# **Monitor Website Traffic with Wireshark**

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#### KEYWORDS

#### ABSTRACT

Wireshark Online Payments Nepal This project advocates for an exhaustive examination of web applications using Wireshark as a primary tool for analyzing network packets. Through a thorough examination of network traffic, the goal is to look under the hood to uncover valuable insights related to data transmission, security protocols, and overall performance. The dynamic of online payments has gained pace in Nepal over the last decade. However, from the network perspective no research has been conducted so far to provide an insight on the web traffic of those online payment systems. Through this research, we intend to gain some insights into the internal workings from a network perspective of the systems under consideration.

## 1 Introduction

This project advocates for an exhaustive examination of web applications using Wireshark as a primary tool for analyzing network packets. Through a thorough examination of network traffic, the goal is to look under the hood to uncover valuable insights related to data transmission, security protocols, and overall performance. The dynamic of online payments has gained pace in Nepal over the last decade. However, from the network perspective no research has been conducted so far to provide an insight on the web traffic of those online payment systems. Through this research, we intend to gain some insights into the internal workings from a network perspective of the systems under consideration.

#### 1.1 Motivation

In the modern age, understanding how applications and webservers exchange data, that is, the data flow of applications and websites is a crucial factor for network administrators, web security professionals. organizations, and casual users alike. This is because of several reasons. Firstly, knowing where data is flowing helps identify vulnerabilities so that we can better protect our data and privacy. The rise of the internet has been meteoric and the threats over the internet are as ubiquitous as the internet itself. Monitoring how your data travels over different devices and networks as it tries to reach its destination helps recognize, reveal, and intercept malicious activity in time to keep data integrity and privacy in check. Secondly, gaining an insight into data flow helps better utilize the network resources to achieve optimum performance. The resources over the internet are limited and several anomalies can arise that can lead to bandwidth congestion and ultimately network failure. Malware (or botnet) activity, DDoS attacks, inadequate network infrastructure, network misconfiguration, and network throttling are some anomalies that we want to avoid. Obviously, looking into data flows helps reveal such anomalies and prevent them. Thirdly, troubleshooting process can be expedited when one has an insight on the data flow. Instead of skimming over issues by following the trial-and-error method to solve network issues, one can better identify issues and reach a feasible solution faster and hence more efficiently when one has an insight into the data flow. Lastly, monitoring data flows can help verify that third-party applications and services are adhering to their service-level agreements and security standards. Social media platforms, payment processors, cloud storage and file sharing services are some third-party applications and services that we use on a daily basis. Monitoring data flows of such applications and services to understand how a user's data is being utilized is crucial to keep data privacy and security in check.

#### 1.2 Contribution

The infrastructure for payment over web applications has gradually evolved in Nepal over the last decade. However, the infrastructure only gained popularity during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. The web applications under consideration are now widely used in Nepal. However, minimal research has been conducted to see how data is flowing over those web applications. Through this research, we intend to gain some insights into the internal workings from a network perspective of the applications under consideration and present a

detailed overview of the protocols and safety standards used and provide guidelines to further secure the web traffic for those web applications if needed. We also intend our work to be a source of reference for any subsequent work that might follow.

## 1.3 Objectives

The primary objectives of this project are:

- Examine Data Transmission: Analyze the patterns and characteristics of data transmission within web applications for identifying potential bottlenecks.
- ☐ Evaluate Security Protocols: Investigate the security protocols used by the web applications, identifying any encryption methods, and any potential vulnerabilities.
- Evaluate the ports used: Access and identify the ports utilized in the data transmission process. This involves determining the ports used and why they are used in the process.
- Analyze domains and subdomains:
  Investigate the domains and subdomains associated with the web application. The aim is to identify the primary web addresses, subcategories, and any other related domains, providing a comprehensive overview of the web application's structural hierarchy.

## 1.4 Scope

This project focuses on a limited set of web applications, chosen based on online payments done in Nepal. We have chosen both private and government web applications for this project. The analysis will encompass both client-server and server-server communication, providing a holistic view of the network traffic associated with web applications. The web applications chosen for this project are:

esewa.com.np
connnectips.com
khalti.com
ipay.com.np
imepay.com.np

## 1.5 Significance

Understanding how the web applications use internet is very important. It helps make things more secure, faster, and gives users a smoother experience. The findings of this project may offer valuable insights to developers, tech admins, and security professionals, contributing to the ongoing improvement of web application development. Also, since the research data on our topic is very minimal in Nepal, our research will also help serve as a reference to any future work related to network analysis and diagnosis of the web applications under consideration.

## 2 Web Applications

#### 2.1 Web Application Analysis

Web application analysis involves the examination of network traffic for gaining insights into the functioning and behavior of applications accessed through the internet. Understanding data transmission, security protocols, and performance is crucial for optimizing web applications and ensuring a secure user experience.

