

Conduct a research study using a virtualized infrastructure to simulate attacks and identify these through a SIEM (Splunk) platform

DetectionLab

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# Detection Lab

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The primary premise of every SIEM system is to collect relevant data, identify abnormalities, and take action. A SIEM system may issue an alert and inform additional security measures to stop the danger. A SIEM system may also utilize statistical or rule-based correlation engines to link event log elements. IT security equipment such as firewalls, antivirus, and intrusion prevention systems are captured by SIEM systems. To prioritize security incidents, security analysts look for trends in the data in a single management console.

The DetectionLab environment is as depicted above. It consists of 4 Virtual Machines (VM):

Logger: This machine is responsible for curating all logging information from the network.

DC: Domain Controller machine responsible for hosting the network Active Directory.

WEF: Windows Event Forwarder responsible for logging all Microsoft Windows events.

Win10: An endpoint workstation typical of a user in an organization.

## 2 Deploying DetectionLab

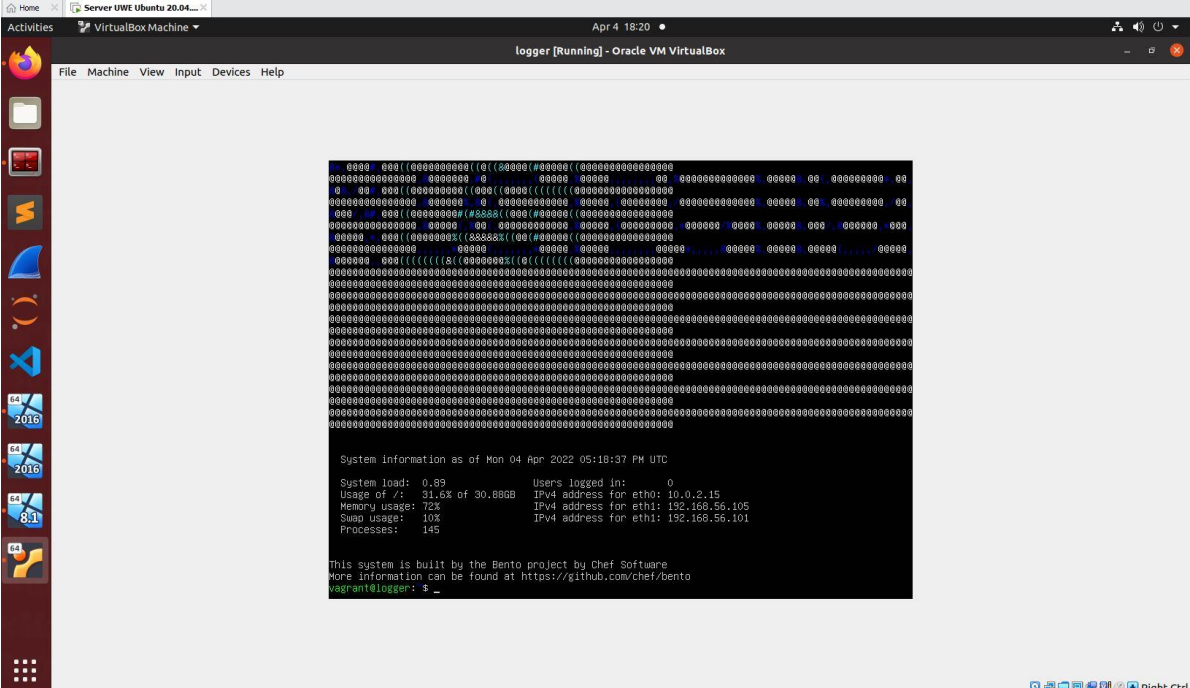
Getting Started:

1. **STEP 1:** Install Detection Lab by following commands from the Terminal.

