

Lab 1 – Introduction to Incident Response

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About the Lab

In this lab we were supposed to examine a file that one of the employees downloaded from a website under the pretense of FOSS software to provide an SSH/Telnet client for Windows systems. Since the user has downloaded this software outside of IT's normal controls, we were tasked with reviewing this application and providing our assessment of whether it is okay to use, or if it poses a threat.

Part 1

There are lot of tools out in the internet that can be used to monitoring and analyzing application, traffic and behavior of a potential malicious executable. In this lab I have used the tools that I'm comfortable with. The question presented in the part one of the lab are as follows.

1. *What utility can be run on the Windows VM to monitor processes running on the system?*

Procmon: Also known as Processes monitor, is a part of SysInternals (tools package) developed by Microsoft that shows real-time file system, Registry and process/thread activity. It is an advanced monitoring tool that provides an extensive list of enhancements like rich and non-destructive filtering, comprehensive event properties such session IDs and user names, reliable process information, and details related to file and registry creation

2. *What utility can be run on the Windows VM to monitor network connections on the system?*

ApateDNS; This tools is used for monitoring network connections. When used in an virtual environment we just need to monitor the DNS loopback to get active connections. It is a tool for controlling DNS responses through an easy-to-use GUI. It spoofs DNS responses to a user-specified IP address by listening on the local machine. It also automatically sets the local DNS to localhost.

3. *What application could you run on Windows to capture network traffic from the system?*

Wireshark: It is one of the most famous tools that is used to monitor network traffic and protocols used. It lets us monitor the network at a microscopic level, both wired and wireless.

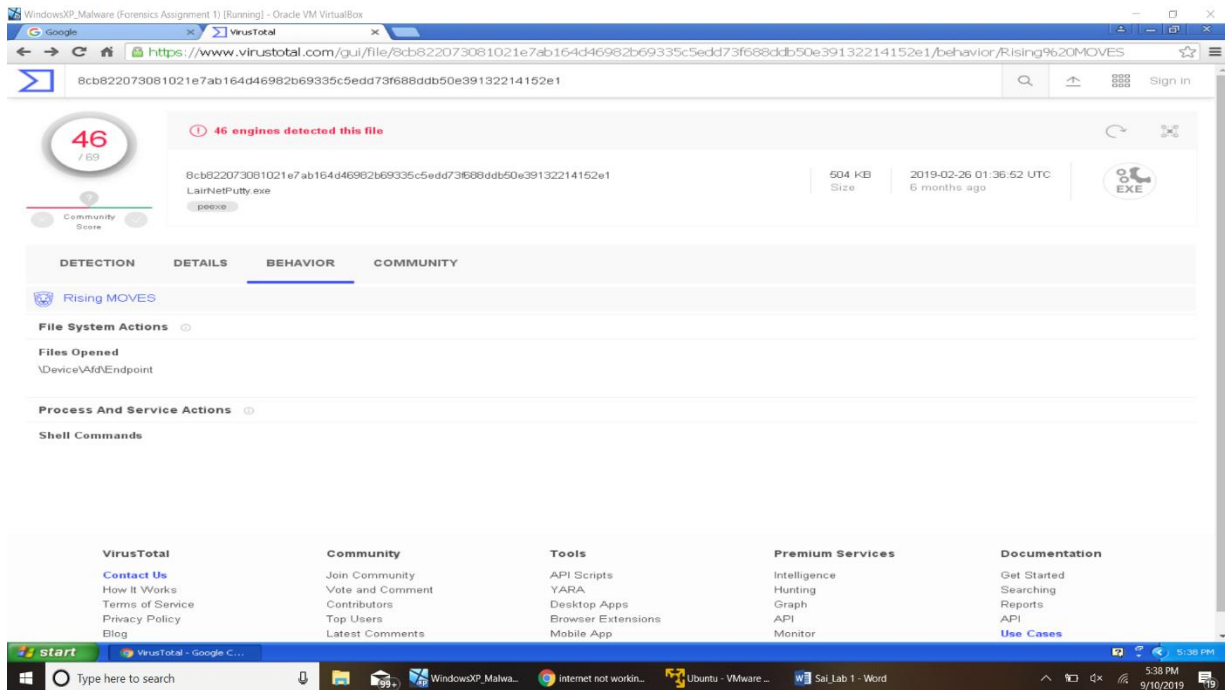
4. *What information can you gather about the application from reviewing it without any special tools?*

A simple method to gather information without reviewing it is by googling about it. In this case I uploaded the executable file to virus total just to verify it against existing malware database. If not virus total one can simply use the strings command against the executable and check if there are any suspicious strings in the .exe file. All these techniques come under static analysis.