#### 2.2 Wireshark Overview

Wireshark is a powerful widely used open-source packet analyzer allowing real-time inspection of data traversing a network. This tool boasts features like packet capturing in real-time, making it beneficial for network administrators, developers and users interested in internet security. With its support for diverse protocols, Wireshark proves versatile in inspecting various layers of computer networks. In this project, Wireshark is used as a tool for packet capturing and looking at the various protocols, ports used and tracking data. Understanding the traffic patterns helps identify anomalies and optimize data transmission efficiency. We also used it for examination of the security protocols such as HTTP, TLS aiding in the identification of vulnerabilities and adherence to best practices. It is also used for evaluating performance metrics like latency, response time, and throughput, contributing to the enhancement of web application performance.

### 2.3 Relevant Technologies and Tools

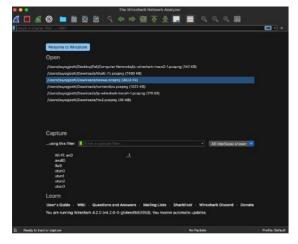
The integration of Wireshark with other analysis tools and methodologies is essential for comprehensive web application analysis. We used other tools as well for this project like browser developer tools, shodan.io, seranking.com, nslookup(in terminal) to help us analyze any vulnerabilities, finding subdomains and real-time monitoring network activity and understand client-server behavior.

## 3 Methodology

The approach proposed involves the usage of Wireshark in information gathering to analyze application layer protocols used by the most popular money transfer and payment web applications in Nepal to look for any possible vulnerabilities. The web applications we have considered are: connectips.com, esewa.com.np, khalti.com, ipay.com.np, and imepay.com.np. Our approach includes the following steps.

#### 3.1 Environment Setup

The initial step is setting up the environment to ensure that we have the necessary permissions and tools for capturing network traffic. In this context, our environment includes several web applications. To replicate real-world scenarios, we've mimicked the actual usage of these websites and done real-world transactions for capturing traffic through Wireshark and additional tools. As a requirement, we have involved an active subscription to a mobile operator in Nepal and used preexisting accounts. The primary tool chosen for analyzing the packets is Wireshark. Also, other helpful tools like shodan.io, web browser tools have been utilized.



#### 3.2 Packet Capture and Filtering

After the environment setup, we activate Wireshark to capture real-time data as it flows through the network connected to our web applications under consideration. The steps involve monitoring the actual data exchanges between the website and users and providing a dynamic view of network activity. Filters will be applied to focus on relevant traffic, and capturing process will be initiated during the user interactions with the applications.

## 3.3 Login into Websites Under Consideration

Interact with the websites by logging into the websites and simulating user's action. This step aims to observe the network traffic patterns especially associated with user authentication and website access.

## 3.4 Analyze the protocols and ports used

Using Wireshark to examine the protocols, ports involved in the communication between the user's device and the websites. This involves looking at the details of how data is exchanged during website interactions and examine the patterns of data transmission, identifying the protocols used, packet sizes, and transmission times. The analysis aims to uncover inefficiencies and optimize data transfer for improved performance.

## 4 Expected Results

We expect to uncover a variety of insights related to web applications, data transmission, and security protocols. Some expected findings and results are as follows.

- ☐ Identify the data being transmitted between client and server.
- ☐ Understand patterns of data transfer.
- ☐ Evaluate the usage of protocols.
- Identify any vulnerabilities and potential security risks in the transmission of sensitive user information.
- Measure and analyze response times for different requests and identifying any bottlenecks.
- Detect any unusual network behaviors that may indicate security threats or technical issues.

By successfully executing this approach, we may be able to contribute to the overall improvement of the web application's security, reliability, and performance.

## 5 Implementation and Findings

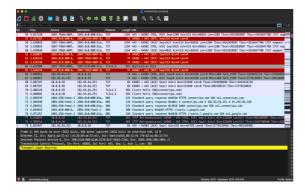
After initiating the packet capture process during interaction with the selected web applications, we ensure that the capture aligns with typical user sessions. A typical user session involves logging in to the system, making transactions and logging out. Using Wireshark's filtering capabilities to focus on relevant communication, including packets, protocols, and ports in use along with associated domains and subdomains, the findings observed in a typical user session for our web applications under consideration have been described below.