2. **STEP 2:**

When we run Vagrant up, here is what happens:

Vagrant will bring up one host at a time, starting with logger and followed by dc, wef, and win10.



```
logger [Running] - Oracle VM VirtualBox

File Machine View Input Devices Help

System Information as of Mon 04 Apr 2022 05:18:37 PM UTC

System load: 0.89      Users logged in: 0
Usage of /: 31.6% of 30.8GB  IPv4 address for eth0: 10.0.2.15
Memory usage: 72%      IPv4 address for eth1: 192.168.56.105
Swap usage: 10%        IPv4 address for eth1: 192.168.56.101
Processes: 145

This system is built by the Bento project by Chef Software
More information can be found at https://github.com/chef/bento
vagrant@logger: $ _
```

Figure 1: vagrant ssh logger

Let's check the IP address of the logger instance.

```

System information as of Mon 04 Apr 2022 05:18:37 PM UTC

System load:  0.89           Users logged in:    0
Usage of /:   31.6% of 30.88GB IPv4 address for eth0: 10.0.2.15
Memory usage: 72%           IPv4 address for eth1: 192.168.56.105
Swap usage:   10%           IPv4 address for eth1: 192.168.56.101
Processes:    145

This system is built by the Bento project by Chef Software
More information can be found at https://github.com/chef/bento
vagrant@logger: $ ip add
1: lo: <LOOPBACK,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 65536 qdisc noqueue state UNKNOWN group default qlen 1000
    link/loopback 00:00:00:00:00:00 brd 00:00:00:00:00:00
    inet 127.0.0.1/8 scope host lo
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
    inet6 ::1/128 scope host
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
2: eth0: <BROADCAST,MULTICAST,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 1500 qdisc fq_codel state UP group default qlen 1000
    link/ether 08:00:27:b1:28:5d brd ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff
    inet 10.0.2.15/24 brd 10.0.2.255 scope global dynamic eth0
        valid_lft 80712sec preferred_lft 80712sec
    inet6 fe80::a00:27ff:feb1:285d/64 scope link
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
3: eth1: <BROADCAST,MULTICAST,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 1500 qdisc fq_codel state UP group default qlen 1000
    link/ether 08:00:27:c1:99:07 brd ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff
    inet 192.168.56.105/24 brd 192.168.56.255 scope global eth1
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
    inet 192.168.56.101/24 brd 192.168.56.255 scope global secondary dynamic eth1
        valid_lft 314sec preferred_lft 314sec
    inet6 fe80::a00:27ff:fec1:9907/64 scope link
        valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever
vagrant@logger: $

```

Figure 2: IP address into the logger

We can ping the other machines:

```

[05/14/22]SHAKIL_21055097-uwe@192.168.146.144: ~
[05/14/22]SHAKIL_21055097-uwe@192.168.146.144: ~ 74x34
[05/14/22]SHAKIL_21055097-uwe@192.168.146.144: ~$ ping 192.168.56.102 -c 5
PING 192.168.56.102 (192.168.56.102) 56(84) bytes of data.
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.102: icmp_seq=1 ttl=128 time=0.403 ms
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.102: icmp_seq=2 ttl=128 time=0.340 ms
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.102: icmp_seq=3 ttl=128 time=0.338 ms
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.102: icmp_seq=4 ttl=128 time=0.358 ms
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.102: icmp_seq=5 ttl=128 time=0.549 ms

--- 192.168.56.102 ping statistics ---
 5 packets transmitted, 5 received, 0% packet loss, time 4093ms
 rtt min/avg/max/mdev = 0.338/0.397/0.549/0.079 ms
[05/14/22]SHAKIL_21055097-uwe@192.168.146.144: ~$ ping 192.168.56.103 -c 5
PING 192.168.56.103 (192.168.56.103) 56(84) bytes of data.
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.103: icmp_seq=1 ttl=128 time=0.362 ms
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.103: icmp_seq=2 ttl=128 time=0.350 ms
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.103: icmp_seq=3 ttl=128 time=0.397 ms
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.103: icmp_seq=4 ttl=128 time=0.380 ms
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.103: icmp_seq=5 ttl=128 time=0.398 ms

--- 192.168.56.103 ping statistics ---
 5 packets transmitted, 5 received, 0% packet loss, time 4093ms
 rtt min/avg/max/mdev = 0.350/0.377/0.398/0.019 ms
[05/14/22]SHAKIL_21055097-uwe@192.168.146.144: ~$ ping 192.168.56.104 -c 5
PING 192.168.56.104 (192.168.56.104) 56(84) bytes of data.
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.104: icmp_seq=1 ttl=128 time=1.46 ms
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.104: icmp_seq=2 ttl=128 time=0.424 ms
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.104: icmp_seq=3 ttl=128 time=0.405 ms
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.104: icmp_seq=4 ttl=128 time=0.349 ms
 64 bytes from 192.168.56.104: icmp_seq=5 ttl=128 time=0.516 ms

--- 192.168.56.104 ping statistics ---
 5 packets transmitted, 5 received, 0% packet loss, time 4072ms
 rtt min/avg/max/mdev = 0.349/0.630/1.457/0.416 ms
[05/14/22]SHAKIL_21055097-uwe@192.168.146.144: ~$

```

Figure 3: Ping to other machines

We can also access the following applications on the logger using a web browser.

