

Computing, Electrical and Applied Technology

NZ Diploma in Cybersecurity

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Student Name: Amirali Sarkhosh

Student ID:

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Executive Summary

The Cybersecurity Project is a network consisting of the following:

- Attack machine Kali Linux
- Network firewall pfSense
- Internal network
 - Metasploitable machine
 - CentOS machine to host the Splunk server
 - Windows Server 2022 machine to host the DHCP, DNS, and IIS server.

The virtual network will be hosted on a Host Machine (IP ADDRESS). The internal network has the subnet of 192.168.111.0/24 and will be connected with an 'internal' network interface card (NIC). The pfSense firewall is the gateway between the host machine and the internal network and will employ a bridged adapter to the Host Machine (Zenarmor, 2023). Kali Linux will also be connected to the host machine with a bridged adapter. A routing table was required to route any external traffic to the internal network.

The Splunk server was set up on the CentOS machine on port 8000. It receives data from pfSense by port 9998/UDP and from Windows Server by port 997/TCP.

Windows server hosts DHCP, DNS, and IIS. DHCP automatically leases IP addresses, and provides the default gateway and the DNS server. The IIS server hosts a website that will be port forwarded. Windows Server utilises a static IP of 192.168.111.2

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The pfSense has been set up with firewall rules that will allow pinging, access from the Host Machine's subnet, and all LAN traffic. There is also a rule to block Kali Linux traffic but this will be disabled for penetration testing.

Kali Linux will be hosted directly on the Host Machine with an IP address set by the DHCP of the Host Machine. The Kali Linux and the Host Machines will be used to test the pfSense firewall rules.

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1.0 Introduction

This is a technical report of the Cybersecurity Project that will outline the network configurations for the Cybersecurity Project.

The Network interface configurations will be reviewed to set the background information on which the network will be built on.

The pfSense machine will be reviewed next as it is the gateway to the internal network, it is important to understand the routing mechanisms. The way the pfSense was set up, the firewall rule configurations, and the Splunk forwarder configuration will be reviewed.

The following machines will be reviewed in turn. The Windows Server machine hosting the IIS server, the DNS server, DHCP server, and Splunk forwarder. The CentOS machine hosting the Splunk server. The Metasploitable machine and Kali Linux.

Finally, the penetration testing will be reviewed, and the tools used will be described.

1.1 Abbreviations

Host Machine (HM): Refers to the Host Machine hosting the virtual network

Windows Server 2022 (WS) : The Windows Server hosting the DHCP, DNS, IIS

CentOS (COS): The machine hosting the Splunk server

pfSense (PF): The network firewall and gateway to the internal network

Metasploitable (MS): The vulnerable machine as penetration testing target

Kali Linux (KL) : The attacking machine used to test network security.

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Network Interface Card (NIC) : The network connections that allow network traffic

Internal Network (Capitalized 'I' and 'N') : refers to the network hosting the three machines: MS, WS, COS, and PF LAN interface.

External Network (Capitalized 'E' and 'N') : refers to the network outside the internal network with HM, KL, and PF WAN interface.

2.0 Network configuration

The network will be set up as follows:

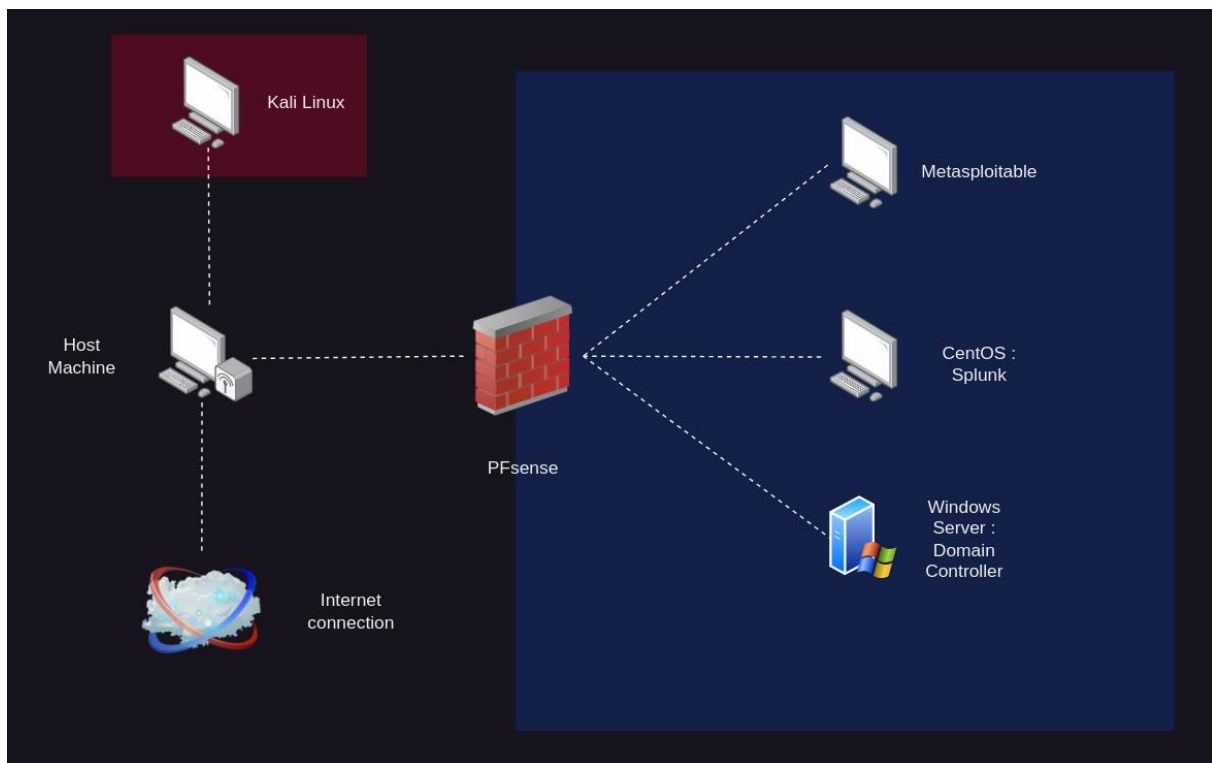


Figure 1. Network diagram

2.1 Bridged connections

The virtual network will be hosted on the HM, which will lease an IP address from the DHCP server of the network it is connected to. Both KL and PF WAN interface have a bridged connection to the HM with a bridged adapter and is also given IPs from the HM's DHCP server.

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The bridged connection is set to allow the machines to connect to the HM, which can then be used to route through the PF gateway and into the Internal Network. However, the machines on the External Network will not be able to communicate with the machines on the Internal Network yet. This is because the machines on the External Network will route towards the default gateway (192.168.68.1), but the default gateway is unable to identify the PF gateway (192.168.68.107) as a router.

Therefore, in order to send traffic from External Network to Internal Network the routing table on the machines must be updated as follows to route the traffic towards the PF gateway, which will then route it to the Internal Network:

Linux machines

```
sudo ip route add 192.168.111.0/24 via 192.168.68.107
```

Windows machines (with elevated privileges)

```
route add 192.168.111.0 mask 255.255.255.0 192.168.68.107 (-p)
```

These commands will only add the routing table temporarily. To make this persistent, /etc/network/interfaces file will need to be modified on a Linux machine. On a windows machine the -p flag needs to be used.