### 5.1 connectips.com

The IP address 182.93.64.251 and 43.245.85.228 are associated with the domain "connectips.com". During the packet capture lines, packet 66,67, and 68 represents a TCP three-way handshake for a connection from source (10.0.0.58) to destination (182.93.64.251), and similar handshake can be observed for other connections, in lines 435 and 829. with "PSH, ACK" indicates the transmission of the actual data (packet 111, 129, 147). The "Len" field in these lines shows the length of the TCP payload. Packets 1819, 1834, and 1835 indicates the initiation of the connection termination with "FIN, ACK" flags. Packets 64, 434, 853, 857, 1823, 1824 shows TCP reset packets. Also, there are additional connection attempts, like 47, 49, 398, 3717, etc. The protocols used are HTTP/HTTPS. Since, the transaction is over HTTPS, there is an SSL/TLS handshake at the beginning of the connection. The ports used is 443. It is used for secure web traffic for HTTPS. HTTPS is a

combination of HTTP and the SSL/TLS protocol. It provides a secure and encrypted communication channel between web server and the user's browser. This encryption helps to protect sensitive information, such as login credentials, personal data, and financial transactions, from eavesdropping and unauthorized access. The domain and subdomain used with their used traffic are shown in the table below.

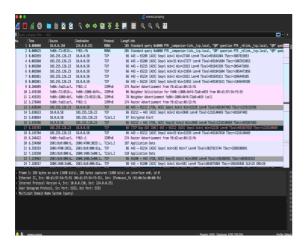
Domain and Sub domain	Traffic Share
connectips.com	59.58%
login.connectips.com	39.16%
corporatepay.connectips.com	0.55%
uat.connectips.com	0.54%
www.connectips.com	0.17%



### 5.2 esewa.com.np

The IP address 103.255.126.24, 103.255.126.46, 103.255.126.22, 103.255.126.21, 103.255.126.23, 103.255.126.20 are associated with the domain "esewa.com.np". Each of these addresses represent a server or a network interface that can be used to access the services provided by "esewa.com.np". It has multiple IP addresses associated with it and indicates a distributed network setup. This can be load balancing, for redundancy or serving users from geographically distributed data centers to reduce latency. When we access the domain through a network service, the request is directed to any of these IP addresses and the decision is made by the DNS resolver, often based on factors like network congestion, distance, or server availability. The packets with "Client Hello" indicate the initiation of a TLS handshake by the client (10.0.0.58) to the server (103.255.126.23). Following the client hello, the sever responds with "Server Hello" packets, indicating that it has accepted the client's request and is ready to establish a secure connection. These Server Hello packets include details about the agreed-upon cryptographic parameters for secure connection. The capture shows multiple instances of the TLS handshake process, with the client initiating the handshake (Client Hello), and the server responding (Server Hello). There is a repetitive nature of the packets that indicates either a repeated attempt to establish a connection or an ongoing communication session. Towards the end of the data, there is a "Client Hello" packet directed at a different IP address (103.65.200.21). This is an attempt to establish a secure connection with a different server. The packets are using the TLSv1.2 protocol version, as the data indicates. Packets 3-8 shows a TCP connection between the source and the destination. Packets 13-16 indicates the termination of a TCP connection, where the source sends a FIN, ACK signal, and the destination acknowledges it. Packets 17-18 show a TCP Dup ACK, indicating a duplicate acknowledgement and this often occurs in response to a retransmitted packet. Packets 683-692 shows the initiation of a new TCP connection from 10.0.0.58 to 103.255.126.23 over port 443. Packets 687-691 shows a TLS handshake with a Client Hello, Server Hello, and Encrypted Handshake Message. Packets 692-699 demonstrate the exchange of Application Data in the TLS-encrypted 695,696, connection. Packets 698 shows retransmitted TCP segments. Packets 715-716 shows an ACK for the FIN, ACK signal and a Syn retransmission for a new connection. Packets 1925-2038 shows the TLS handshake and the termination of a connection. The ports used for communication are 443, 993 and 995. Port 443 is used for secure web traffic for HTTPS. HTTPS is a combination of HTTP and the SSL/TLS protocol. It provides a secure and encrypted communication channel between web server and the user's browser. This encryption helps to protect sensitive information, such as login credentials, personal data, and financial transactions, from eavesdropping and unauthorized access. Port 993 is used for secure email configuration over IMAP protocol. IMAP allows email clients to retrieve message from a mail server, and when it operates over TLS/SSL (encrypted), it uses port 993 to ensure the confidentiality of email data during transmission. Port 995 is used for secure email retrieval using the POP3 protocol. It is similar to IMAPS, as it operates over TLS/SSL to provide encryption for the communication between an email client and the mail server. It ensures that sensitive email content, including usernames and passwords, is transmitted securely. In short, port 443 is associated with secure web browsing (HTTPS), port 993 is associated with secure email retrieval using IMAP(IMAPS), port 995 is associated with secure email retrieval using POP3(POP3S). The domain and subdomain used with their used traffic are shown in the table below.

