Emulating Windows XP on an Android Mobile Device	
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Concept Overview

The processing capabilities of today's mobile devices are more powerful than ever. Anecdotally, it seems mobile devices are becoming the device of choice for the average user's primary computing needs, significantly more so than the traditional desktop computers. So with all this computer capability at our fingertips, what *unconventional* things can we do with it? It is this very question that fueled my curiosity for this research project. With that said, my hypothesis is as follows:

Emulating a different operating system, specifically Windows XP, on an Android device will likely yield artifacts of interest.

Testing

The following details the steps I performed as part of this research project.

1. Create a Blank Image File: Before an emulation application was selected, I first needed to create a blank image file (i.e. *.img) as a landing point for the Windows XP installation.

Note: Windows XP was selected because its minimum hardware requirements were less demanding than any newer version of Windows, and all with full acknowledgment that XP is no longer supported by Microsoft.

To accomplished this, I used a free open source tool called Bochs Disk Image Creation Tool. Figure 1 below shows this command line interface (CLI) and the associated options which I selected for the blank image file. Note the filename as *c.img* as this will be referenced throughout this write-up. The default directory for the newly created image file is:

C:\Users\%Username%\AppData\Local\VirtualStore\Program Files (x86)\Bochs-2.6.8.

```
Bochs Disk Image Creation Tool
                                                                              X
                                   bximage
 Disk Image Creation / Conversion / Resize and Commit Tool for Bochs
         $Id: bximage.cc 13069 2017-02-12 16:51:52Z vruppert $
  Create new floppy or hard disk image
Convert hard disk image to other format (mode)
  Resize hard disk image
Commit 'undoable' redolog to base image
  Disk image info
  Ouit
Please choose one [0] 1
reate image
o you want to create a floppy disk image or a hard disk image?
Please type hd or fd. [hd] hd
what kind of image should I create?
Please type flat, sparse, growing, vpc or vmware4. [flat] flat
Enter the hard disk size in megabytes, between 10 and 8257535
what should be the name of the image?
c.img] c.img_
```

Figure 1 - Bochs Disk Image Creation Tool

2. Windows XP Installation: A free Windows-based application called Qemu Manager v7.0 was used to install Windows XP on the blank *c.img* image file. Qemu Manager is a generic and open source machine emulator and virtualizer. Figure 2 below shows the drive configuration for this installation. Note the *c.img* (blank disk) image file and the Windows XP ISO files similar to creating a virtual machine using Virtual Box or VMWare.

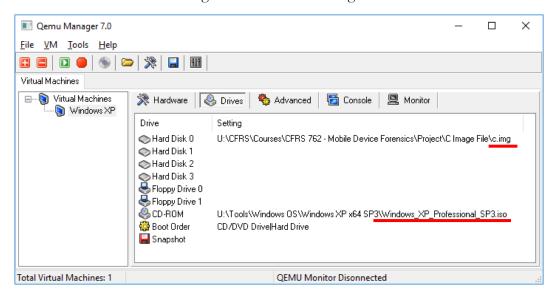


Figure 2 - Qemu Manager drive configuration for Windows XP installation

3. Test Windows XP Installation: Next, the XP operating system was tested in Qemu Manager to validate a successful installation. The username *Sterling Archer* was set up with Administrator privileges. Figure 3 below is a screenshot of XP running in Qemu Manager.

