

FORENSICS LAB SERIES

Lab 3: Introduction to Partitions (MBR & GPT)

Material in this Lab Aligns to the Following Certification Domains/Objectives				
GIAC Certified Forensics Examiner (GCFE) Domains	Certified Cyber Forensics Professional (CCFP) Objectives	Computer Hacking Forensic Investigator (CHFI) Objectives		
4. File and Program Activity Analysis	4: Digital Forensics	8: Windows Forensics		

Document Version: 2016-08-17

Copyright © 2016 Network Development Group, Inc. www.netdevgroup.com

NETLAB Academy Edition, NETLAB Professional Edition and NETLAB+ are registered trademarks of Network Development Group, Inc.



Lab 3: Introduction to Partitions (MBR & GPT)

Contents

Inti	roduction	3
Ob	ojective	3
-	d Topology	
	b Settings	
1		
2	-	
3	Exploring the /dev/sda2 Partition	
4	Exploring the /dev/sda1 Partition	
5	Exploring Windows Data Structure	
6	Exploring the /dev/sdb1 Partition	
7	Exploring the /dev/sdb2 Partition	
8	Exploring GPT Partitions	



Introduction

This lab focuses on exploring partitioning systems with a hex editor. This lab will help teach at a hex level how the operating system understands and interprets a Master Boot Record (MBR) versus GUID Partition Table (GPT) partitioning scheme.

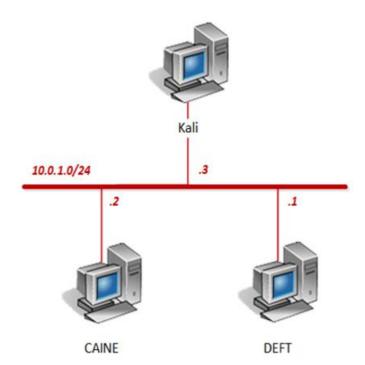
Objective

In this lab, you will be conducting forensic practices using various tools. You will be performing the following tasks:

- 1. Exploring Linux Data Structure
- 2. Exploring the /dev/sda3 Partition
- 3. Exploring the /dev/sda2 Partition
- 4. Exploring the /dev/sda1 Partition
- 5. Exploring Windows Data Structure
- 6. Exploring the /dev/sdb1 Partition
- 7. Exploring the /dev/sdb2 Partition
- 8. Exploring GPT Partitions



Pod Topology





Lab Settings

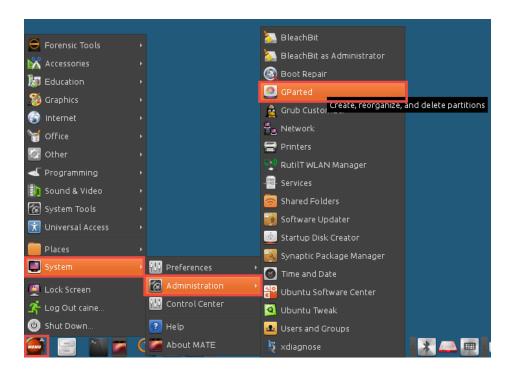
The information in the table below will be needed in order to complete the lab. The task sections below provide details on the use of this information.

Virtual Machine	IP Address	Account (if needed)	Password (if needed)
DEFT	10.0.1.1	deft	password
CAINE	10.0.1.2	caine	
Kali	10.0.1.3	root	toor



1 Exploring Linux Data Structure

- 1. Click on the **CAINE** graphic on the *topology page* to open the VM.
- Open the *GParted* partition editor by navigating to Menu > System > Administration > GParted.



3. Once the *GParted* application window appears, minimize it and open a new terminal by clicking on the **MATE Terminal** icon from the bottom tool bar.



4. Using the terminal, enter the command below to open the /dev/sda disk with wxHexEditor.

wxHexEditor /dev/sda

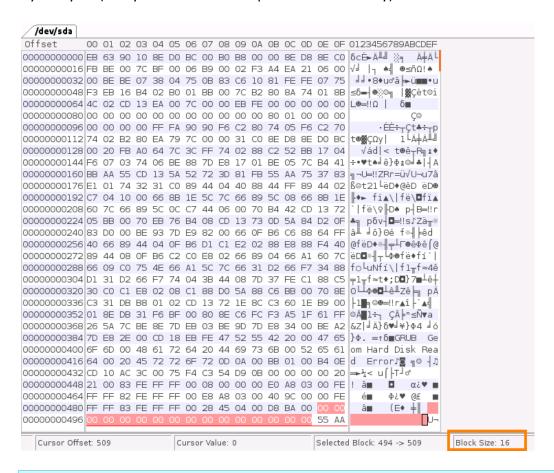
5. If presented with a permissions error message, click **OK** to continue.







6. Notice the hex of the boot sector appears for the 1st Linux drive, which is /dev/sda. The boot sector ends with a signature of 55 AA. This sda drive was setup as a PC DOS style layout with a MBR. Therefore, we can have up to 4 primary partitions max. Locate the 4th partition by counting back from "55 AA" by 16 bytes (16 bytes is the size of a partition table entry).



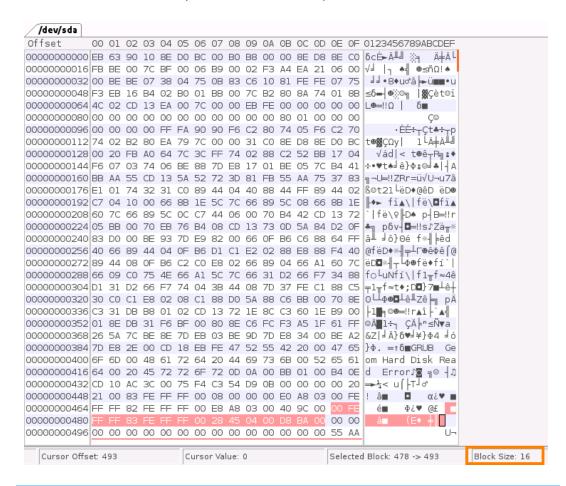
This is the 4th partition, which is empty.



2 Exploring the /dev/sda3 Partition



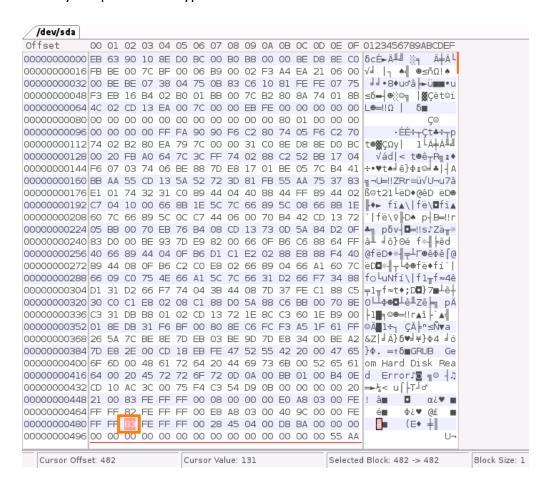
1. Count back another 16 bytes to locate the 3rd partition.



This is the 3rd partition, notice that it is populated.



2. Examine the 3rd partition. Count 4 bytes from the beginning of the partition and identify the partition ID type of **83**.