2.2 Internal connections

The Internal Network will be connected from the PF LAN interface to WS, COS, and MS. The DHCP server hosted on the WS will lease IPs to COS and MS machines. An internal LAN segment NIC must be used to completely isolate the network from the External Network except through the PF gateway. A host only network will allow the machines to connect to the host and fail to achieve an internal environment.

Machine	IP	Default gateway	Mask
Host Machine	192.168.31.216	192.168.31.1	255.255.255.0
Kali Linux	192.168.66.128	192.168.31.1	255.255.255.0
Pfsense WAN	192.168.66.132	192.168.111.1	255.255.255.0
Pfsense LAN	192.168.111.1	192.168.111.1	255.255.255.0
Windows Server	192.168.111.2	192.168.111.1	255.255.255.0
CentOS	192.168.111.100	192.168.111.1	255.255.255.0
Metasploitable	192.168.111.101	192.168.111.1	255.255.255.0

Table 1. IP address table

3.0 pfSense configuration

pfSense has a WAN interface that receives traffic from the external network and the Internet, and routes it to the LAN. Therefore, there are two network interface connections, the WAN and the LAN.

The WAN NIC is provided by the DHCP server of the network the HM is on. It is a bridged adapter connection to the HM. The LAN interface can be set as a static IP that will act as the default gateway for all machines in the Internal Network. NIC is an 'internal LAN segment'.

PF has a static IPv4 of 192.168.111.1, and the web configurator can be accessed by typing the IP into a browser connected to PF sense on the LAN side.

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pfSense acts as a firewall, gateway, and a router.

As a firewall it will inspect the packets and allow/block the packet depending on the firewalls it has set.

As a gateway and router it will receive all traffic from within the Internal Network and route it outside, or from the outside and route it in.

3.1 Firewall Rules

The current rules are set up as follows:

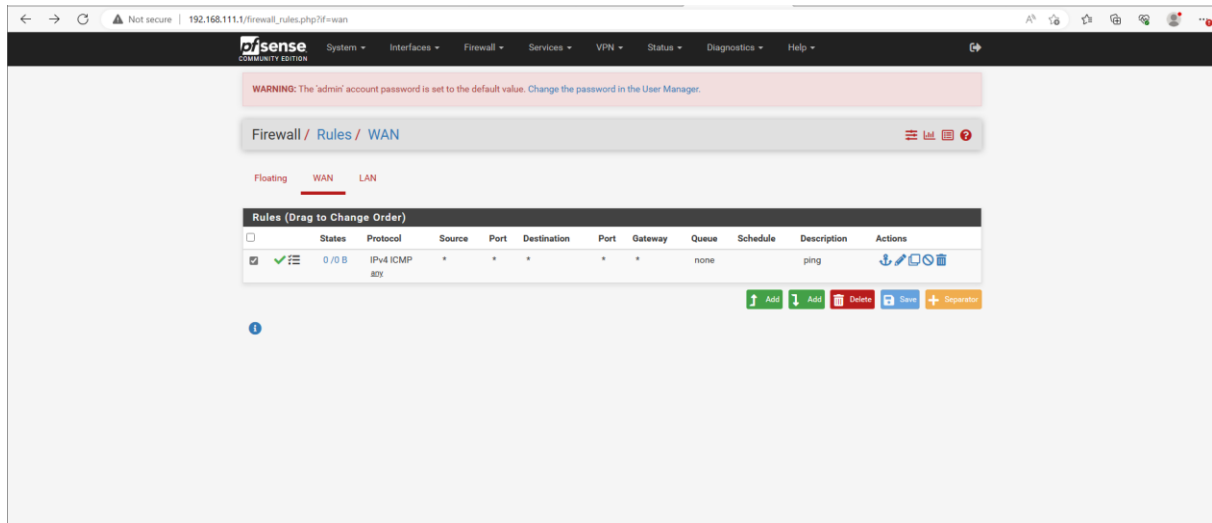


Figure 2. WAN interface rules

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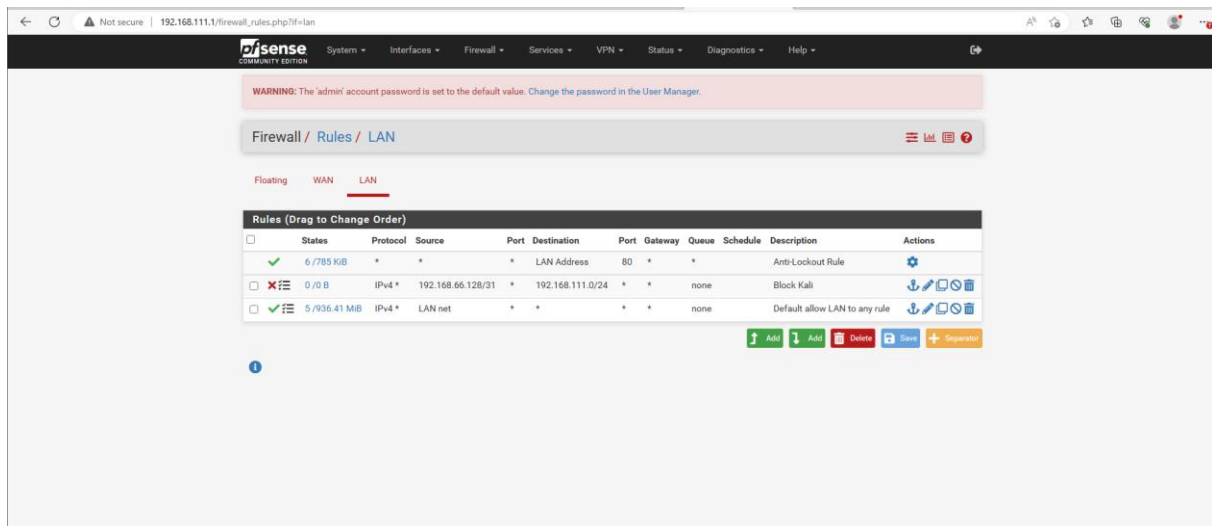