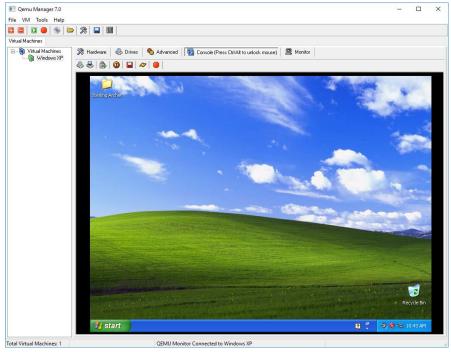


Figure 3 – XP running in Qemu Manager

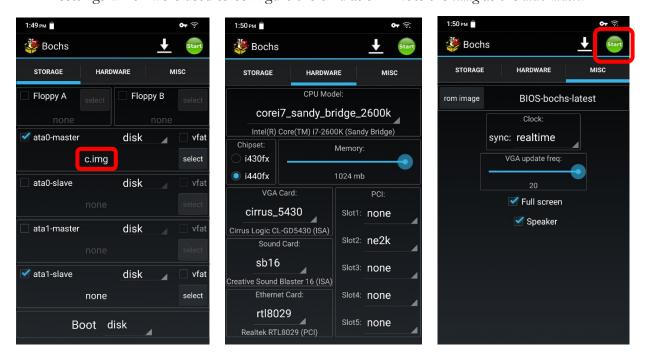
- 4. Exemplary Devices: Since I had to personally finance this effort, my "Research & Development" budget was rather limited. Therefore, a top of line phones with the highest processing power was not an option. However, with some deliberate comparison of specification sheets and reading dozens of product reviews I ended up selecting a BLU Vivo XI+ running Android Oreo (8.1.0) and a rooted Google Pixel (1st generation) also running Android Oreo (8.1.0) as my exemplary devices.
- 5. Simple Direct-Media Layer (SDL): According to the SDL website "Simple Direct-Media Layer (SDL for short) is a cross-platform development library designed to provide low-level access to audio, keyboard, mouse, joystick, and graphics hardware via OpenGL and Direct3D. Developed by Sam Lantinga, SDL is used by video playback software, emulators, and popular games." When paired with the Bochs Cross Platform Emulator Android application the result is a simple yet powerful combination for running non-standard operating systems.
- 6. Bochs Cross Platform IA-32 Emulator Android App: According to the Boch website and the Google Play Store, the Bochs application, originally developed by Kevin Lawton, "is a highly portable open source x86 PC emulator written in C++, that runs on most popular platforms. It includes emulation of the Intel x86 CPU, common I/O devices, and a custom BIOS. Bochs can be compiled to emulate many different x86 CPUs, from early 386 to the most recent x86-64 Intel and AMD processors. Bochs is capable of running most Operating Systems inside the emulation including Linux, DOS or Microsoft Windows. The typical use of Bochs is to provide complete x86 PC emulation, including the x86 processor, hardware devices, and memory thereby allowing users to run operating systems and software within the emulator on their workstation [or device]." ^{2,3}

There are three files that must accompany the Bochs Android application to ensure successful emulation. The files are *BIOS-bochs-latest, bochsrc.txt*, and *VGABIOS-lgpl-latest*. Additionally, the stock *bochsrc.txt* required a slight modification prior to implementation. Specifically the *ata0 master path* (reference Figure 4 below) needed to match the name of the image file used to install Windows XP. In this case, the pathname was changed to *c.img*.

```
bochsrc.txt - Notepad
<u>F</u>ile <u>E</u>dit F<u>o</u>rmat <u>V</u>iew <u>H</u>elp
megs: 512
 cpu: count=1, ips=6000000, reset_on_triple_fault=1, ignore_bad_msrs=1
 # filename of ROM images
romimage: file=BIOS-bochs-latest
vgaromimage: file=VGABIOS-lgpl-latest
vga: extension=cirrus, update_freq=25
pci: enabled=1, chipset=i440fx, slot1=cirrus
ata0: enabled=1, ioaddr1=0x1f0, ioaddr2=0x3f0, irq=14
atal: enabled=1, ioaddr1=0x170, ioaddr2=0x370, irq=15
ata0-master: type=disk, path="c.img"
#ata0-slave: type=disk, path="d.img"
#ata1-master: type=disk, mode=vvfat, path=/sdcard/HDD, journal=vvfat.redolog
#type=cdrom, path="CD.ISO", status=inserted
boot: c
ata1: enabled=1, ioaddr1=0x170, ioaddr2=0x370, irg=15
config_interface: textconfig
#display_library: x
# other choices: win32 sdl wx carbon amigaos beos macintosh nogui rfb term svga
log: bochsout.txt
sb16: enabled=1
mouse: enabled=1
sb16: wavemode=1, dmatimer=500000
clock: sync=none, time0=1
```