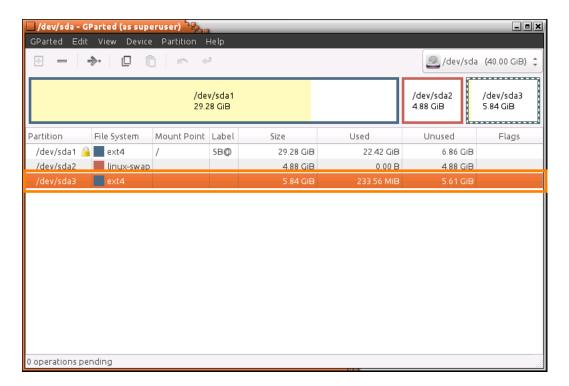
Reference the table below to identify partitions by ID. Notice *Type ID 83* is a Linux partition, therefore /dev/sda3 should be a Linux partition.

Type ID	Partition system	Type ID	Partition system	Type ID	Partition system	Type ID	Partition system
0x00	Empty	0x1e	Hidden W95 FAT1	0x80	Old Minix	0xbe	Solaris boot
0x01	FAT12	0x24	NEC DOS	0x81	Minix/old Lin	0xbf	Solaris
0x02	XENIX root	0x39	Plan 9	0x82	Linux swap/	0xc1	DRDOS/sec
0x03	XENIX usr	0x3c	Partiti on Magic	0x83	Linux	0xc4	DRDOS/sec<32M
0x04	FAT16 < 32M	0x40	Venix 80286	0x84	OS/2hidden C:	Охсб	DRDOS/sec>32M
0x05	Extended	0x41	PPC PReP Boot	0x85	Linux extended	0xc7	Syrinx
0x06	FAT16	0x42	SFS	0x86	NTFS volume	0xda	Non-FS data
0x07	HPFS/NTFS	0x4d	QNX4.x	0x87	NTFS volume	0xdb	CP/M / CTOS
0x08	AIX	0x4e	QNX4.x 2nd part	0x88	Linux plaintext	0xde	Dell Utility
0x09	AIX bootable	0x4f	QNX4.x 3rd part	0x8e	Linux LVM	0xdf	BootIt
0x0a	OS/2Boot	0x50	OnTrack DM	0x93	Amoeba	0xe1	DOS access
0x0b	W95 FAT32	0x51	OnTrack DM6 Aux	0x94	Amoeba BBT	0xe3	DOSRO
0x0c	W95 FAT32 (LBA)	0x52	CP/M	0x9f	BSDIOS	0xe4	SpeedStor
0x0e	W95 FAT16 (LBA)	0x53	OnTrack DM6 Aux	0xa0	IBM Thinkpad hi	0xeb	BeOS fs
0x0f	W95 Ext'd (LBA)	0x54	OnTrackDM6	0xa5	FreeBSD	0xee	EFI GPT
0x10	OPUS	0x55	EZ-Drive	0хаб	OpenBSD	0xef	EFI (FAT-12/16/
0x11	Hidden FAT12	0x56	Golden Bow	0xa7	NeXTSTEP	0xf0	Linux/PA-RISC b
0x12	Compaq diagnost	0x5c	Priam Edisk	0xa8	Darwin UFS	0xf1	SpeedStor
0x14	Hidden FAT16	0x61	SpeedStor	0xa9	NetBSD	0xf2	DOS secondary

3. Change focus to the **GParted** window.



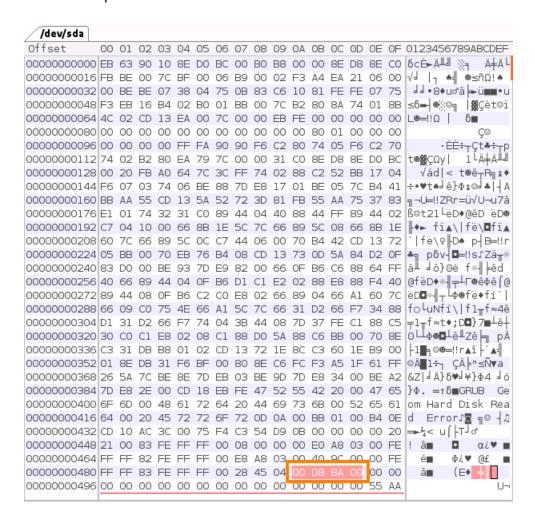
4. Using the GParted application, identify the third partition, /dev/sda3. Notice that the file system is setup as *ext4*, which is a Linux file system.



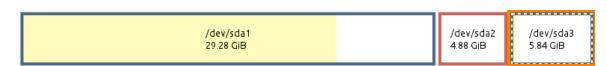
5. Identify the size of the partition using the wxHexEditor application.



6. Since the partition was created on an Intel machine, data is stored in reverse order or also called *Little Endian*. Bytes 12 to 15 read *00 D8 BA 00* in hex, which needs to be put into *Little Endian* order.



- 7. To find the number of sectors using the *Little Endian* order, take the Little Endian order *00 BA D8 00* and convert it to decimal. When converted, the output is **12,244,992** which is the number of sectors.
- 8. Convert the number of sectors to bytes; **12,244,992** X **512** bytes/sector = **6,269,435,904** bytes.
- 9. Convert the number of bytes to gigabytes; **6,269,435,904** bytes (1,073,741,824) bytes $(0.2^{30}) = 5.838$ GiB.
- 10. Change focus to the **GParted** application and notice that the manual computation resembles closely to the *5.84* GiB size output for /dev/sda3.

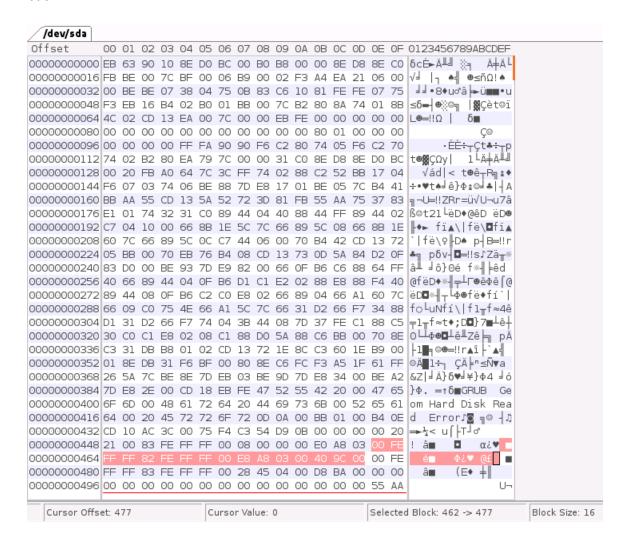




3 Exploring the /dev/sda2 Partition



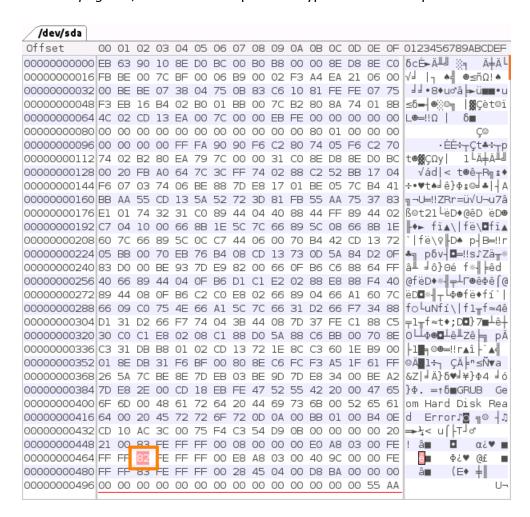
 Change focus Identify to the wxHedEditor application and go another 16 bytes back.



This is the second partition, which is /dev/sda2.