Splunk: Navigate to <https://192.168.56.105:8000>. Login using admin:changeme.

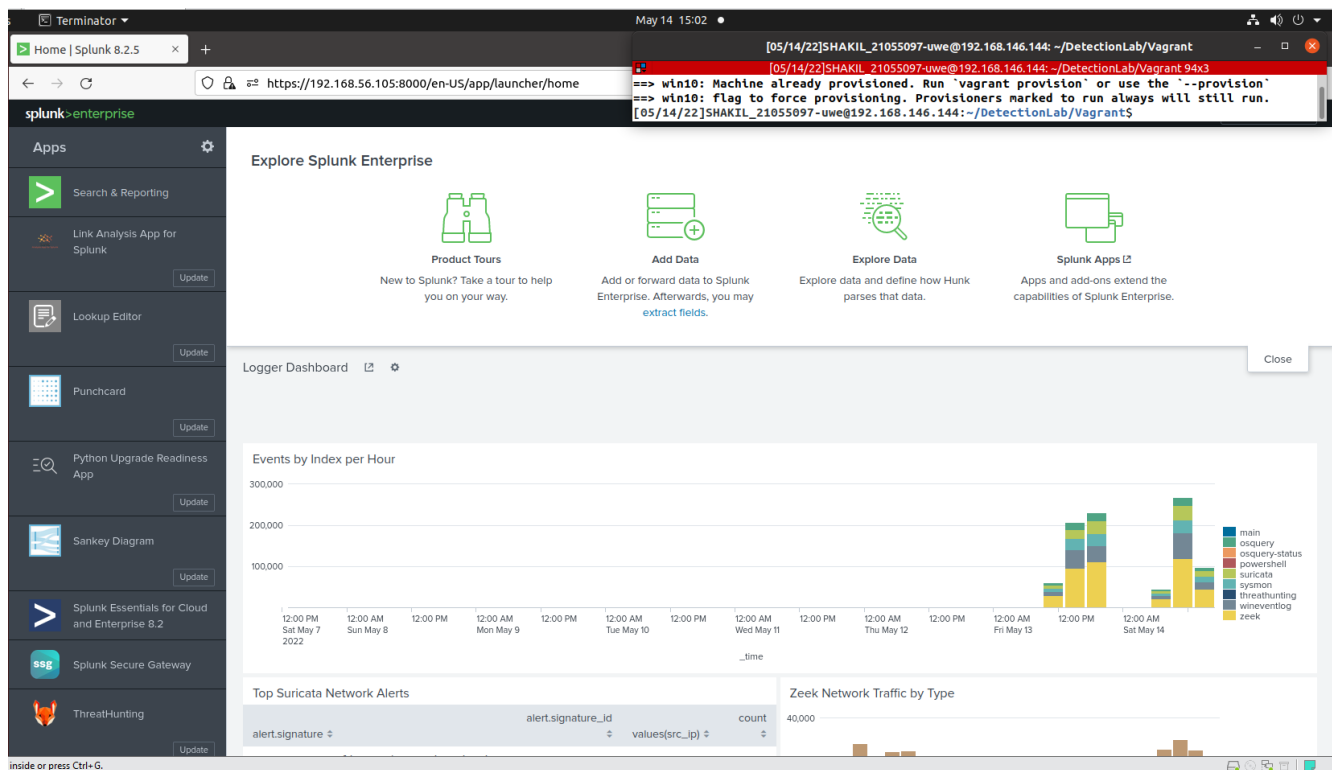


Figure 4: Splunk Home Page.

