Report TDT4237

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1 Time spent

I decided to follow the recommendations and started with the SCW course in OWASP Top 10. While the course was not exhaustive, it did give me a quick introduction to known security issues in code, and I learned a lot from the examples and challenges. The course did however take some time to finish. I used approximately 5 hours on the course, but I believe it was worth the time. Coming to the assigment, I had already seen a lot of examples from the course, so I managed to pass in two tries. The first time I spent around 1 hour and 30 minutes. Since the questions were the same, I spent only 30 minutes on the second try, spending more time on the challenges I got wrong.
Overall I spent about 7 hours on SCW.

2 Positive ascpects of SCW

I think the most positive ascpect of SCW is that you get to see lack of security in action. I think not only that you learn by doing, but that you also gain a deeper understanding of the issue when theory is combined with examples. I also liked the challenges, both to locate a security issue and choosing an optimal solution.

3 What did I learn?

Since SCW focuses so much on examples and challenges, I believe the most important thing I learned was how to recognize bad security choices. This includes finding specific patterns, but also reflecting over the root cause of a security issue, as in "*Yes, this component makes something unsafe, but the component in itself is safely written, and there is another component that is the reason for the security issue*".

By seeing genuine examples of security issues, I have become more aware over possible security issues when I write code. Not only has my code become more secure, but I also find it easier when reading someone else's code to find vulnerabilities.

4 How has SCW helped me learn?

As I have mentioned before, I think the examples and challenges, i.e the interactivity of SCW has made it much easier to grasp the different concepts of OWASP Top 10. I think that if it was only theory, it would have been the same as reading the book. By introducing interactivity, I think it's easier to understand the vulnerabilities, because you can associate it to some explicit code.

5 Compatibility

I think SCW is very compatible, and I think it's a valuable asset. I like that we in classes learn about the theory, and in SCW we can explore and try out the concepts learned in class in practice. It's very relevant to the course, and fits really well as an exercise, as it does not take so much time to complete, but you learn a lot of about software security in practice.

6 Suggestions

I don't know if SCW has it (I tried searching for it), but it would be cool if we could also get some hands-on experience in GDPR. I know it's highly theoretical, but I'm sure one can construct code examples and challenges that teach about GDPR. Since many students most likely going to work with GDPR after their studies, I think it would be nice with some experience in working with GDPR.

7 Improvements

Overall, SCW is a very good platform, and I enjoyed the experience. The videos are short and structured and instructive. However, the site is slow when loading examples and challenges, and switching between solutions. Maybe this could be done by pre-fetching? Also, in some of the challenges, the solution could in some cases be very easy and not challenging at all. In other cases, you got these big codebases, with many possibilities, and it was hard to pinpoint exactly where the vulnerability had it's root cause.

8 Comments

Overall I think SCW was fun and I learned a lot from it. I definitely think that it should be kept for future iterations of this course.

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

SECURE CODING CERTIFICATE

Erlend Paulsen Skaaden

With a passing grade of 96.12 %

TDT4237 - Exercise 1 (Spring 2023)

Secure Coding Assessment on Feb 3 2023