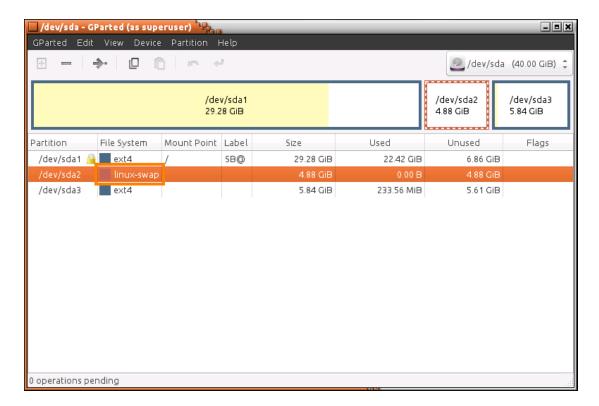


2. Count 4 bytes in and identify the partition *Type ID 82*. When referencing to the table on *page 10*, notice that this partition type is a Linux swap.



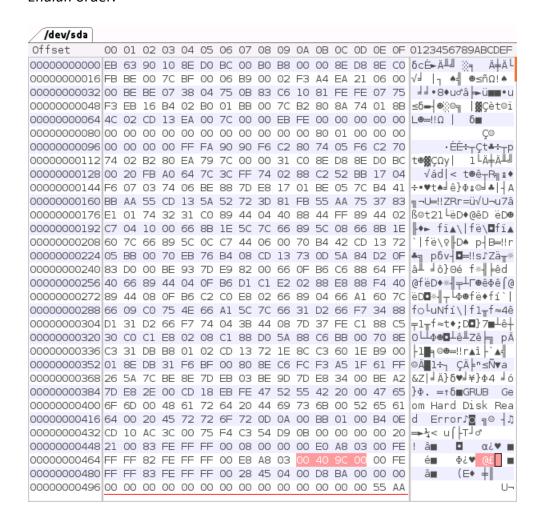


3. Change focus to the **GParted** application and notice /dev/sda2 is listed as a *linux-swap* file system.

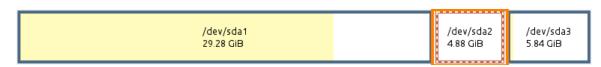




4. Change focus to the **wxHexEditor** application. Calculate the size of the partition. The bytes 12 to 15 read 00 40 9C 00 in hex, which needs to be put into *Little Endian* order.



- 5. To find the number of sectors using the *Little Endian* order, take the Little Endian order *00 9C 40 00* and convert it to decimal. When converted, the output is **10,240,000**, which is the number of sectors.
- Convert the number of sectors to bytes; 10,240,000 X 512 bytes/sector = 5,242,880,000 bytes.
- 7. Convert the number of bytes to gigabytes; **5,242,880,000** bytes / **1,073,741,824** bytes (or 2^{30}) = **4.882** GiB.
- 8. Change focus to the **GParted** application and notice that the manual computation resembles closely to the *4.88* GiB size output for /dev/sda2.



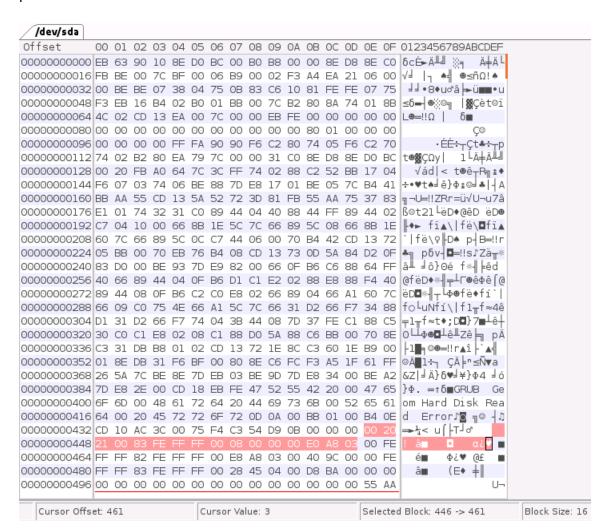
9. Change focus to the **wxHexEditor** application.



4 Exploring the /dev/sda1 Partition

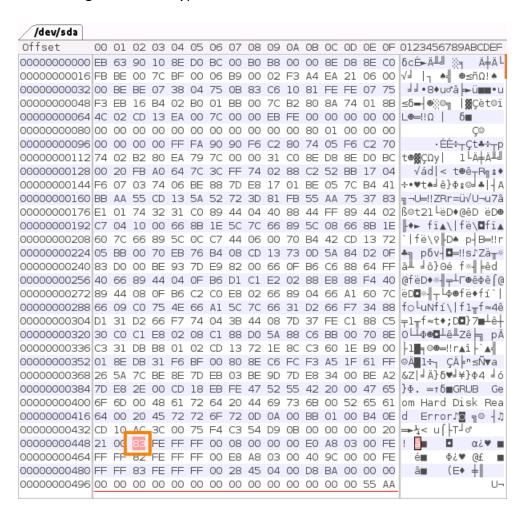


1. Identify the first partition **/dev/sda1** by moving back 16 bytes from the last position.

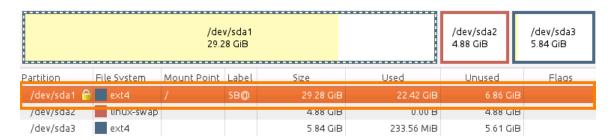




2. Notice the partition *Type ID* is *83*, which is a Linux ext4 file system when referencing back to the *Type ID* table.

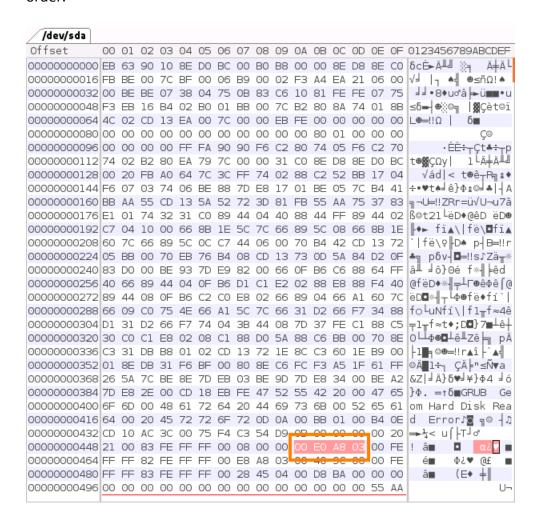


- 3. Change focus to the **GParted** application.
- 4. Notice the information is accurate, labeling the partition file system as ext4.





5. Change focus back to the **wxHexEditor**. Calculate the size of the partition. The bytes 12 to 15 read *00 E0 A8 03* in hex, which needs to be put into *Little Endian* order.



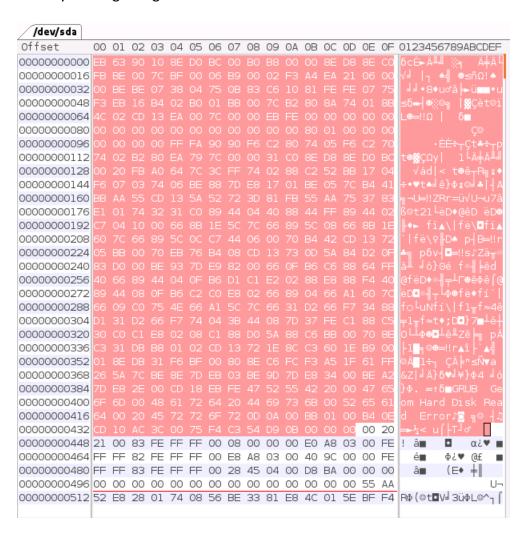
- 6. To find the number of sectors using the *Little Endian* order, take the Little Endian order *03 A8 E0 00* and convert it to decimal. When converted, the output is **61,399,040**, which is the number of sectors.
- 7. Convert the number of sectors to bytes; **61,399,040** X **512** bytes/sector = **31,436,308,480** bytes.
- 8. Convert the number of bytes to gigabytes; **31,436,308,480** bytes / **1,073,741,824** bytes (or 2^{30}) = **29.277** GiB.
- 9. Change focus to the **GParted** application and notice that the manual computation resembles closely to the *29.28* GiB size output for /dev/sda1.