Figure 3. LAN interface rules



Figure 4. PfSense IP

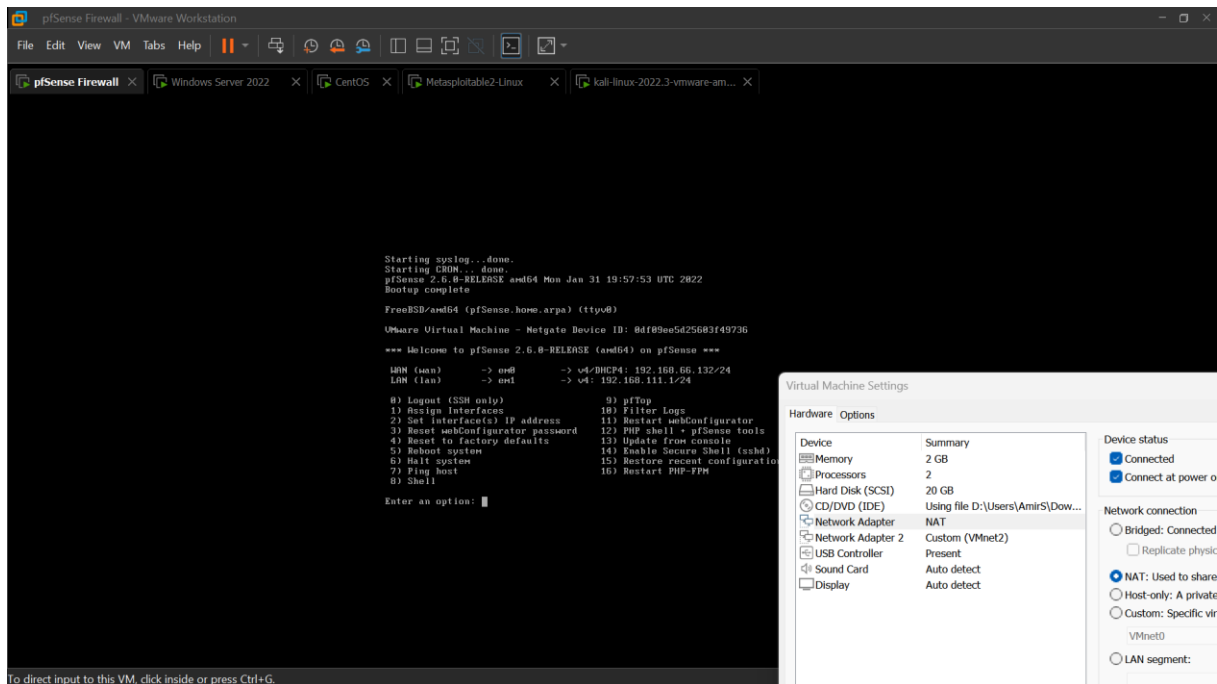


Figure 5. Network Adapter

3.2 Splunk Forwarder

pfSense sends its logs by UDP. The Splunk server must first be set up with a listener on port 9998/UDP. Then from the pfSense web configurator go to system logs and set up a remote logging option to IP: port 192.168.111.100:9998. pfSense will automatically send the logs via UDP to the listening port.

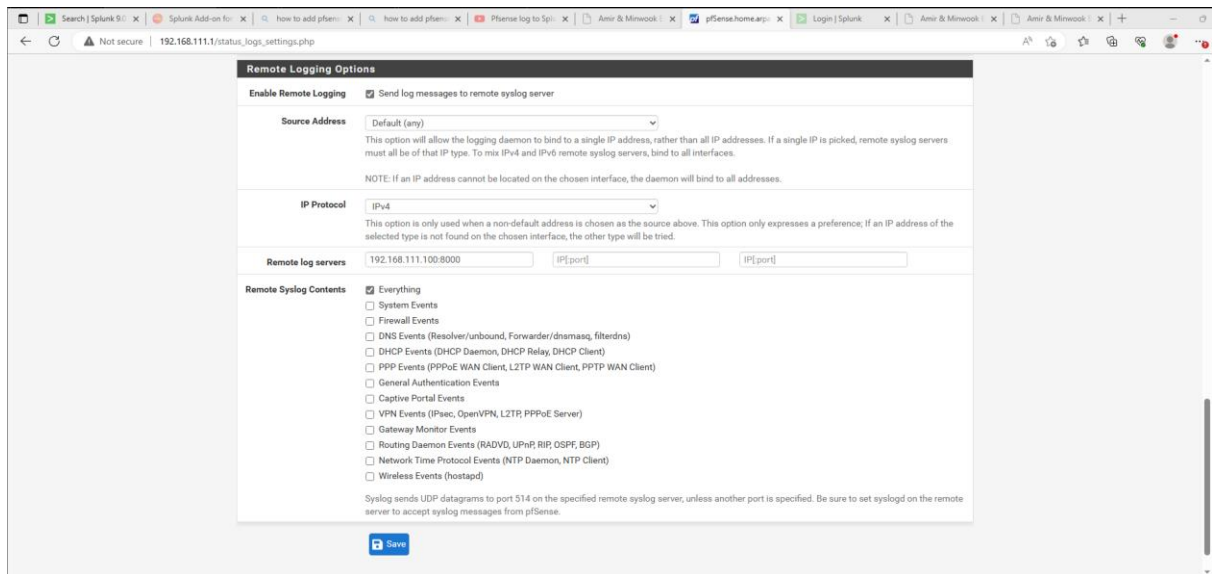


Figure 6. Remote logging

4.0 Windows Server

The Windows server is a specialized Windows OS designed as a server. It has a GUI interface for noob-friendly experience (Harwood, 2022). The “add roles and features” can be used to set up

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```
Microsoft Windows [Version 10.0.20348.587]
(c) Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

C:\Users\Administrator>splunk.exe status
'splunk.exe' is not recognized as an internal or external command,
operable program or batch file.

C:\Users\Administrator>ipconfig

Windows IP Configuration

Ethernet adapter Ethernet0:

    Connection-specific DNS Suffix  . : 
    Link-local IPv6 Address . . . . . : fe80::c802:fe6f:2ebb:d0e1%4
    IPv4 Address. . . . . : 192.168.111.2
    Subnet Mask . . . . . : 255.255.255.0
    Default Gateway . . . . . : 192.168.111.1

Ethernet adapter Ethernet0 2:

    Connection-specific DNS Suffix  . : localdomain
    Link-local IPv6 Address . . . . . : fe80::34bc:d7e0:4190:cead%16
    IPv4 Address. . . . . : 192.168.66.138
    Subnet Mask . . . . . : 255.255.255.0
    Default Gateway . . . . . : 192.168.66.2
```

Figure 7. WS2022 IP Config

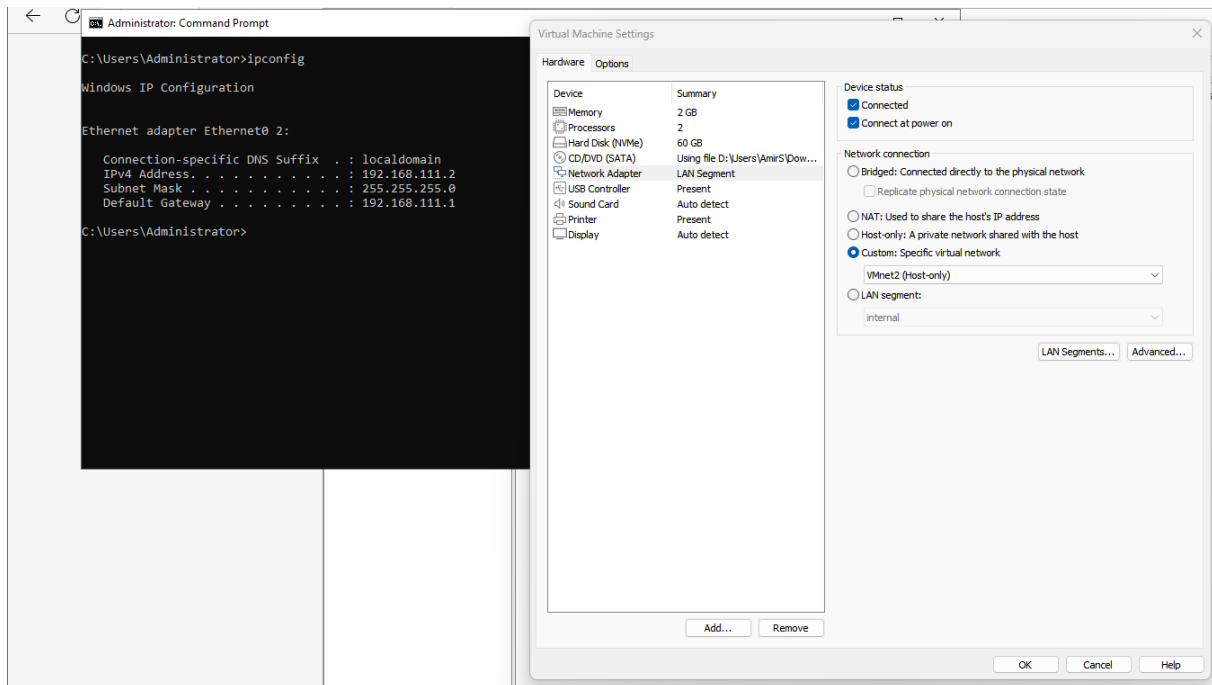


Figure 8. Network Adapter

the services listed below. In tools, the corresponding management console can be used to configure the services.

WS is on static IPv4 192.168.111.2 and has NIC of 'internal LAN segment'.

4.1 Internet Information System (IIS) Server

IIS server is used to host a website, defaulted to the IP of the WS machine. The website can be designed by designating a directory to host the website files and then adding in files as necessary to achieve the desired website. The directory in this configuration is the default C:\inetpub\www. The website traffic is served on port 80 with HTTP protocol.

The website address is : "www.htcs6707.local".

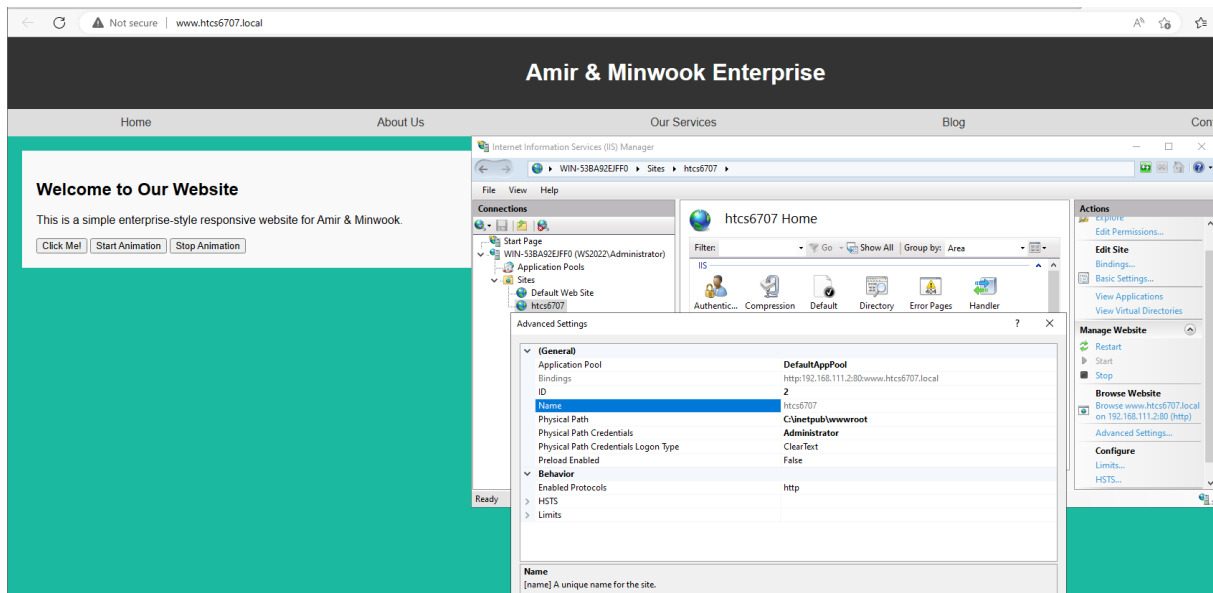


Figure 9. IIS Server config

4.2 DNS server

The DNS server resolves URL and IP address requests from a browser on port 53 with UDP traffic (Bogna, 2022). There are two DNS resolution methods. Forward lookup zones resolve an URL entered into the browser and returns the corresponding IP address of the website, allowing the browser to access the website. The Reverse lookup zone returns the website corresponding to the IP address entered into the browser.

To set up the DNS:

A records : The A records resolves IPv4 URL requests. This record will require the URL and the IP address of the website, and will resolve the URL to the IP address of the website which allows the browser to access the website through HTTP traffic.

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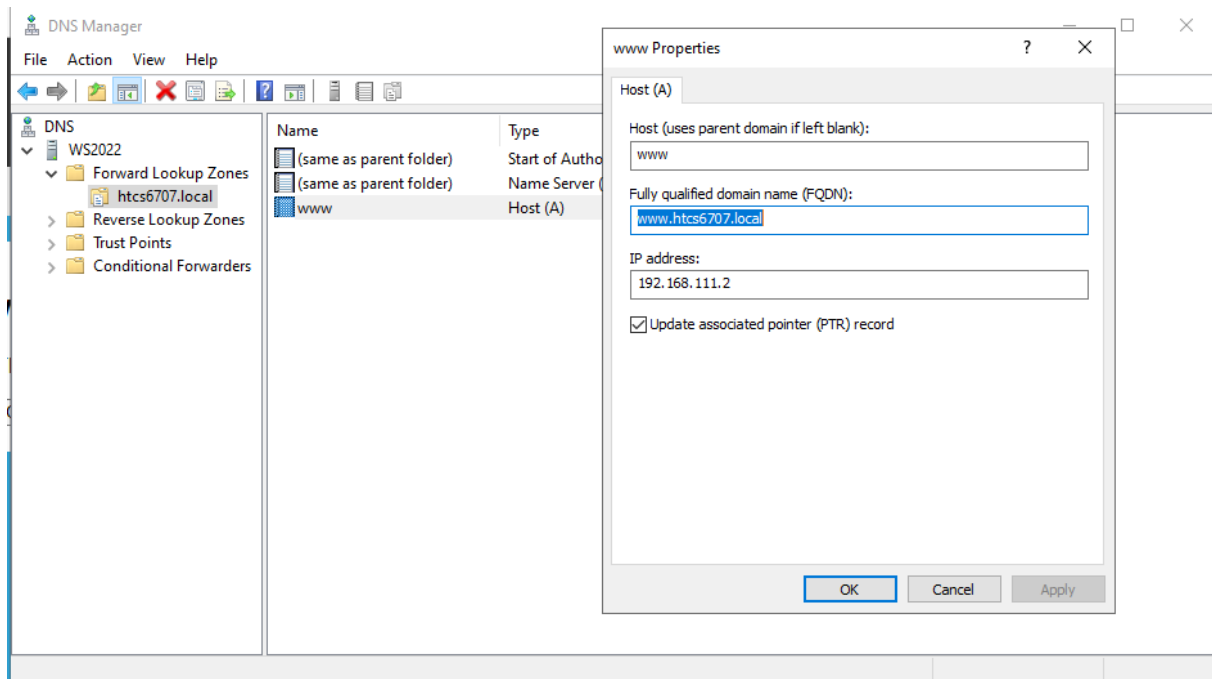


Figure 10. A record

PTR records : The PTR record consists of the network address, host address, website URL and website IP. The website corresponding to the IP address entered into the browser is returned.