Figure 4 – modified *bochsrc.txt*

- 7. Transfer Files to Exemplary Devices: Hine sight, I should have created the c.img file as a 4GB blank disk instead of 5GB so that a FAT32 formatted USB flash drive could be used to quickly transfer the three Bochs files and the c.img file to both exemplary devices. Apparently, neither exemplary device supports exFAT formatted USB drives even with an On-The-Go (OTG) USB Type C / Type A cable adapter. As a result, the files were simply emailed to an address specifically created for this research project. All four files were then saved to the root directory of each exemplar's internal storage, specifically in a folder titled SDL.
- 8. Emulation: With the Bochs emulator Android app installed along with the necessary files (BIOS-bochs-latest, bochsrc.txt, and VGABIOS-lgpl-latest) in place on both exemplary devices it was time to configure the app to enable a successful emulation. Figure 5 below shows the settings which were used to configure the emulation. Note the c.img as the ata0-master.



<u>Figure 5</u> – Bochs Android App Settings

Tapping the *Start* button initiates the boot sequence. Figure 6, on the next page, shows a series of screenshots during the Windows XP bootup process on the BLU Vivo XI+ and are followed by Figure 7 which is a photo of the same exemplary device with XP up and running. There was an audible sigh of relief when the operating system finally loaded, despite being the outdated Windows XP.



<u>Figure 6</u> – Screenshots of Windows XP booting up on the BLU Vivo XI+ exemplary device



Figure 7 - Photograph of Windows XP running on the BLU Vivo Xi+ exemplary device

- 9. Create User Footprint: At this stage, it is worth noting that "using" XP on both exemplary devices was painfully slow which was disappointing but not overly surprising. Moreover, navigating the GUI with the touchscreen mouse and virtual keyboard was very cumbersome. Additionally, the installation was unable to connect to either exemplar's WIFI Network Interface Card which kept me from generating any internet artifacts.
- 10. Acquisition: Thanks to Professor Jessica Hyde for providing a trial license of Magnet Forensics AXIOM tool suite. Full disclosure, I have no previous training (on-the-job, instructor-led, or otherwise) with AXIOM. Therefore, the issues encountered during the

acquisition and analysis portions of this research project are attributable to operator error vice a capability shortfall with the tool. That being said, AXIOM Process made short order of a quick/logical acquisition of the BLU Vivo XI+ exemplary. A second full/physical was attempted on the same exemplary, but was unsuccessful due to the device not being rooted. Booting the Google Pixel into the Team Win Recovery Project custom recovery enabled AXIOM Process to obtain a full/physical acquisition. In an effort to streamline the analysis portion of this research project the National Software Reference Library (NSRL) Android Reference Data Set (RDS) was incorporated for both acquisitions.⁵

Targeted Analysis

➤ Target #1 - Analyzing the *c.img* file:

In no particular order, the following descriptions represent general findings from analyzing the *c.img* file. Every tool employed for this portion of the analysis is, as of this writing, open source. Additionally, all parsing and analysis were performed on a forensic workstation. This section is far from an exhaustive analysis for the simple fact that analyzing *.img* files is synonymous with performing traditional computer forensics on other image file formats (e.g. .E01, .dd, .raw), and therefore outside the scope of this research project. As such, only strings, registry, and prefetch data parsing has been detailed below.

1. Strings Parsing: A command line utility developed by Eric Zimmerman named *bstrings.exe* ⁶, was run against the *c.img* file using the following syntax:

bstrings.exe -m 8 -b 1024 -o C:\strings.txt -s -f < path to c.img file>

Figure 8 below provides a brief description of each switch employed in the aforementioned command line.

-m 8	Sets the minimum string length to eight characters. The default is three. Eight was used
	simply to speed up the string parsing
b 1024	Chunks c.img in blocks of 1024MB which resulted in five chunks for the 5GB c.img file
-0	Writes output of the search to strings.txt
S	Really Quiet Mode (Does not display hits to console. Speeds up processing when using
	the -o switch)
-f	Specifies the file to search

Figure 8 - Description of each switch employed

Figure 9 below is a very small and arbitrary screenshot from the *strings.txt* output file.