10. Change focus to the wxHexEditor application.

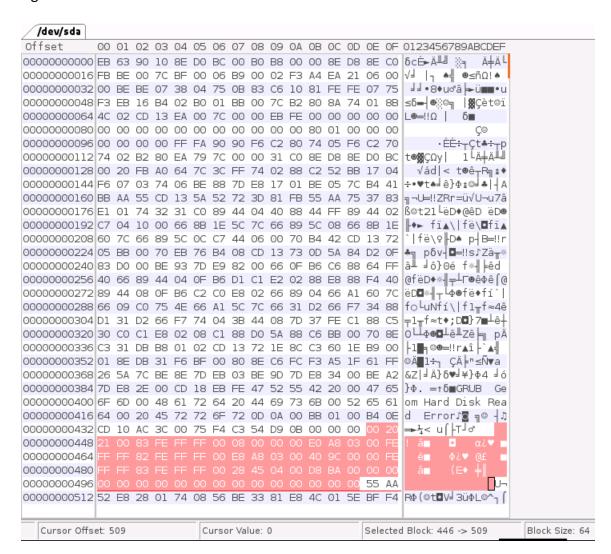


11. Identify the beginning of the drive. This is the boot code area of the drive.





12. Notice the entire partition table follows and it is 64 bytes. End with the boot signature of "55 AA".

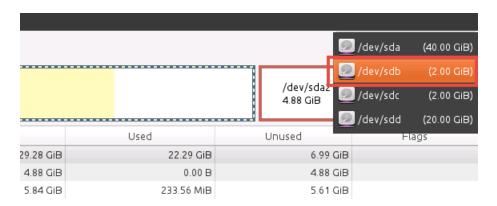


13. Close the wxHexEditor and terminal application window.

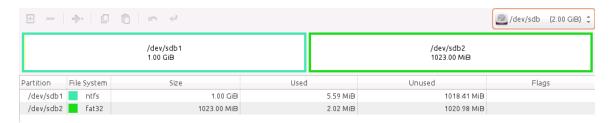


5 Exploring Windows Data Structure

- 1. Change focus to the **GParted** application window.
- 2. In the top-right corner, click on the /dev/sda (40.00GiB) drop-down menu and choose /dev/sdb.



3. Notice the different hard drive with two partitions.



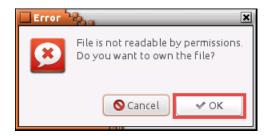
4. Open a new terminal window.



5. Using the terminal, enter the command below to open the /dev/sdb drive with wxHexEditor.

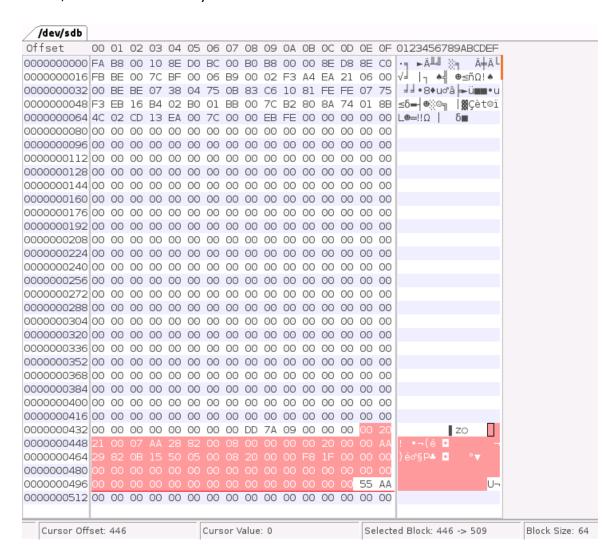


6. If presented with a permissions error message, click **OK** to continue.





7. Using the *wxHexEditor*, identify the partition table. To do so, find the signature, **55 AA**, and count back 64 bytes.

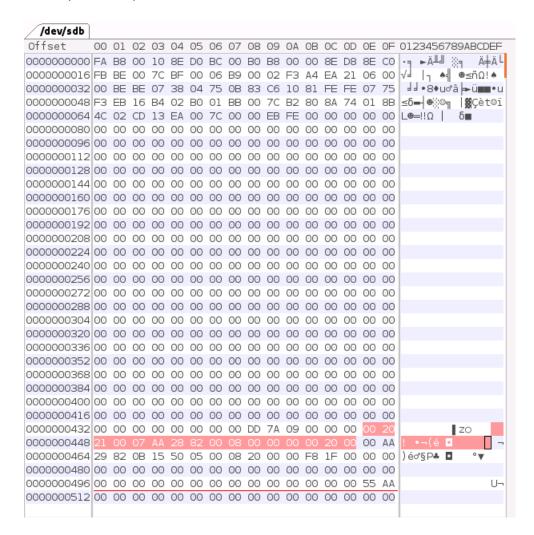




6 Exploring the /dev/sdb1 Partition

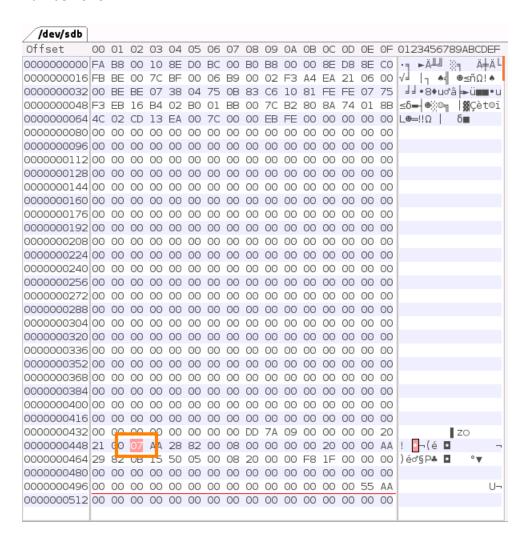


1. Identify the first partition, which will be /dev/sdb1.

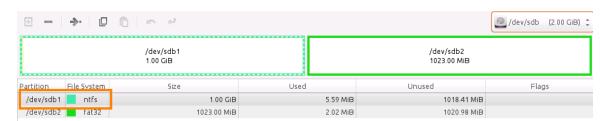




 Identify the 4th byte of the /dev/sdb1 partition. Notice that the partition ID number is "07".

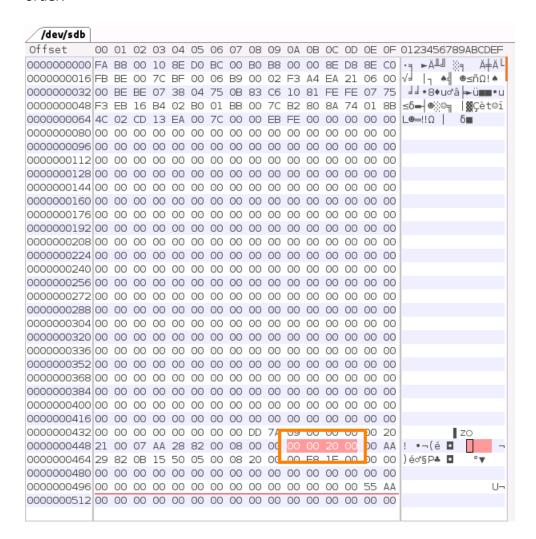


- 3. When referencing back to the partition ID table from *Task 2*, notice that partition ID #07 is *NTFS*. Change focus to the **GParted** application window.
- 4. Notice that in the *GParted* application, it labels the */dev/sdb1* partition as a *NTFS* file system as well.