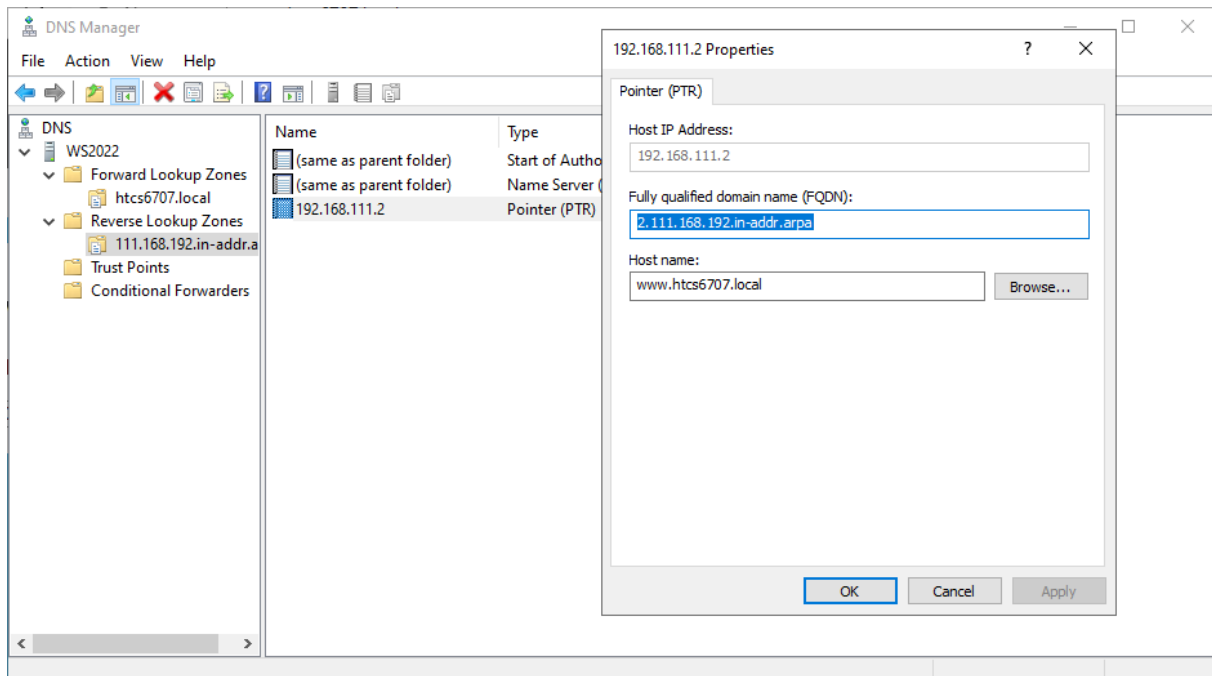


Figure 11. PTR record

4.3 DHCP server

The DHCP server leases IP addresses to all machines on its subnet for a limited amount of time. An IP address is required for network traffic to traverse through routers and connect to different networks or the Internet (Gerend, 2021). The DHCP is re-leased when it expires. The DHCP server can be configured to provide a default gateway and DNS server upon lease.

Setting up a DHCP server involves adding in a zone to the DHCP server. During the set up, the DNS and default gateway can be configured.

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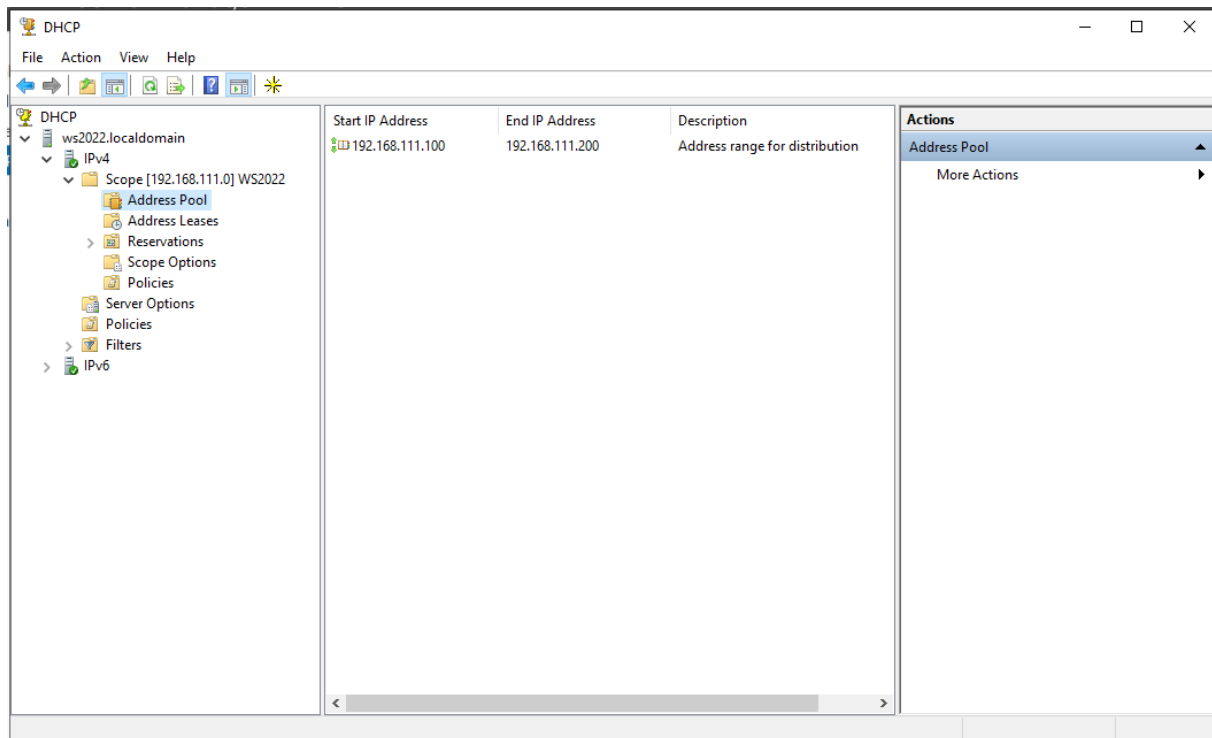
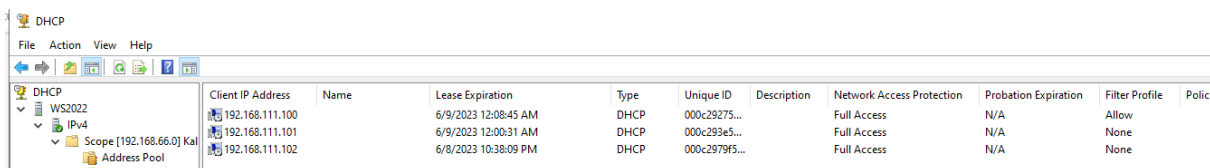


Figure 12. DHCP



Client IP Address	Name	Lease Expiration	Type	Unique ID	Description	Network Access Protection	Probation Expiration	Filter Profile	Policy
192.168.111.100		6/9/2023 12:08:45 AM	DHCP	000c29275...		Full Access	N/A	Allow	
192.168.111.101		6/9/2023 12:00:31 AM	DHCP	000c293e5...		Full Access	N/A	None	
192.168.111.102		6/8/2023 10:38:09 PM	DHCP	000c2979f5...		Full Access	N/A	None	

Figure 13. DHCP IP lease

4.4 Splunk forwarder

The Splunk forwarder can simply be installed by downloading it from the website and executing the file. During the installation, the logs that should be forwarded to the Splunk

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server is selected, and the IP:port of the Splunk server is designated. WS will forward data via TCP.

5.0 CentOS Machine

The COS hosts the Splunk server. COS has an IP of 192.168.111.100 as leased from the WS DHCP server. The NIC is 'internal LAN segment'. The Splunk server is hosted on port 8000. To access the Splunk web configurator the IP:port of '192.168.111.100:8000' must be typed into a browser connected to this machine. Splunk can be installed by downloading the RPM file.

Install Splunk