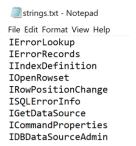


Figure 9 – Screenshot of the *strings.txt* output file

2. Registry Parsing: To parse the Windows XP registry hives I used RegRipper, an open source tool developed by Harlan Carvey. Figure 10 below shows two screenshots from the report generated after parsing the NTUSER registry hive. Note the *Sterling Archer* fictitious username.

```
logonusername v.20080324
(NTUSER.DAT) Get user's Logon User Name value
Logon User Name
Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer
LastWrite Time [Sat Oct 6 04:58:58 2018 (UTC)]
Logon User Name = Sterling Archer
_____
shellfolders v.20090115
(NTUSER.DAT) Retrieve user Shell Folders values
Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Shell Folders
LastWrite Time Sat Oct 6 04:57:50 2018 (UTC)
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\My Documents
Personal
Desktop
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Desktop
AppData
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Application Data
Cookies
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Cookies
                  C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Favorites
Favorites
NetHood
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\NetHood
PrintHood
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\PrintHood
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Recent
Recent
SendTo
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\SendTo
                  C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Start Menu
Start Menu
Templates
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Templates
Programs
                  C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Start Menu\Programs
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Start Menu\Programs\Startup
Startup
                  C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Local Settings
Local Settings
Local AppData
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Local Settings\Application Data
Cache
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Local Settings\Temporary Internet Files
History
                    C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Local Settings\History
My Pictures
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\My Documents\My Pictures
Fonts
                    C:\WINDOWS\Fonts
My Music
                   C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\My Documents\My Music
My Video
Administrative Tools
                    C:\Documents and Settings\Sterling Archer\Local Settings\Application Data\Microsoft\CD Burning
CD Burning
```

<u>Figure 10</u> – Screenshot *NTUSER.dat* RegRipper report

3. Prefetch Parsing: To parse the c.img's C:\Windows\Prefetch directory I used WinPrefetchView v1.35 developed by Nir Soft. The screenshot below shows a prefetch listing filtered from highest to lowest Run Count.

Filename	Created Time	Modified Time	File Size	Process EXE	Process Path	Run Counter 🔻	Last Run Time	Missing Process
WUAUCLT.EXE-399A8E72.pf	10/6/2018 12:52:36 AM	10/6/2018 12:57:58 AM	17,860	WUAUCLT.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\WUAUCLT.EXE	10	10/6/2018 12:57:48 AM	No
■ VERCLSID.EXE-3667BD89.pf	10/6/2018 12:55:31 AM	10/6/2018 12:58:08 AM	21,924	VERCLSID.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\VERCLSID.EXE	7	10/6/2018 12:58:06 AM	No
■ CMD.EXE-087B4001.pf	10/6/2018 12:55:20 AM	10/6/2018 12:55:27 AM	12,716	CMD.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\CMD.EXE	5	10/6/2018 12:55:25 AM	No
DEVCON.EXE-3189D4D7.pf	10/6/2018 12:55:23 AM	10/6/2018 12:55:26 AM	7,940	DEVCON.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\DEVCON.EXE	4	10/6/2018 12:55:26 AM	No
REGSVR32.EXE-25EEFE2F.pf	10/6/2018 12:56:12 AM	10/6/2018 12:57:25 AM	35,502	REGSVR32.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\REGSVR32.EXE	3	10/6/2018 12:57:15 AM	No
SHMGRATE.EXE-1BA69E68.pf	10/6/2018 12:56:21 AM	10/6/2018 12:57:15 AM	22,450	SHMGRATE.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\SHMGRATE.EXE	3	10/6/2018 12:57:13 AM	No
SVCHOST.EXE-3530F672.pf	10/6/2018 12:52:22 AM	10/6/2018 12:52:30 AM	20,560	SVCHOST.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\SVCHOST.EXE	3	10/6/2018 12:52:20 AM	No
IE4UINIT.EXE-169A5A39.pf	10/6/2018 12:56:03 AM	10/6/2018 12:57:07 AM	38,930	IE4UINIT.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\IE4UINIT.EXE	2	10/6/2018 12:57:05 AM	No
I LOGONUI.EXE-0AF22957.pf	10/6/2018 12:55:15 AM	10/6/2018 12:59:05 AM	19,108	LOGONUI.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\LOGONUI.EXE	2	10/6/2018 12:58:55 AM	No
SETUP50.EXE-362FF7C9.pf	10/6/2018 12:56:16 AM	10/6/2018 12:56:28 AM	57,692	SETUP50.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\PROGRAM FILES\OUTLOOK EXPRESS\SETUP50.EXE	2	10/6/2018 12:56:25 AM	No
WMIADAP.EXE-2DF425B2.pf	10/6/2018 12:54:14 AM	10/6/2018 12:56:47 AM	21,936	WMIADAP.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\WBEM\WMIADAP.EXE	2	10/6/2018 12:56:33 AM	No
WMIPRVSE.EXE-28F301A9.pf	10/6/2018 12:53:33 AM	10/6/2018 12:53:38 AM	22,554	WMIPRVSE.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\WBEM\WMIPRVSE.EXE	2	10/6/2018 12:53:28 AM	No
WSCNTFY.EXE-1B24F5EB.pf	10/6/2018 12:55:25 AM	10/6/2018 12:58:58 AM	9,488	WSCNTFY.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\WSCNTFY.EXE	2	10/6/2018 12:58:58 AM	No
■ AGENTSVR.EXE-002E45AB.pf	10/6/2018 12:52:57 AM	10/6/2018 12:52:57 AM	5,628	AGENTSVR.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\MSAGENT\AGENTSVR.EXE	1	10/6/2018 12:52:47 AM	No
■ ALG.EXE-0F138680.pf	10/6/2018 12:53:32 AM	10/6/2018 12:53:32 AM	17,406	ALG.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\ALG.EXE	1	10/6/2018 12:53:22 AM	No
CSRSS.EXE-12B63473.pf	10/6/2018 12:55:21 AM	10/6/2018 12:55:21 AM	1,890			1	10/6/2018 12:55:11 AM	No
DPSFNSHR.EXE-1C8143D1.pf	10/6/2018 12:55:30 AM	10/6/2018 12:55:30 AM	18,544	DPSFNSHR.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\DPSFNSHR.EXE	1	10/6/2018 12:55:20 AM	No
EXPLORER.EXE-082F38A9.pf	10/6/2018 12:55:25 AM	10/6/2018 12:55:25 AM	29,172	EXPLORER.EXE	\DEVICE\HARDDISKVOLUME1\WINDOWS\EXPLORER.EXE	1	10/6/2018 12:55:15 AM	No