Domains and Sub domain	Traffic Share
esewa.com.np	29.93%
blog.esewa.com.np	67.16%
merchant.esewa.com.np	2.63%
helpdesk.esewa.com.np	0.15%
uat-merchant.esewa.com.np	0.05%
developer.esewa.com.np	0.04%
nicnepal.esewa.com.np	0.02%
edolpa.esewa.com.np	0%
edn.esewa.com.np	0%
gbics.esewa.com.np	0%

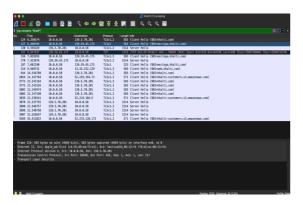


#### 5.3 khalti.com

The IP address 139.5.70.201 and 139.5.70.200 are associated with the domain "Khalti.com". The ports used are 443 and 8081. Port 443 is used for the encrypted web traffic using HTTPS. The S in HTTPS stands for secure and indicates that the communication between the web browser and the web server is encrypted using SSL/TLS. It ensures that the data exchanged between client and the server is secure and is difficult to intercept or tampered by the third parties. Port 8081 is used as an alternative for default HTTP port 80. It allows web servers to run on a different port than the standard one. It is useful in scenarios where port 80 is already in use, or when an administrator wants to configure a server to listen on a non-standard port for various reasons.

The domain and subdomain used with their used traffic are shown in the table below.

Domain and Sub domain	Traffic Share
khalti.com	50.26%
blog.khalti.com	41.1%
web.khalti.com	7.45%
admin.khalti.com	0.51%
docs.khalti.com	0.45%
corporate.khalti.com	0.2%
test-admin.khalti.com	0.02%
a.khalti.com	0%
events.khalti.com	0%



### 5.4 ipay.com.np

The IP address 43.245.85.179 is associated with the domain "ipay.com.np". The ports used are 80 and 443. Port 80 is the default port for unencrypted web traffic using HTTP. Port 443 is used for the encrypted web traffic using HTTPS. The S in HTTPS stands for secure and indicates that the communication between the web browser and the web server is encrypted using SSL/TLS. It ensures that the data exchanged between client and the server is secure and is difficult to intercept or tampered by the third parties. The domain and subdomain used with their used traffic are shown in the table below.

Domain and Sub domain	Traffic Share
www.ipay.com.np	100%

#### 5.5 imepay.com.np

The domain and subdomain used with their used traffic are shown in the table below.

Domain and Sub domain	Traffic Share
www.imepay.com.np	97.34%
blog.imepay.com.np	2.56%
services.imepay.com.np	0.11%

## 6 Challenges

We encountered several challenges during this project. Firstly, we couldn't find any previous research work that we could use as a reference point. Also, during network traffic analysis, the traffic was so huge that it difficult to track all of them. To solve this, we looked at few of the captured data that was useful for this project. Also, some websites use privacy to protect their data, hence obfuscating the data and making it difficult for us to understand. Furthermore, we want to respect people's privacy. So, even though we did collect some personal information while conducting the project, we haven't disclosed it in our report. Also, some networks do things in dynamic ways and were complicated for our study. Filtering out unwanted background noise is another challenge that we faced during the project. Despite all these challenges, careful planning and teamwork helped us complete the project successfully.

#### 7 Results and Conclusion

In conclusion, our project aimed to conduct an indepth analysis of web application, especially focusing on network traffic using Wireshark as a primary tool. The selected web applications, including connectips.com, eswea.com.np, Khalti.com, ipay.com.np, and imepay.com.np, were inspected for understanding data transmission,

security protocols, and overall performance. Through our methodology, we were able to achieve several significant findings and insights. We identified patterns and characteristics of data transmission within web applications. uncovered TCP three-way handshakes, data transmission and connection termination sequence. We also explored SSL/TLS handshakes, indicating secure connections in web applications, and examined encryption methods and potential vulnerabilities in the communication process. We identified specific ports used in data transmission, such as 443 for secure web traffic. We also explored alternatives ports like 8081, providing insights into server configuration choices, port 993 ensures that the communication between the email client and server is encrypted using TLS and 995 uses TLS/SSL for secure communication channel between the client and the server. We also analyzed various domains and subdomains associated with each web application and calculated traffic shares for each domain and subdomains, highlighting the significance of specific components.

Our project successfully met its objectives, and the expected results were achieved. We uncovered valuable insights into data transmission patterns, security protocols, and potential vulnerabilities within the chosen web applications.

### 8 Future Work

The project focused mostly on application and transport layer protocols of the layered internet protocol stack. An even more exhaustive analysis can be done when the focus is shifted toward the network, link, and physical layers of the internet protocol stack. Perhaps, this can be achieved as a future work. Also, more work is needed on identifying different cyber-attacks that the web applications might be vulnerable to. So, another future work can involve a series of tests simulating a real-life cyber-attack through penetration testing. We believe that being able to gain perspectives as a network administrator and an attacker is important in securing web applications.