```
sudo rpm -i [splunk file.rpm]
```

Start Splunk (--accept-license only needs to be flagged the first time this is run)

```
sudo /opt/splunk/bin/splunk start --accept-license
```

Enable Splunk to start on boot

```
sudo /opt/splunk/bin/splunk enable boot-start
```

```
[splunk@localhost ~]$ ip a
1: lo: <LOOPBACK,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 65536 qdisc noqueue state UNKNOWN group default qlen 1000
    link/loopback 00:00:00:00:00:00 brd 00:00:00:00:00:00
    inet 127.0.0.1/8 scope host lo
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
    inet6 ::1/128 scope host
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
2: ens36: <BROADCAST,MULTICAST,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 1500 qdisc fq_codel state UP group default qlen 1000
    link/ether 00:0c:29:79:f5:53 brd ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff
    altnam enp2s4
    inet 192.168.111.100/24 brd 192.168.111.255 scope global dynamic noprefixroute ens36
        valid_lft 85438sec preferred_lft 85438sec
    inet6 fe80::68e6:c9d3:839f:ab35/64 scope link noprefixroute
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
3: ens33: <BROADCAST,MULTICAST,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 1500 qdisc fq_codel state UP group default qlen 1000
    link/ether 00:0c:29:79:f5:49 brd ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff
    altnam enp2s1
```

Figure 14. CentOS (Splunk) IP

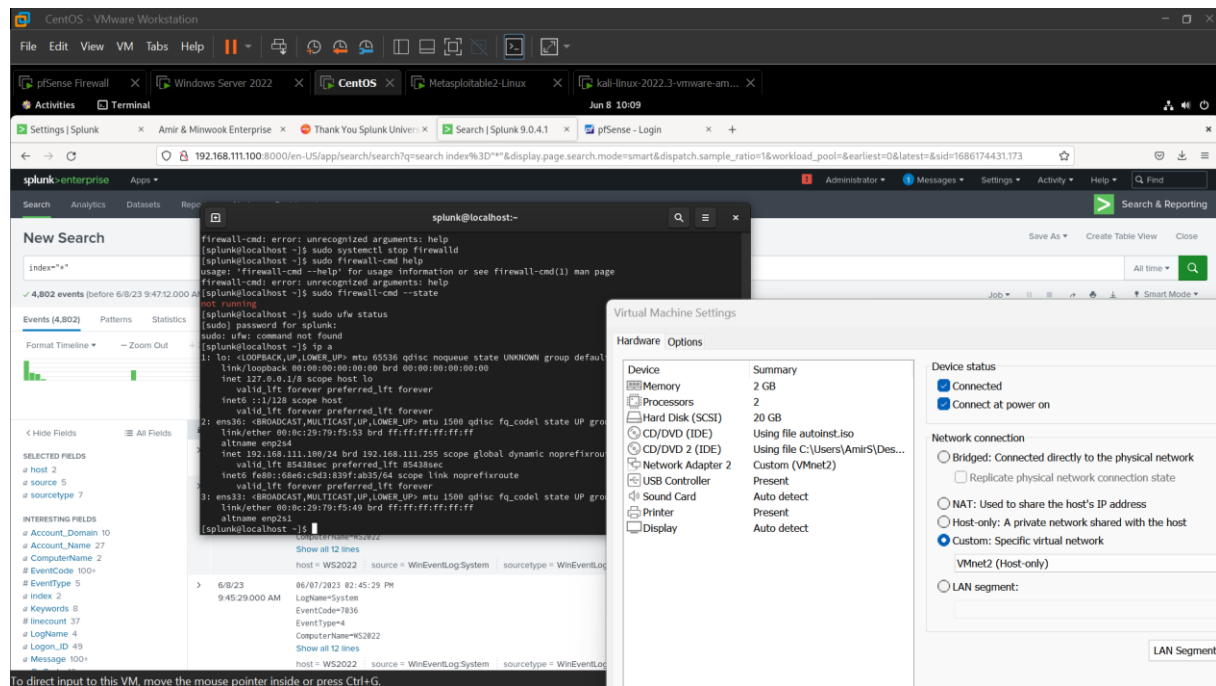


Figure 15. Network Adapter

5.1 Splunk listening ports

The Splunk forwarders on PF and WS machines have been configured to send the data to a socket on the COS machine. The socket needs to be open and Splunk listening on them to properly receive the data.

pfSense sends data by UDP and port 9998/UDP has been opened on Splunk. The data from PF will be put into index 'fw' for firewall.

WS sends data by TCP and port 9997/TCP has been opened on Splunk. The data from WS will be put into index 'ws' for windows server.

6.0 Metasploitable and Kali Linux

6.1 Metasploitable

MS has been installed by importing into Vmware as .vmdk file. MS has an IP address of 192.168.111.101 as leased from the DHCP. The NIC used on MS is 'internal LAN segment'.

```
msfadmin@metasploitable:~$ ip a
1: lo: <LOOPBACK,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 16436 qdisc noqueue
    link/loopback 00:00:00:00:00:00 brd 00:00:00:00:00:00
    inet 127.0.0.1/8 scope host lo
    inet6 ::1/128 scope host
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
2: eth0: <BROADCAST,MULTICAST,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 1500 qdisc pfifo_fast qlen 1000
    link/ether 00:0c:29:3e:5e:a1 brd ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff
    inet 192.168.111.101/24 brd 192.168.111.255 scope global eth0
    inet6 fe80::20c:29ff:fe3e:5ea1/64 scope link
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
```

Figure 16. Metasploitable IP

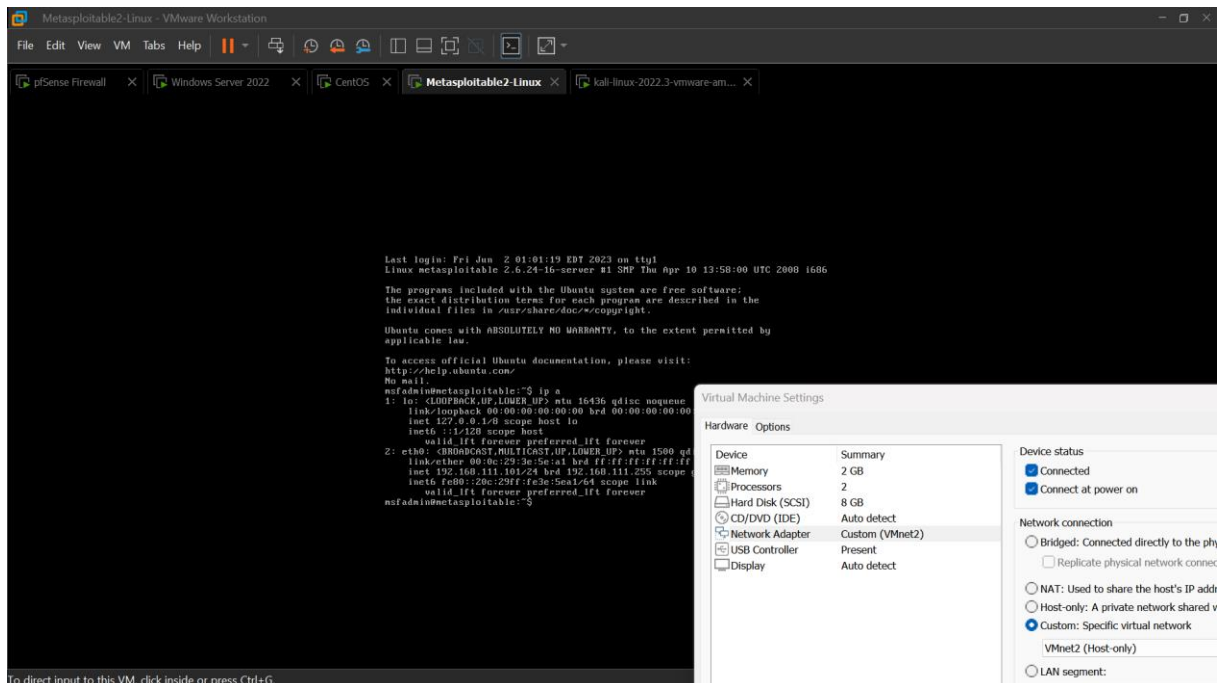


Figure 17. Network Adapter

6.2 Kali Linux

Kali Linux exists on the External Network and is connected to the HM by a 'bridged adapter'. The IP address of (192.168.66.128) is provided by the DHCP server of the network the HM is connected to. Kali Linux uses the HM's NIC to route traffic. As mentioned in 2.1 Bridged connections, a routing table needs to be added to the Kali Linux machine to be able to communicate with the Internal Network.

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```
(kali@kali)-[~]
$ ip a
1: lo: <LOOPBACK,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 65536 qdisc noqueue state UNKNOWN group default qlen 1000
    link/loopback 00:00:00:00:00:00 brd 00:00:00:00:00:00
    inet 127.0.0.1/8 scope host lo
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
    inet6 ::1/128 scope host
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
2: eth0: <BROADCAST,MULTICAST,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 1500 qdisc fq_codel state UP group default qlen 1000
    link/ether 00:0c:29:27:5c:46 brd ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff
    inet 192.168.66.128/24 brd 192.168.66.255 scope global dynamic noprefixroute eth0
        valid_lft 1656sec preferred_lft 1656sec
    inet6 fe80::cf:cfd6:f6ed:b119/64 scope link noprefixroute
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
3: docker0: <NO-CARRIER,BROADCAST,MULTICAST,UP> mtu 1500 qdisc noqueue state DOWN group default
    link/ether 02:42:d0:6d:72:bc brd ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff
```