Figure 11 – Screenshot of the *c.img's C:\Windows\Prefetch* directory

After tirelessly analyzing the *c.img* file, I was left disappointed that I had not found even one unique Android artifact which had embedded itself into the *c.img* file as a result of emulating the Windows XP operating system on both exemplary devices.

- Target #2 Analyzing the Bochs Android Application:
 - 1. Application Directory: In both exemplary devices, the Bochs Android application directory was found in *adb-data.tar/apps/net.sourceforge.bochs*. Below is a screenshot showing the application's file directory structure.

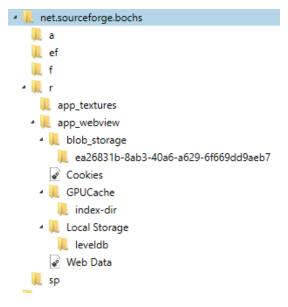


Figure 12 – File structure for Bochs Android application

2. XML Files of Interest: Using Magnet Forensics AXIOM tool, four XML files of interest were found in the *net.sourceforge.bochs/sp* directory and are shown in Figure 13 below.

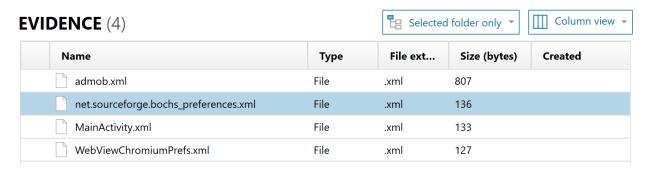


Figure 13 – XML Files of Interest from the net.sourceforge.bochs/sp directory

a. *admob.xml*: A review of the *admob.xml* file resulted in three artifacts of interest which have been marked by the red arrows in Figure 14 on the following page.