5. Change focus back to the **wxHexEditor**. Calculate the size of the partition. The bytes 12 to 15 read 00 00 20 00 in hex, which needs to be put into *Little Endian* order.



- To find the number of sectors using the *Little Endian* order, take the Little Endian order 00 20 00 00 and convert it to decimal. When converted, the output is 2,097,152, which is the number of sectors.
- Convert the number of sectors to bytes; 2,097,152 X 512 bytes/sector = 1,072,741,824 bytes.
- 8. Convert the number of bytes to gigabytes; **1,072,741,824** bytes / **1,073,741,824** bytes (or 2^{30}) = **0.999** GiB.
- 9. Change focus to the **GParted** application and notice that the manual computation resembles closely to the 1.00 GiB size output for /dev/sdb1.

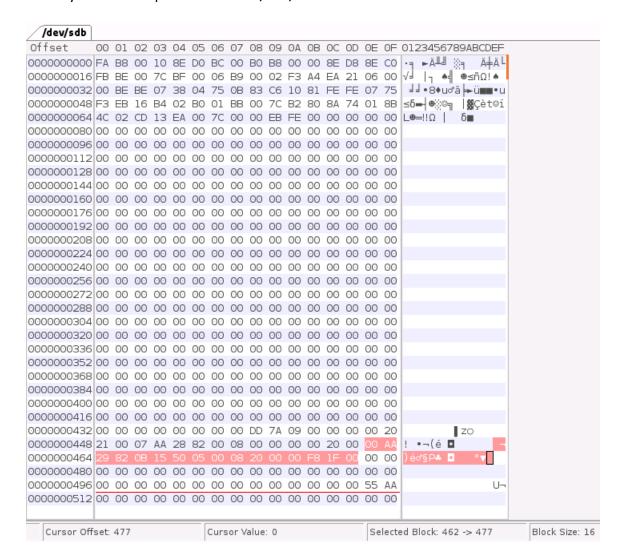




7 Exploring the /dev/sdb2 Partition

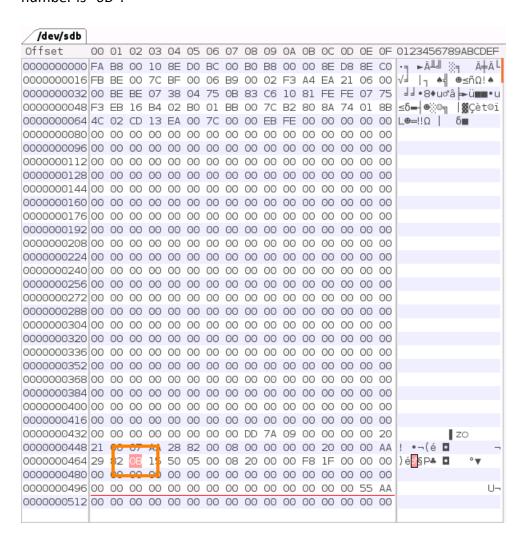


- 1. Change focus to the wxHexEditor application window.
- 2. Identify the second partition on the /dev/sdb disk.

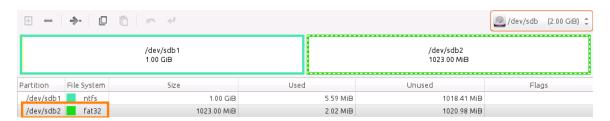




3. Identify the 4th byte of the /dev/sdb2 partition. Notice that the partition ID number is "0B".

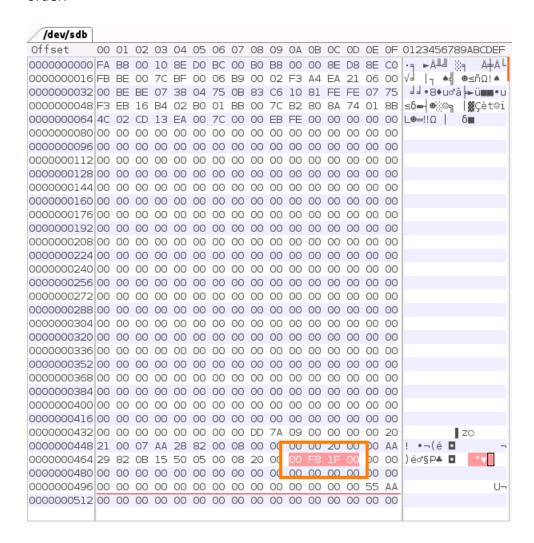


- 4. When referencing back to the partition ID table from *Task 2*, notice that partition ID #0B is *FAT32*. Change focus to the **GParted** application window.
- 5. Notice that in the *GParted* application, it labels the */dev/sdb2* partition as a *FAT32* file system.





 Change focus back to the wxHexEditor. Calculate the size of the partition. The bytes 12 to 15 read 00 F8 1F 00 in hex, which needs to be put into Little Endian order.



- 7. To find the number of sectors using the *Little Endian* order, take the Little Endian order *00 1F F8 00* and convert it to decimal. When converted, the output is **2,095,104**, which is the number of sectors.
- Convert the number of sectors to bytes; 2,095,104 X 512 bytes/sector = 1,072,741,824 bytes.
- 9. Convert the number of bytes to gigabytes; **1,072,693,248** bytes / **1,073,741,824** bytes (or 2^{30}) = **0.999** GiB.
- 10. Close the wxHexEditor and terminal application windows.
- 11. Change focus to the **GParted** application and notice that the manual computation resembles closely to the *1023.00* MiB size output for */dev/sdb2*.



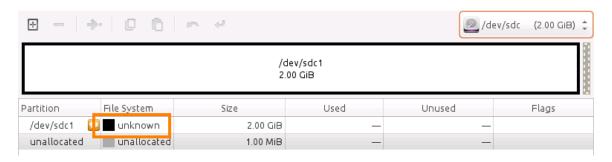


8 Exploring GPT Partitions

 Using the GParted application, in the top-right corner, click on the /dev/sdb (2.00GiB) drop-down menu and choose /dev/sdc.



2. Notice the different hard drive with only one unknown partition.



3. Open a new **terminal** window.



4. Using the terminal, enter the command below as an attempt to identify the unknown partition of /dev/sdc.

```
caine@Caine@1:~$ sudo gdisk /dev/sdc
GPT fdisk (gdisk) version 0.8.8

Partition table scan:
   MBR: protective
   BSD: not present
   APM: not present
   GPT: present

Found valid GPT with protective MBR; using GPT.

Command (? for help):
```

Notice that *GPT* is present on the disk, therefore, the partition is *GPT*.



5. Enter the **P** character followed by pressing the **Enter** key.

```
Command (? for help): p
Disk /dev/sdc: 4194304 sectors, 2.0 GiB
Logical sector size: 512 bytes
Disk identifier (GUID): 129E29BB-94D0-41C9-90B5-33B481CC1739
Partition table holds up to 128 entries
irst usable sector is 34, last usable sector is 4194270
Partitions will be aligned on 2048-sector boundaries
Total free space is 4029 sectors (2.0 MiB)
Number Start (sector)
                          End (sector)
                                        Size
                                                   Code
                                                         Name
                             4192255
                                       2.0 GiB
                                                   8300
                2048
Command (? for help):
```

Notice the partition table can hold up to 128 entries as opposed to just 4 with an *MBR*.