Figure 18. Kali Linux IP

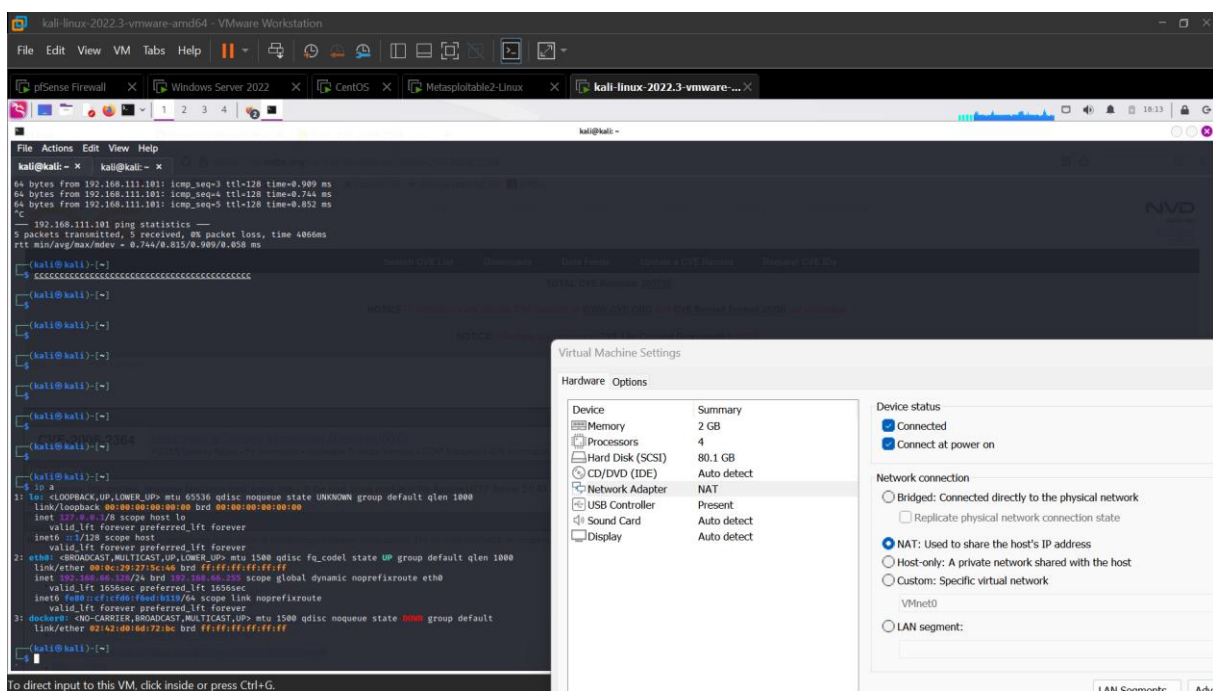


Figure 19. Network Adapter

7.0 Penetration test

Title: Detailed Report on Penetration Testing of Metasploitable 2 Using Kali Linux

Summary:

The objective of the exercise was to conduct a penetration test on a vulnerable virtual machine, Metasploitable 2, using Kali Linux. The test was executed using tools such as nmap, Nessus, and Metasploit to exploit known vulnerabilities and gain unauthorized access.

The initial phase involved conducting a network scan using nmap with the command 'nmap -sV -O 192.168.1.5'. This process revealed valuable information regarding the operating system and network services employed by Metasploitable 2. This data was subsequently used to identify potential vulnerabilities by researching known security issues related to these services.

The second phase entailed running a comprehensive vulnerability scan on the identified IP address with the Nessus tool. This scan furnished a detailed vulnerability profile of the Metasploitable 2 machine, highlighting areas that could potentially be exploited.

Following the identification of specific vulnerabilities, the Metasploit framework was utilized to exploit the system. The command sequence 'msfconsole', 'use exploit/unix/ftp/vsftpd_234_backdoor', 'set RHOST 192.168.1.5', and 'exploit' was executed, which granted unauthorized command shell access to Metasploitable 2.