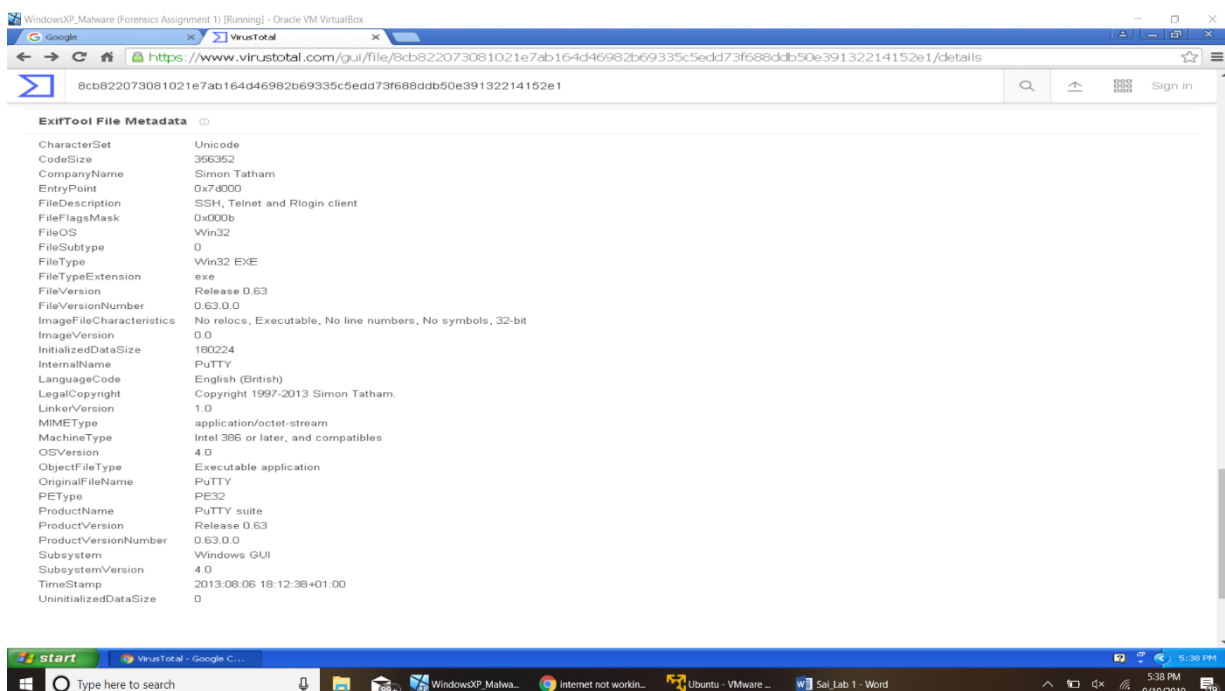
Part 2

1. What is your assessment of the application and why?

For the initial assessment the executable was uploaded to virustotal.com which lead us to a preliminary decision that the file could be malicious. Upon further examining the file we found out that the executable has images which could act as executables, i.e., code hidden inside the images.