- 6. Press the **Q** character followed by pressing the **Enter** key to quit.
- 7. Using the same terminal, enter the command below to open the /dev/sdc drive with wxHexEditor.

```
wxHexEditor /dev/sdc
caine@Caine01:~$ wxHexEditor /dev/sdc
```

8. If presented with a permissions error message, click **OK** to continue.





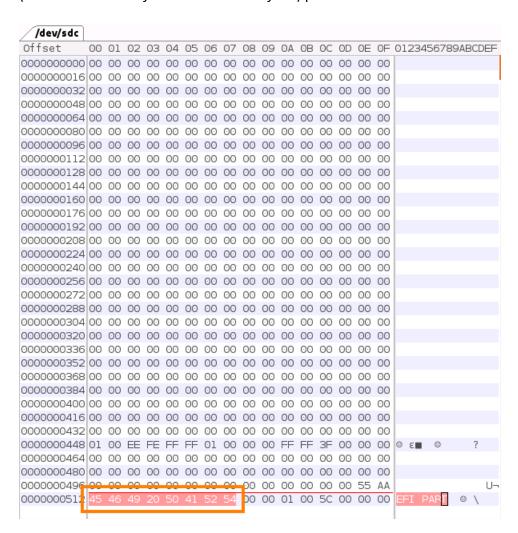
9. Notice in wxHexEditor that the /dev/sdb disk looks different when compared to a Master Boot Record (MBR) scheme. In MBR, the sector starts on 0000000000. GUID Partition Table (GPT) on the other hand, starts right after the 55 AA signature. This is to preserve backwards compatibility with legacy MBR boot code. Moving forward with the lab, use the table below as a reference for the GPT scheme.

Offset	Length	Contents		
0	8 bytes	Signature ("EFI PART", 45 46 49 20 50 41 52 54)		
8	4 bytes	Revision (For GPT version 1.0 (through at least UEFI version 2.3.1), the		
		value is 00 00 01 00)		
12	4 bytes	Header size in little endian (in bytes, usually 5C 00 00 00 meaning 92		
		bytes)		
16	4 bytes	CRC32 of header (0 to header size), with this field zeroes during		
		calculation		
20	4 bytes	Reserved; must be zero		
24	8 bytes	Current LBA (location of this header copy)		
32	8 bytes	Backup LBA (location of the other header copy)		
40	8 bytes	First usable LBA for partitions (primary partition table last LBA + 1)		
48	8 bytes	Last usable LBA (secondary partition table first LBA – 1)		
56	16 bytes	Disk GUID (also referred to as UUID on UNIXes)		
72	8 bytes	Partition entries starting LBA (always 2 in primary copy)		
80	4 bytes	Number of partition entries		
84	4 bytes	Size of partition entry (usually 128)		
88	4 bytes	CRC32 of partition array		
92	*	Reserved; must be zeroes for the rest of the block (420 bytes for a		
		512-byte LBA)		
LBA size		Total		



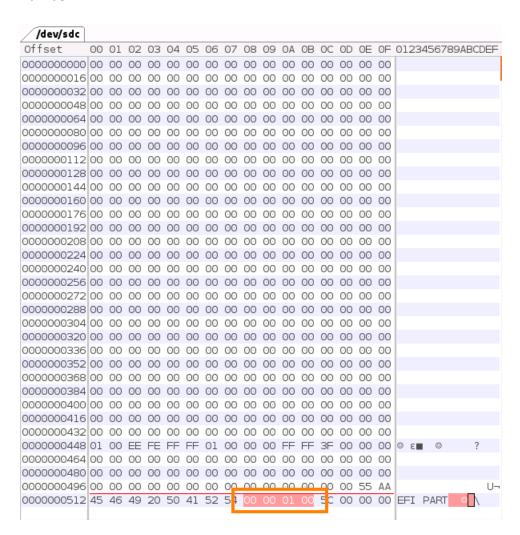


10. Using wxHexEditor, notice that from 0x00 to 0x08 identifies this disk as an EFI (adheres to the Unified Firmware Interface) partition.



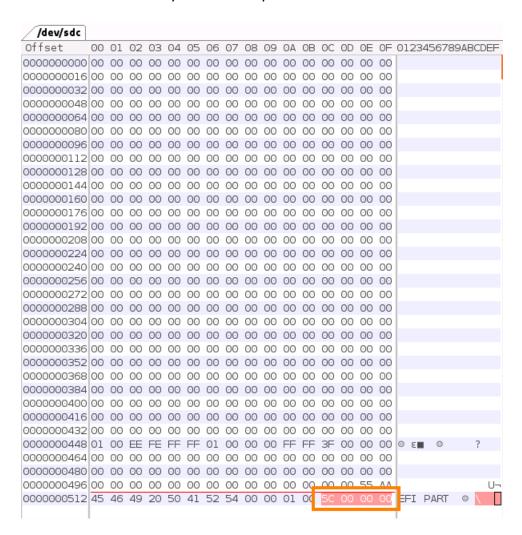


11. Using wxHexEditor, move over to the next 4 bytes to identify the revision number.





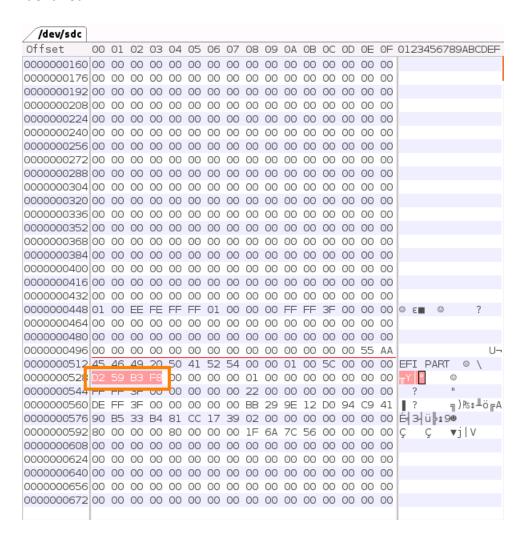
12. Move over another 4 bytes to identify the header size in *Little Endian*.



The hex identified is 5C 00 00 00 which equals 5C in Little Endian format (by removing the leading zeros) to equal out 92 bytes in decimal.

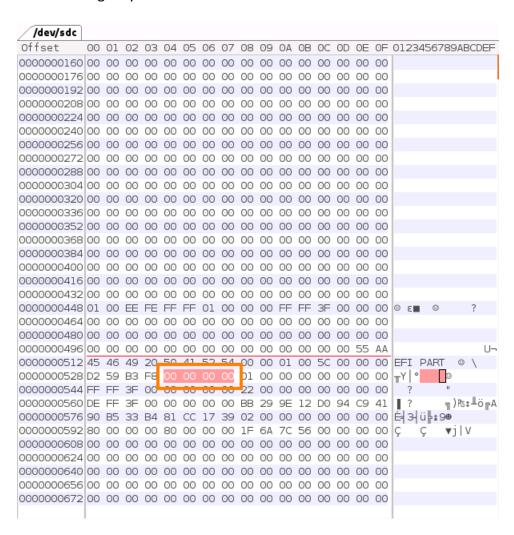


 Moving to the next 4 bytes and the Cyclic Redundancy Check (CRC-32) can be identified.