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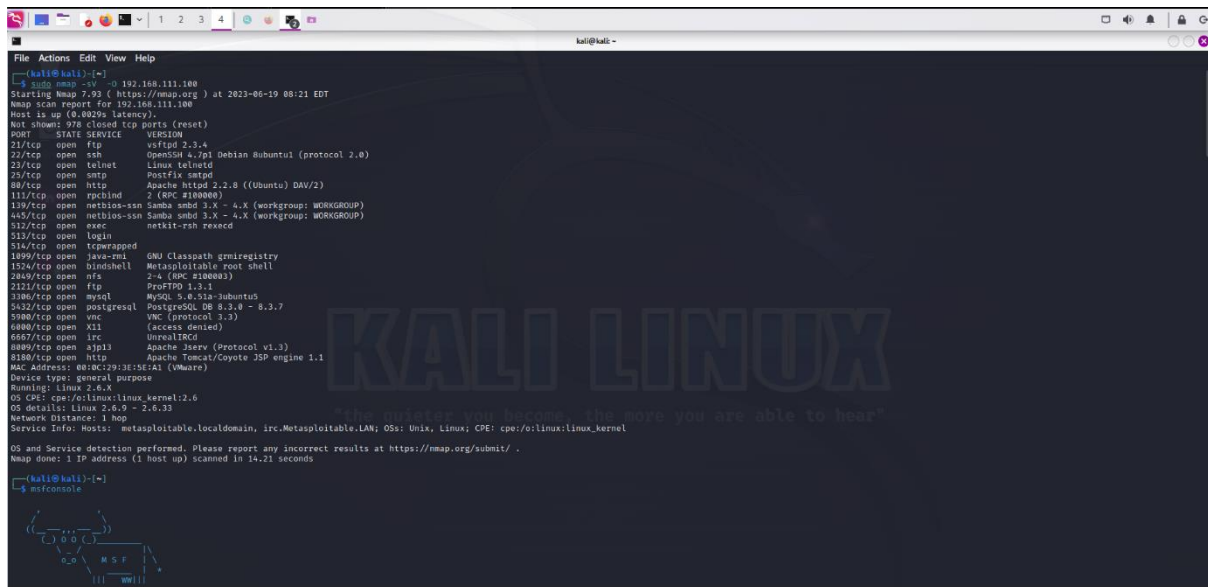
This penetration testing exercise successfully demonstrated the effectiveness of multiple tools in exploiting known system vulnerabilities to gain unauthorized access. It provides a crucial understanding of how attackers might exploit such vulnerabilities, underscoring the importance of maintaining robust and updated cybersecurity defenses to safeguard systems from such attacks.

This report details the procedure and results of a pen-testing exercise performed on a Metasploitable 2 machine using Kali Linux, a Linux distribution designed for digital forensics and penetration checking out. The test concerned the use of a couple of pieces of equipment, such as Nmap, Nessus, and Metasploit, to pick out vulnerabilities and take advantage of them.

Procedure:

Reconnaissance: The first step involved identifying the operating system and network services running on the target machine, which was Metasploitable 2 in this instance. This was accomplished by using the nmap command 'nmap -sV -O 192.168.1.5' on Kali Linux. The results provided key details on the operating system and network services employed by Metasploitable 2.

Vulnerability Assessment: Once the services running on the target machine were known, Nessus was utilized to perform a comprehensive scan on the IP address of the Metasploitable 2 machine. Nessus provided a report highlighting the existing vulnerabilities, including their severity and potential ways they could be exploited.



```

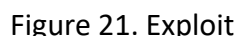
kali@kali:~$ nmap -iV -o 192.168.1.100
Starting Nmap 7.93 ( https://nmap.org ) at 2023-06-19 08:21 EDT
Nmap scan report for 192.168.1.100
Host is up (0.0029s latency).
Not shown: 978 closed tcp ports (reset)
PORT      STATE SERVICE      VERSION
21/tcp    open  ftp          vsftpd 2.3.4
22/tcp    open  ssh          OpenSSH 4.7p1 Debian 8ubuntu1 (protocol 2.0)
23/tcp    open  telnet      Linux telnetd
25/tcp    open  smtp        Postfix smtpd
80/tcp    open  http        Apache/2.2.8 ((Ubuntu) DAV/2)
111/tcp   open  rpcbind     2 (RPC #10000)
139/tcp   open  netbios-ssn Samba smbd 3.X - 4.X (workgroup: WORKGROUP)
445/tcp   open  netbios-ssn Samba smbd 3.X - 4.X (workgroup: WORKGROUP)
512/tcp   open  exec        netkit-rsh rshexec
513/tcp   open  login
514/tcp   open  rcp          rcpd
1099/tcp  open  java-rmi    GNU Classpath gmicregistry
1524/tcp  open  bindshell   Metasploitable root shell
2449/tcp  open  nfs         2.4 (rpc.statd)
2121/tcp  open  ftp        ProFTPD 1.3.1
3306/tcp  open  mysql       MySQL 5.6.21a-ubuntu
5432/tcp  open  postgresql  PostgreSQL DB 8.3.0 - 8.3.7
5900/tcp  open  vnc         VNC (protocol 3.3)
6080/tcp  open  rii         (access denied)
6667/tcp  open  irc         UnrealIRCd
8080/tcp  open  http       Apache/2.2.8 ((Ubuntu) DAV/2)
8180/tcp  open  http       Apache/2.2.8 ((Ubuntu) DAV/2)
MAC Address: 08:00:27:3E:5E:A1 (VMware)
Device type: general purpose
Running: Linux 2.6.x
OS CPE: cpe:/o:linux:linux_kernel:2.6
OS details: Linux 2.6.9 - 2.6.33
Network Distance: 1 hop
Service Info: Hosts: metasploitable.localdomain, irc.Metasploitable.LAN; OS: Unix, Linux; CPE: cpe:/o:linux:linux_kernel
OS and Service detection performed. Please report any incorrect results at https://nmap.org/submit/ .
Nmap done: 1 IP address (1 host up) scanned in 14.21 seconds

kali@kali:~$ msfconsole

msf5 (root) >
  
```

Figure 20. Nmap scan

Exploitation: Following the vulnerability assessment, the Metasploit framework was used to exploit a specific vulnerability. The sequence of commands used included: 'msfconsole', 'use exploit/unix/ftp/vsftpd_234_backdoor', 'set RHOST 192.168.1.5', and 'exploit'. This sequence targeted the vsftpd 2.3.4 backdoor vulnerability, which is a known issue in the very secure FTP daemon running on the Metasploitable 2 machine.



This penetration testing exercise demonstrates the importance of regular vulnerability assessments and penetration tests in identifying and mitigating security risks. This hands-on demonstration provides insights into how potential attackers could exploit known vulnerabilities, emphasizing the need for robust and up-to-date cybersecurity measures. Continuous monitoring, patching of known vulnerabilities, and employing intrusion detection and prevention systems are vital steps in maintaining a secure environment.

8.0 Conclusion

The Cybersecurity Project successfully executed a series of technical configurations to establish a secure and comprehensive network. The network consisted of various components including an attack machine (Kali Linux), network firewall (pfSense), an internal network comprising Metasploitable machine, CentOS machine to host the Splunk server, and a Windows Server 2022 machine to host the DHCP, DNS, and IIS server. Each of these entities performed unique functions contributing to the overall functionality and security of the network.

The virtual network was hosted on a Host Machine that housed an internal network with the subnet of 192.168.111.0/24, which was connected through an 'internal' network interface card (NIC). A routing table was established to direct external traffic to the internal network. The Splunk server effectively received data from pfSense and Windows Server, enabling efficient log management.

Windows Server, utilizing a static IP, performed its functions in hosting DHCP, DNS, and IIS successfully. Firewall rules on pfSense were efficiently configured, allowing specific types of traffic while blocking others, with provision made for penetration testing by disabling the rule blocking Kali Linux traffic. Kali Linux, hosted directly on the Host Machine, proved effective in testing the pfSense firewall rules.

The network setup, configurations, and subsequent penetration testing exercise on the Metasploitable machine using Kali Linux provided a practical demonstration of the

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implications of cybersecurity vulnerabilities. This exercise underscored the importance of robust network configurations, the judicious use of firewall rules, and the application of penetration testing as a means to test the resilience of cybersecurity defenses.

In conclusion, the project has shown the importance of using different machines to perform specialized tasks within a network. It also demonstrated the effectiveness of various cybersecurity tools and techniques in ensuring network security. The successful establishment and operation of this network, along with the conduct of the penetration test, underline the critical importance of understanding and implementing effective cybersecurity measures in today's digital world.

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