated different metrics based on these classifiers like accuracy, recall, precision and f1-score. These metrics have been calculated by using the following equations.

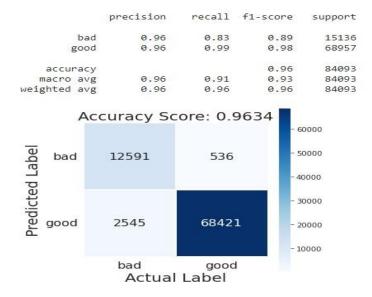
$$Precision = \frac{True \, Positive}{(True \, Positive + False \, Positive)}$$

$$Recall = \frac{True \, Positive}{(True \, Positive + False \, Negative)}$$

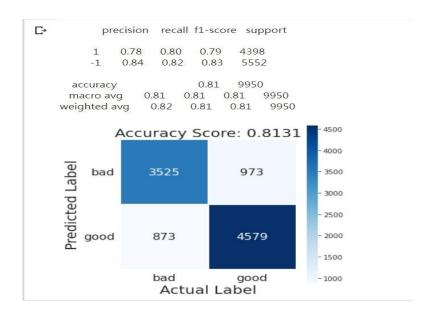
$$F1 - Score = \frac{2 \, (Precision \times Recall)}{(Precision + Recall)}$$

The results from these classifiers are shown below.

1) Logistic Regression:



2) Random Forest Classifier:



As can be seen from the above two tables, the logistic regression model gave the best results. The logistic regression model produced highest precision score of 96%, highest recall with score of 91% and the highest f1-score of 93.5%.

V. CONCLUSION

Malicious URL recognition is used in many cybersecurity scenarios, and machine learning methods have a bright future. This article sets out the requirements and challenges for developing Malware Detection Identification as a service for real-world cybersecurity applications. Our solution will use the Chrome Extension to identify harmful links and their origin signatures (first posted person-profile URL, name, email, phone number, etc.) in real time and issue advisory notifications to public corresponding agencies regarding the links' source reliability. Machine Learning is used to evaluate whether a URL is dangerous or not.

We might not be perfect but we have a sharp edge over every other similar application due to highly accurate results, multi-platform support and various other functionalities. This application has the ability that it can be integrated with the other modules which will be created against the cyber-attacks in the upcoming cyber era.

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