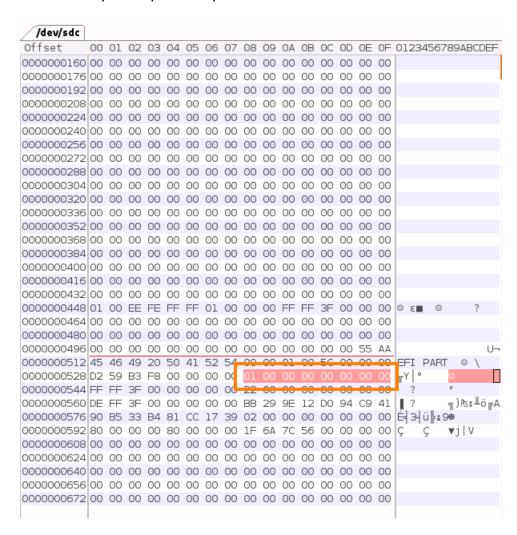


14. The following 4 bytes are reserves and must be zeros.





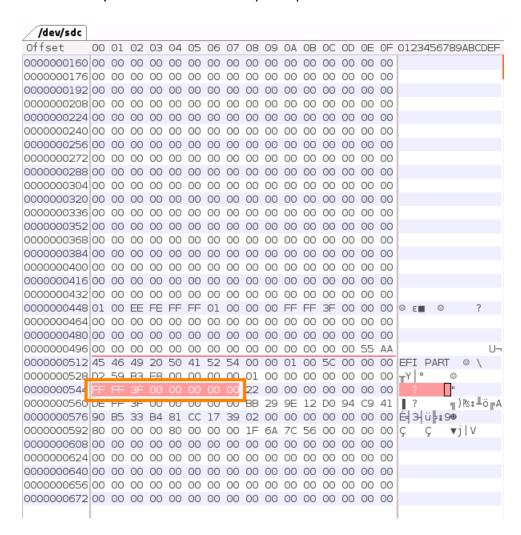
15. The next 8 bytes helps identify the location of the header block.



When converting to Little Endian; take the original hex, 01 00 00 00 00 00 00 00, and convert to 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 01 which equals sector 1.

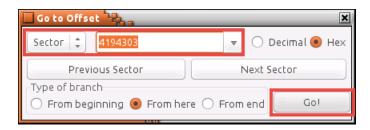


16. The next 8 bytes is where the backup is kept.



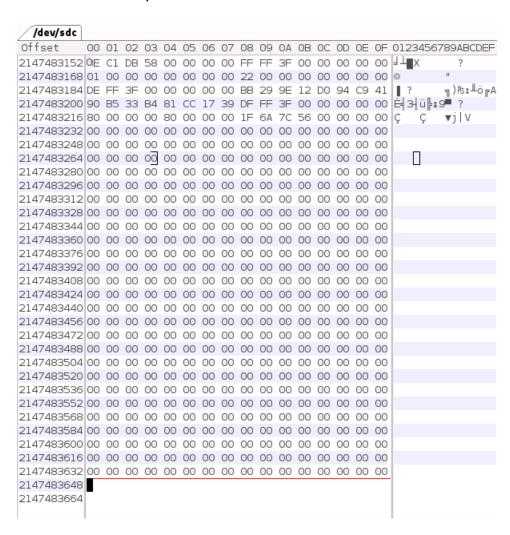
When converting to Little Endian; take the original hex, FF FF 3F 00 00 00 00 00, and convert to 00 00 00 00 3F FF FF which equals sector 4194303.

17. Using wxHexEditor, press CTRL+G and type the sector number, 4194303, in decimal and make sure Sector is selected. Click the Go! button.



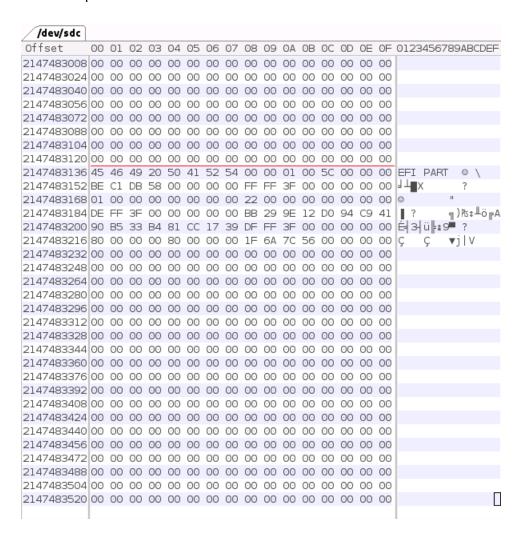


18. Notice that it takes you to the end of the disk.





19. Scroll up a few offsets, to offset **2147483120**, and notice the backup copy. This is the backup for sector 1.

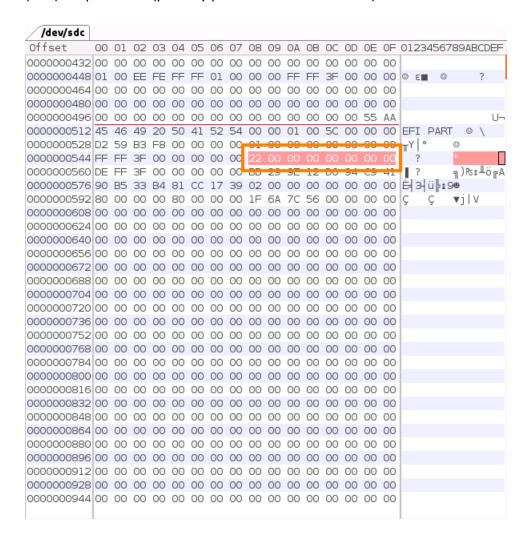


It may be easier to navigate using the available search by offset function provided by the *wxHexEditor* application. Press **CTRL+G** and search by the desired offset, in this case, **2147483136**, with **Decimal** selected.





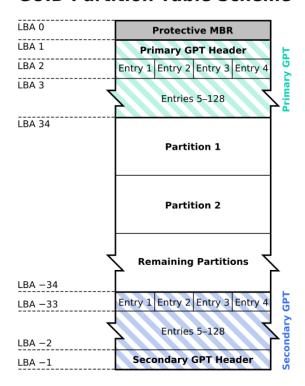
20. Navigate back towards the beginning, specifically to the **0000000544** offset. The 8 bytes shown below are assigned for the first usable *Logical Block Addressing* (*LBA*) for partitions (primary partition table last *LBA* 1).





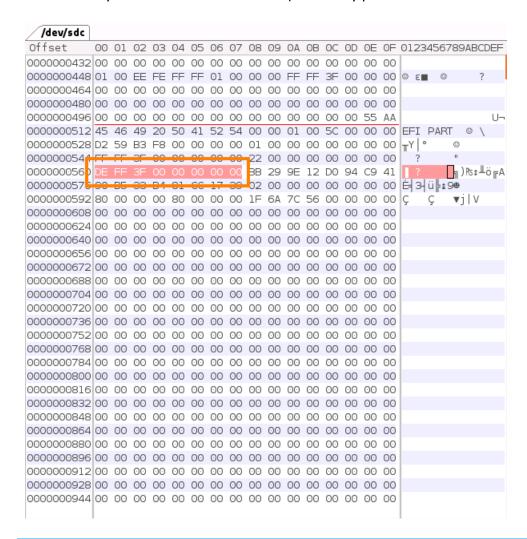
When converting to Little Endian; take the original hex, 22 00 00 00 00 00 00 00, and convert to 00 00 00 00 00 00 22 which equals 34 bytes in decimal. See the table below for reference on LBA 34.