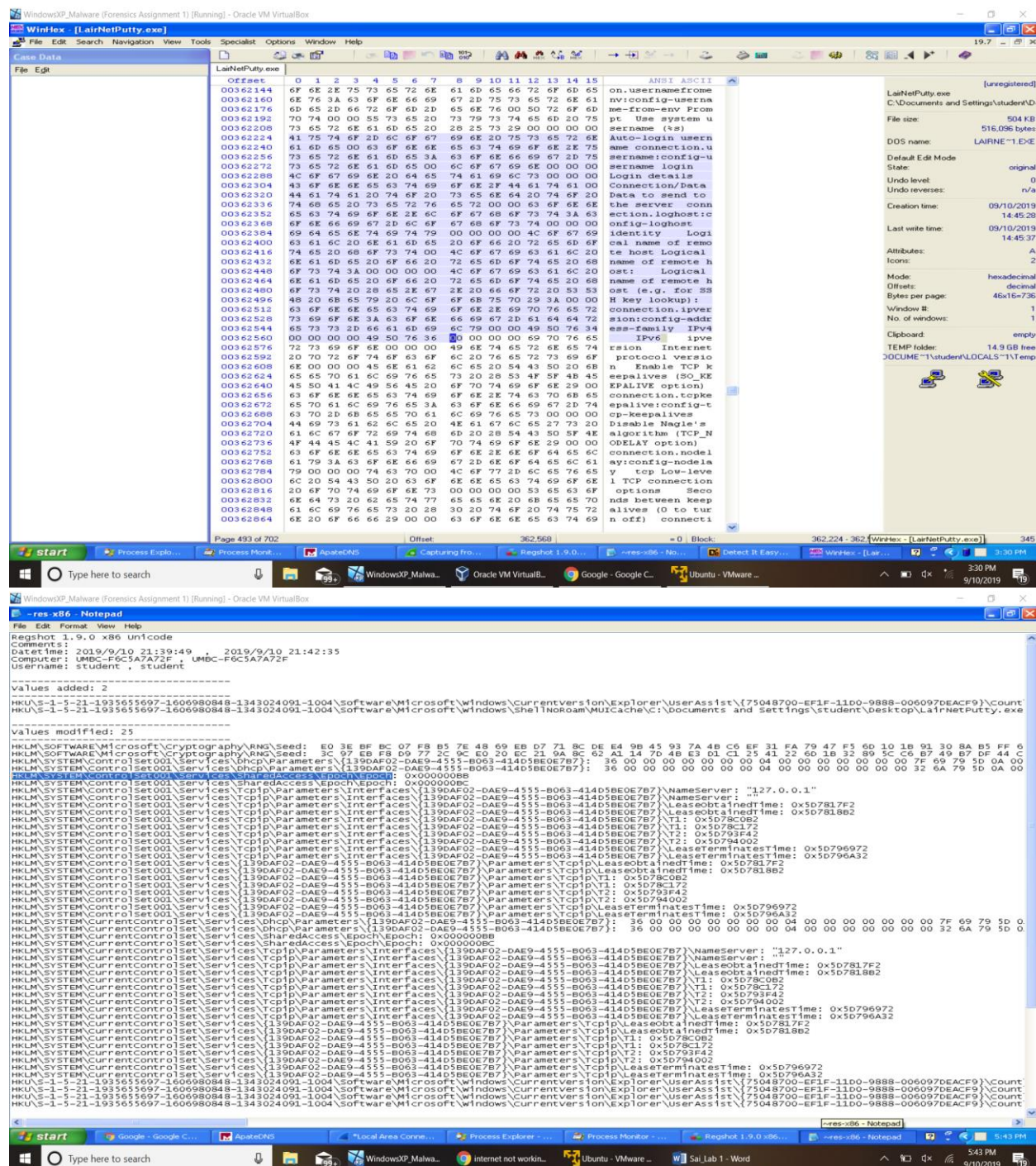
The screenshot shows the VirusTotal web interface for a file named `LaitNetPutty.exe` (SHA256: `8cb822073081021e7ab164d46982b69335c5edd73f688ddb50e39132214152e1`). The file is 504 KB and was uploaded 6 months ago. It has a Community Score of 46/69 and is detected by 46 engines. The 'BEHAVIOR' tab is selected, showing 'Rising MOVES' under 'File System Actions' (Files Opened: `\Device\NPF{...}`), 'Process And Service Actions', and 'Shell Commands'. The footer contains links for VirusTotal, Community, Tools, Premium Services, and Documentation.



The screenshot shows the 'DETAILS' tab of the VirusTotal file analysis page. It displays 'ExifTool File Metadata' for `LaitNetPutty.exe`. The metadata includes:

Field	Value
CharacterSet	Unicode
CodeSize	356352
CompanyName	Simon Tatham
EntryPoint	0x74000
FileDescription	SSH, Telnet and Rlogin client
FileFlagsMask	0x000b
FileOS	Win32
FileSubtype	0
FileType	Win32 EXE
FileTypeExtension	exe
FileVersion	Release 0.63
FileVersionNumber	0.63.0.0
ImageFileCharacteristics	No relocations, Executable, No line numbers, No symbols, 32-bit
ImageVersion	0.0
InitializedDataSize	180224
InternalName	PuTTY
LanguageCode	English (British)
LegalCopyright	Copyright 1997-2013 Simon Tatham.
LinkerVersion	1.0
MIMEType	application/octet-stream
MachineType	Intel 386 or later, and compatibles
OSVersion	4.0
ObjectFileType	Executable application
OriginalFileName	PuTTY
PEType	PE32
ProductName	PuTTY suite
ProductVersion	Release 0.63
ProductVersionNumber	0.63.0.0
Subsystem	Windows GUI
SubsystemVersion	4.0
TimeStamp	2013:08:06 18:12:38+01:00
UninitializedDataSize	0

For later assessments we used ApatDNS, Promon, Process Explorer, Wireshark, WinHex and Regshot. This assessment led us to a conclusion that file was trying to connect to remote server and send data from the host computer to the server, for which wireshark and apate DNS were used. From preliminary assessment we can say that the code was stored inside an image. In later stages, using process explorer we found out more evidence to prove this point.



Conclusion

In conclusion this executable has been classified as a malicious trojan. Immediate and necessary action have been scheduled to remove this file from the infected system and the network is also being monitored for any traces of this trojan.

From this lab I learned that one should not download any executables/ files from outside IT norms and even if someone did it has to be immediately reported so that the incident response team can take immediate action before severe damage is done.