<u>Figure 14</u> – admob.xml from the net.sourceforge.bochs/sp directory

The value strings encircled above appear to be epoch timestamps. Using an online epoch time converter⁷ resulted in the following human-readable dates:

Last Update: 1538805957909	Friday, November 16, 2018 3:12:16 AM GMT-05:00
First Ad Req Time: 1541361732452	Friday, November 16, 2018 6:17:17 PM GMT-05:00
App Last Background Time: 1541364595064	Friday, November 16, 2018 6:32:52 PM GMT-05:00

b. Figure 15 shows the XML code for the net.sourceforge.bochs_preferences.xml

Figure 15 – netsourceforge.boch_preferences.xml from the net.sourceforge.bochs/sp directory

At the time of this writing, I am unable to determine the level of interest or purpose of the *variations_seed_native_stored* XML code.

c. Figure 16 shows the XML code for the Main Activity.xml is

<u>Figure 16</u> – MainActivity.xml from the net.sourceforge.bochs/sp directory

The /storage/emulated/0/SDL is the Android backup location for the SDL files used by the Boch Android application.

d. Figure 17 shows the XML code for the WebViewChrominumPrefs.xml.

Figure 17 – WebViewChromiumPrefs.xml from the net.sourceforge.bochs/sp directory

The *lastVersionCodeUsed* represents the current version of the Bochs Android application used on the device. The Google Play lists 2.6.9 as the version of Boch Android application installed on both exemplary devices. Unfortunately, at the time of this writing, I am unable to correlate "2.6.9" with "353808052" number string from the XML code above.

3. Other Files of Interest: Figure 18 below shows the contents of the *leveldb* folder. Inside were three log files as two database files presumably SQLite. Viewing each in both a hex editor (HxD v1.7.7.0) and a database viewer (DB Browser for SQLite v3.10.1) yielded little to no information of interest which was not surprising given the same file sizes.

VIDENCE (6)							Selected folder only • Column view
Name	Туре	File extension	Size (bytes)	Created	Accessed	Modified	MD5 hash
CURRENT	File		16			10/6/2018 6:05:57 AM	46295cac801e5d4857d09837238a6394
MANIFEST-000001	File		41			10/6/2018 6:05:57 AM	5af87dfd673ba2115e2fcf5cfdb727ab
000003.log	File	.log	0			10/6/2018 6:05:57 AM	d41d8cd98f00b204e9800998ecf8427e
LOG	File		182			10/27/2018 3:04:26 AM	ac768e8bdabf20908691682f7613f3e1
LOG.old	File	.old	182			10/27/2018 2:49:48 AM	71f4e41635403b4d949473b1cf707265
LOCK	File		0			10/6/2018 6:05:57 AM	d41d8cd98f00b204e9800998ecf8427e

<u>Figure 18</u> – Files of Interest from the *net.sourceforge.bochs/r/app_webview/Local Storage/leveldb* directory

For completeness, Figure 19 below shows the content of the *LOG.old* file primarily because when compared to the other files it held the most content, all 182 bytes.

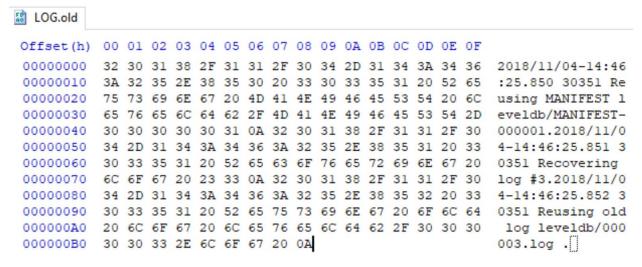


Figure 19 – Contents of the *LOG.old* file

Conclusion

This research project, while not terribly enlightening, did satisfy my curiosity about running a non-traditional operating system on an Android device. Additionally, it was helpful for me, as a novice and a student, to examine the data using a commercial-grade tool while simultaneously leaning on course lecture notes and textbooks to draw certain conclusions. From my standpoint, the *admob.xml* file appeared to yield the most data of interest, and I suspect this specific information would be helpful for the examiner as they develop their timeline surrounding a chain of events.

References

- 1. https://www.libsdl.org/
- 2. http://bochs.sourceforge.net/
- 3. https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=net.sourceforge.bochs&hl=en
- 4. http://bochs.sourceforge.net/doc/docbook/user/bochsrc.html
- 5. https://www.nist.gov/itl/ssd/software-quality-group/nsrl-download/current-rds-hash-sets
- 6. https://github.com/EricZimmerman/bstrings
- 7. https://www.epochconverter.com/