GUID Partition Table Scheme





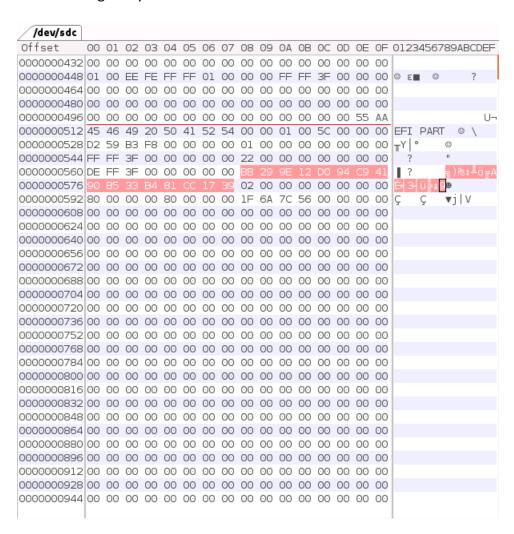
21. The next 8 bytes are the last usable LBA (secondary partition table first LBA -1).



When converting to Little Endian; take the original hex, *DE FF 3F 00 00 00 00 00*, and convert to *00 00 00 00 3F FF DE*, which equals sector 4194270.



22. The following 16 bytes are reserved for the GUID.





23. Reference back to *Task 8, Step 5*. When analyzing the */dev/sdc* disk with *gdisk,* the GUID printed is: 129E29BB-94D0-41C9-90B5-33B481CC1739.

When converting the *GUID* value to hex, it is printed as: *BB 29 9E 12 D0 94 C9 41* **90 B5 33 B4 81 CC 17 39**. Notice the last 8 bytes match with **90 B5 33 B4 81 CC 17 39**.

To match the first 8 bytes of the GUID, the first 4 bytes of the 8 bytes need to be reversed and the second 4 bytes of the first 8 bytes require each 2-byte block to be reversed, as shown below:

First 8 bytes in Hex: BB 29 9E 12 DO 94 C9 41

First 4 bytes (reverse the 4 bytes):

BB 29 9E 12 = 12 9E 29 BB

Second 4 bytes (reverse each 2-byte block):

D0 94 C9 41 =

D0 94 = 94 D0

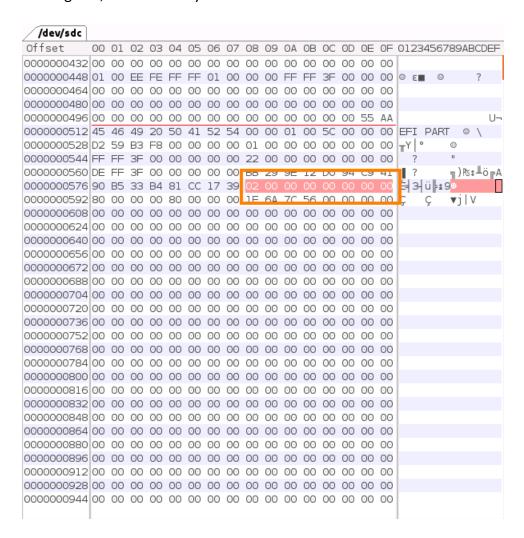
C9 41 = 41 C9

= 94 D0 41 C9

First 8 bytes in GUID: 129E29BB-94D0-41C9



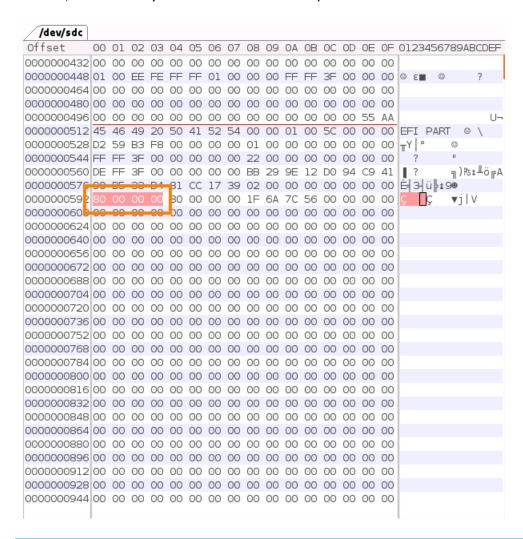
24. Focusing on wxHexEditor, the next 8 bytes are reserved for the partition entries starting LBA, which is always 2.



When converting to Little Endian; take the original hex, 02 00 00 00 00 00 00 00, and convert to 00 00 00 00 00 00 00, which equals 2 bytes in decimal.



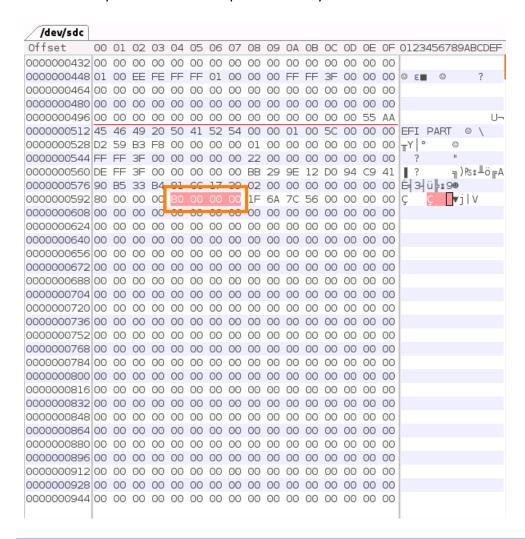
25. Notice, the next 4 bytes show the number of partition entries.



When converting to Little Endian; take the original hex, 80 00 00 00, and convert to 00 00 00 80, which equals 80 bytes in decimal. In return, that equals 128 partitions.



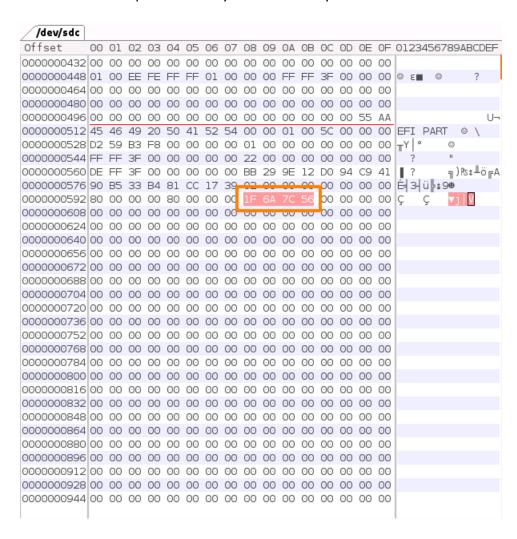
26. The next 4 bytes is the size of a partition entry.



When converting to Little Endian; take the original hex, 80 00 00 00, and convert to 00 00 00 80, which equals 80 bytes in decimal. Which again, in return, equals 128 partitions.

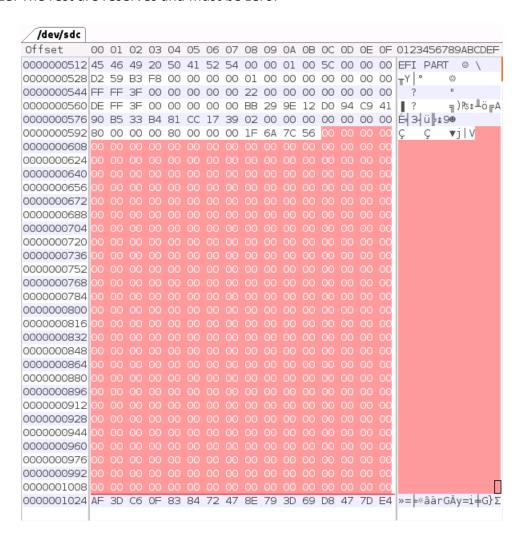


27. The CRC32 of the partition array is the next 4 bytes shown.





28. The rest are reserves and must be zero.



29. Close all **PC Viewers** and end the reservation to complete the lab.