### 3 ATTACK DEMONSTRATION

ATOMIC RED TEAM: Atomic Red Team allows every security team to test their controls by executing simple “atomic tests” that exercise the same techniques used by adversaries (all mapped to Mitre’s ATT&CK).

```
Windows PowerShell
PS C:\Users\vagrant> Import-Module "C:\Tools\AtomicRedTeam\Invoke-atomicredteam\Invoke-AtomicRedTeam.ps1" -Force
PS C:\Users\vagrant> $PSDefaultParameterValues = @{"Invoke-AtomicTest:PathToAtomicsFolder"="C:\Tools\AtomicRedTeam\atomics"}
PS C:\Users\vagrant> Invoke-AtomicTest T1003.001 -TestNumbers 1,2
```

Figure 5: Attack execution commands

Atomic Red Team in DetectionLab aims to allow the user to simulate TTPs and observe the resulting telemetry or create new detections.

#### 3.1 ATTACK 1: System Binary Proxy Execution: Compiled HTML File ID: T1218.001

To execute mentioned attack, run the following commands at win10 VM in Powershell module and atomics-path:

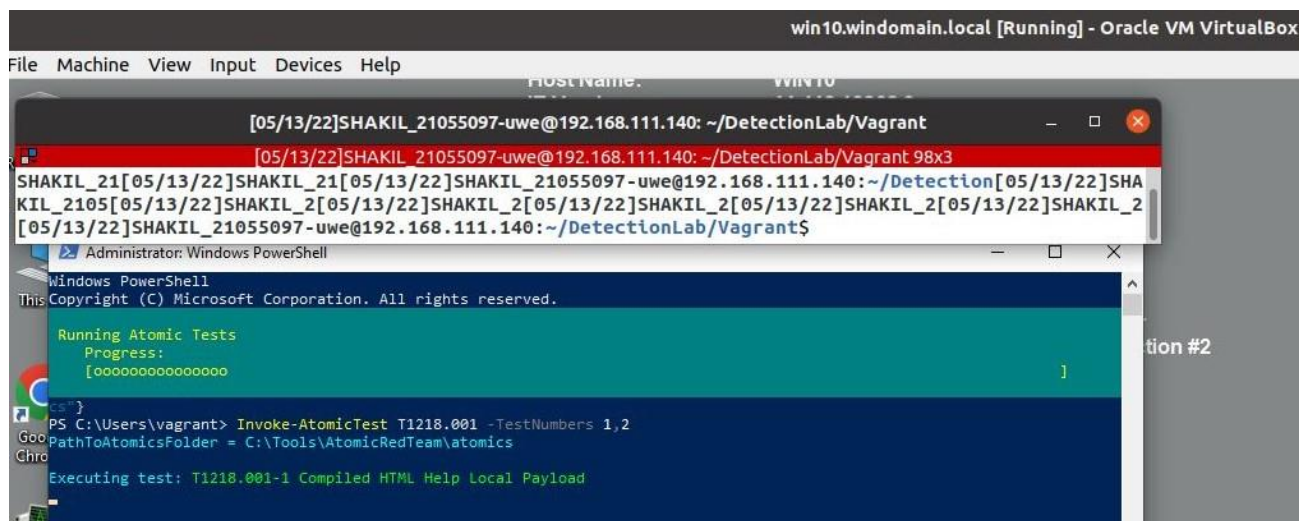


Figure 6: Attack ID T1218.001

### Background of mentioned Attack from Mitre ATT&CK:

Attackers may misuse HTML files that have been compiled (.chm) by hiding malicious code. As part of the Microsoft HTML Help system, CHM files are often disseminated. CHM files are compressed collections of diverse material, including HTML texts, graphics, and scripting/web-related programming languages such as VBA, JScript, Java, and ActiveX. CHM material is shown utilizing underlying Internet Explorer browser components loaded by the HTML Help application (hh.exe). (The MITRE Corporation., 2022)

### 3.1.1 Attack Identification ID: 1218.001

Let us see what happened in Splunk:

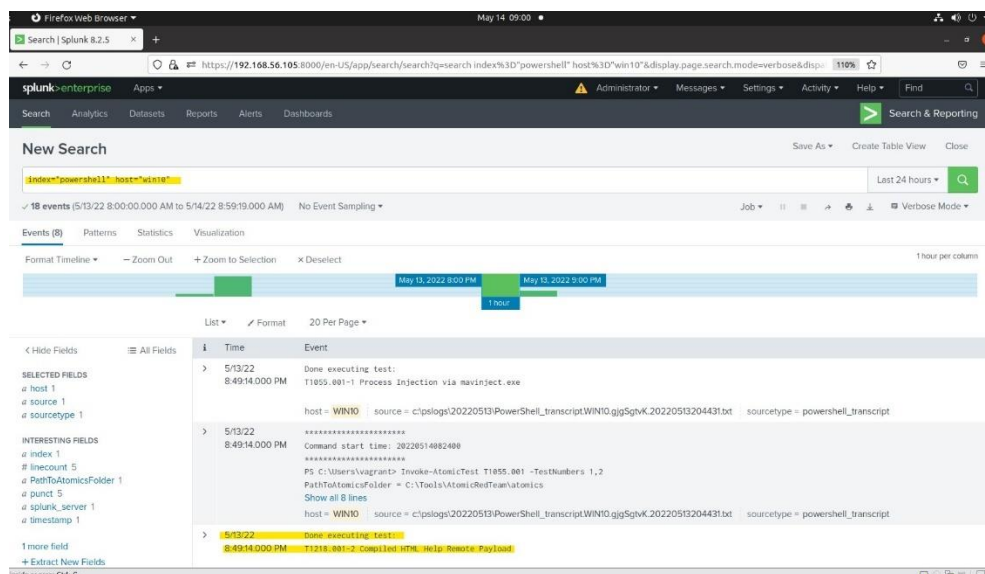


Figure 7: Splunk log for executing attack T1218.001. Full report source: <https://rb.gv/9i3iq9>



**Identification:** We can see from the Splunk log that the attack T1218.001 has been Compiled a customized HTML help Payload, which could be contained embedded payloads delivered to a victim.

### 3.1.2 Mitre ATT&CK Mitigation T1218.001

Consider using application control to prevent execution of hh.exe if it is not required for a given system or network to prevent potential misuse by adversaries. Consider blocking download/transfer and execution of potentially uncommon file types known to be used in adversary campaigns, such as CHM files. (The MITRE Corporation., 2022)

### 3.2 ATTACK 2: Software Discovery: Security Software Discovery ID: T1518.001

To execute mentioned attack, run the following commands at wef VM (Virtual Machine) in Powershell module and atomics-path:

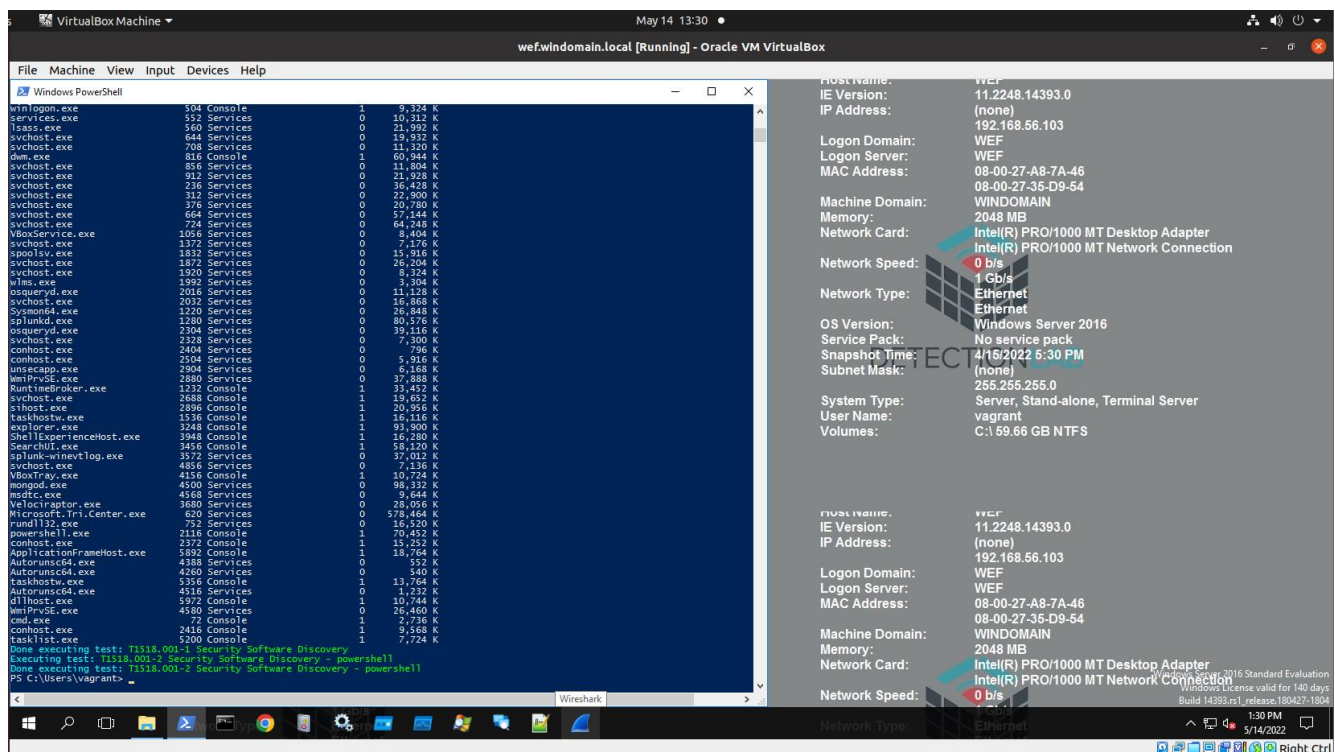


Figure 8: Attack ID T1518.001

### Background of mentioned Attack in Mitre ATT&CK:

Adversaries may try to obtain a list of installed security software, settings, defensive tools, and sensors on a machine or in a cloud environment. This might include firewall rules and antivirus software. During automated discovery, adversaries may leverage the information obtained via Security Software Discovery to affect subsequent behaviors, such as whether the adversary fully infects the target and/or performs certain activities. (The MITRE Corporation., 2022)



### 3.2.1 Attack Identification ID: 1518.001

Let us see what happened in Splunk:

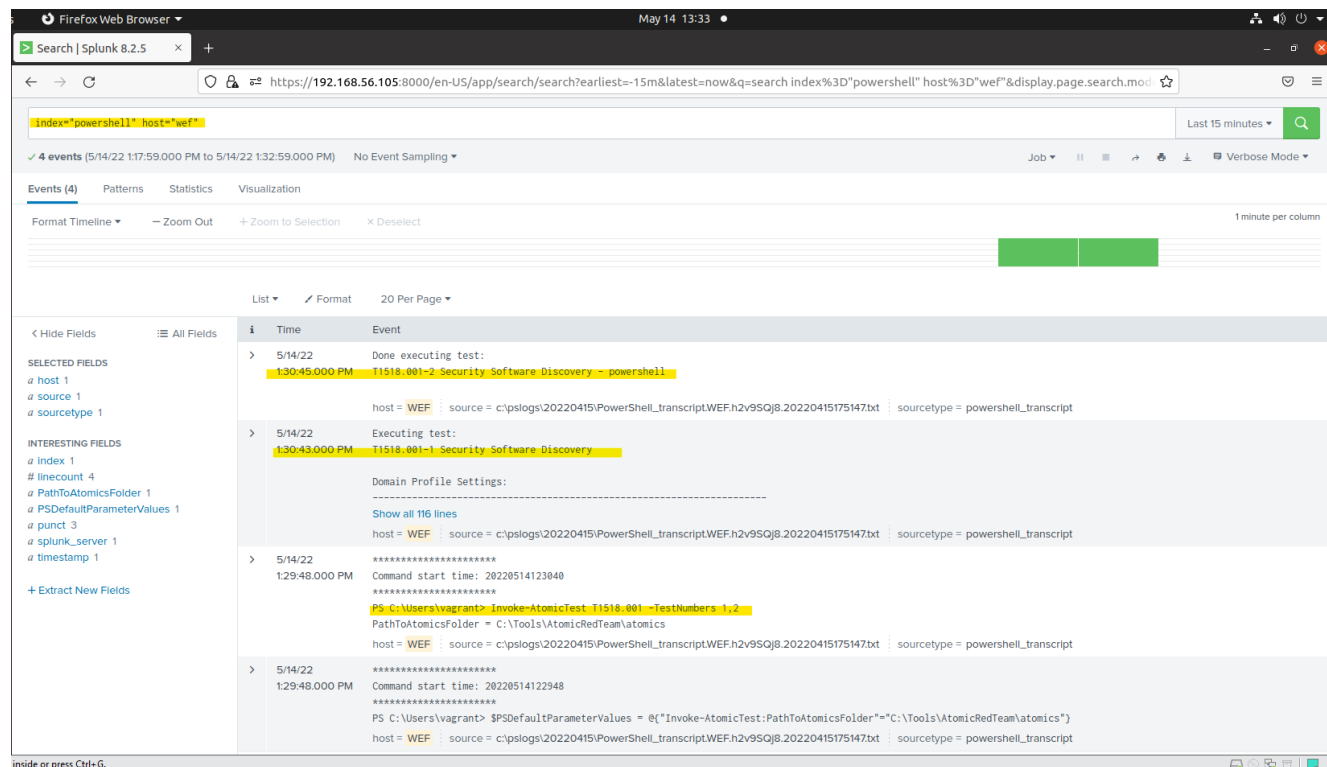


Figure 9: Splunk log for executing attack T1518.001. Complete report source: <https://rb.gy/xbewk9>

**Attacker's Objective:** Adversaries may try to obtain a list of installed security software, settings, defensive tools, and sensors on a machine or in a cloud environment. As a result, the attacker will launch a script to gather essential data. For example, according to the report (see source link for details), the attacker attempted to gather the following information from the victim.

- `%systemroot%\system32\LogFiles\Firewall\pfirewall.log`
- Domain profile settings
- Private profile settings
- Public profile settings

(The MITRE Corporation., 2022)

**Investigation:** The attacker runs an executionlog script to get the victim's computer security software information. I have run the below command to Splunk search to get a complete log report of the attack.

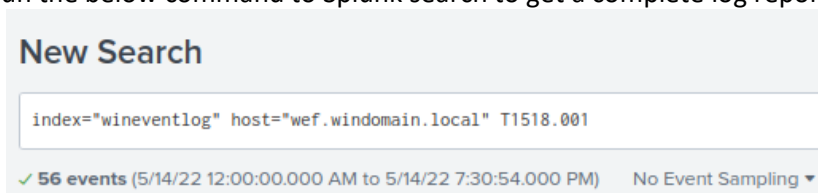


Figure 10: Search winlogs for T1518.001

<https://192.168.56.105:8000/>

[05/14/22]SHAKIL 21055097-uwe@192.168.146.144: ~/DetectionLab/Vagrant 94x2

==> win10: flag to force provisioning. Provisioners marked to run always will still run.

[05/14/22]SHAKIL\_21055097-uwe@192.168.146.144:~/DetectionLab/Vagrant\$

List

Format

20 Per Page

Time

Event

Message=CommandInvocation(Write-ExecutionLog): "Write-ExecutionLog"

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="startTime"; value="5/14/2022 12:30:42 PM"

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="stopTime"; value="5/14/2022 12:30:44 PM"

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="technique"; value="T1518.001"

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="testNum"; value="2"

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="testName"; value="Security Software Discovery - powershell"

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="testGuid"; value="7f566051-f033-49fb-89de-b6bacab730f0"

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="testExecutor"; value="powershell"

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="testDescription"; value="Methods to identify Security Software on an endpoint"

when successfully executed, powershell is going to processes related AV products if they are running.

"

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="command"; value="get-process | ?(\$\_.Description -like "\*virus\*")"

get-process | ?(\$\_.Description -like "\*carbonblack\*")

get-process | ?(\$\_.Description -like "\*defender\*")

get-process | ?(\$\_.Description -like "\*cyllance\*")

"

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="logPath"; value="C:\Users\vagrant\AppData\Local\Temp\1\Invoke-AtomicTest-ExecutionLog.csv"

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="targetHostname"; value="wef"

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="targetUser"; value="wef\vagrant"

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="stdOut"; value=""

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="stdErr"; value=""

ParameterBinding(Write-ExecutionLog): name="isWindows"; value="True"

Context:

Severity = Informational

Host Name = ConsoleHost

Host Version = 5.1.14393.2248

Host ID = bd7d4e43-e10d-4875-9923-dc9b0a34cd60

Host Application = C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe

Engine Version = 5.1.14393.2248

Runspace ID = 1879483d-5e4c-41ef-8846-ed8e4d72b211

Pipeline ID = 159

Command Name = Write-ExecutionLog

Command Type = Function

Script Name = C:\Tools\AtomicRedTeam\invoke-atomicredteam\Public\Invoke-AtomicTest.ps1

Command Path =

Sequence Number = 13736

User = WEF\vagrant

Connected User =

Shell ID = Microsoft.PowerShell

Figure 11: winlog file for T1518.001. Complete report Source: <https://rb.gy/ufaaxi>

### 3.2.2 Mitre ATT&CK Mitigation T1518.001

This type of attack technique cannot be easily mitigated with preventive controls since it is based on the abuse of system features. (The MITRE Corporation., 2022)

### 3.3 BITS Jobs ID T1197

To execute mentioned attack, run the following commands at dc VM in Powershell module and atomics-path:

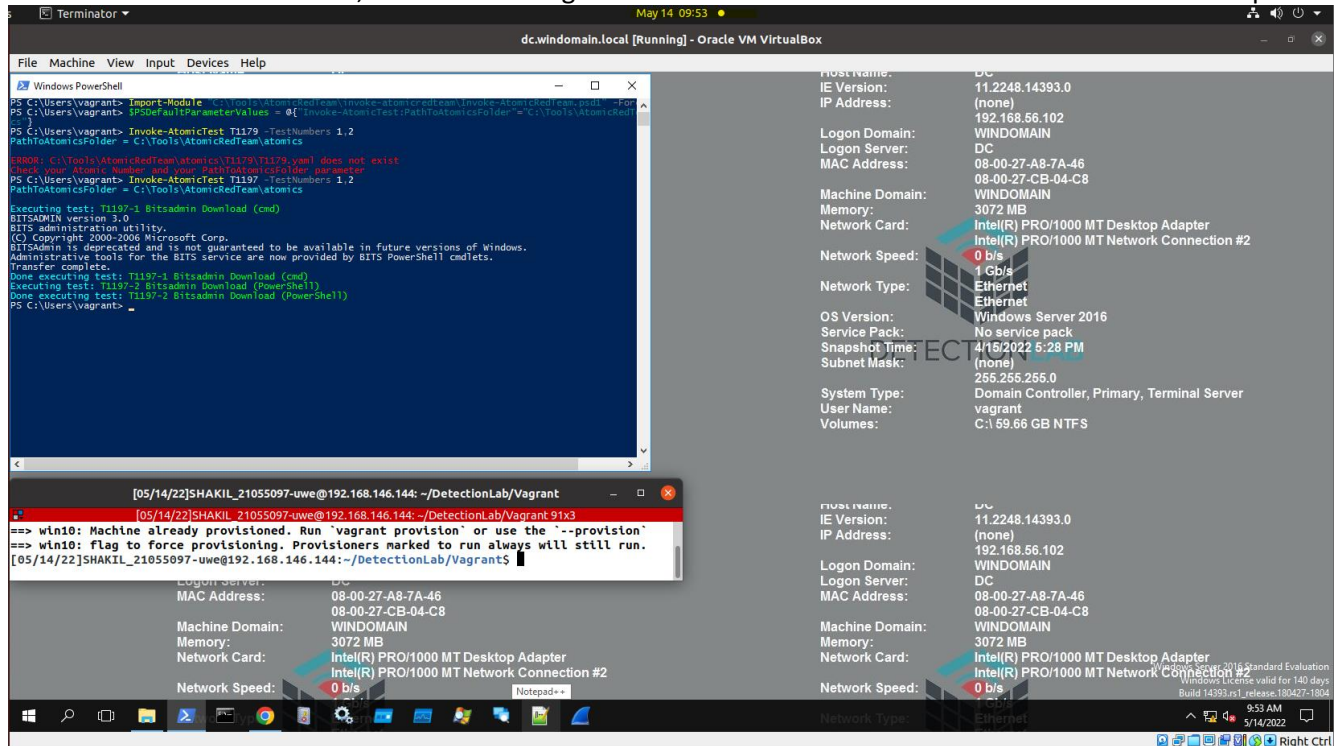


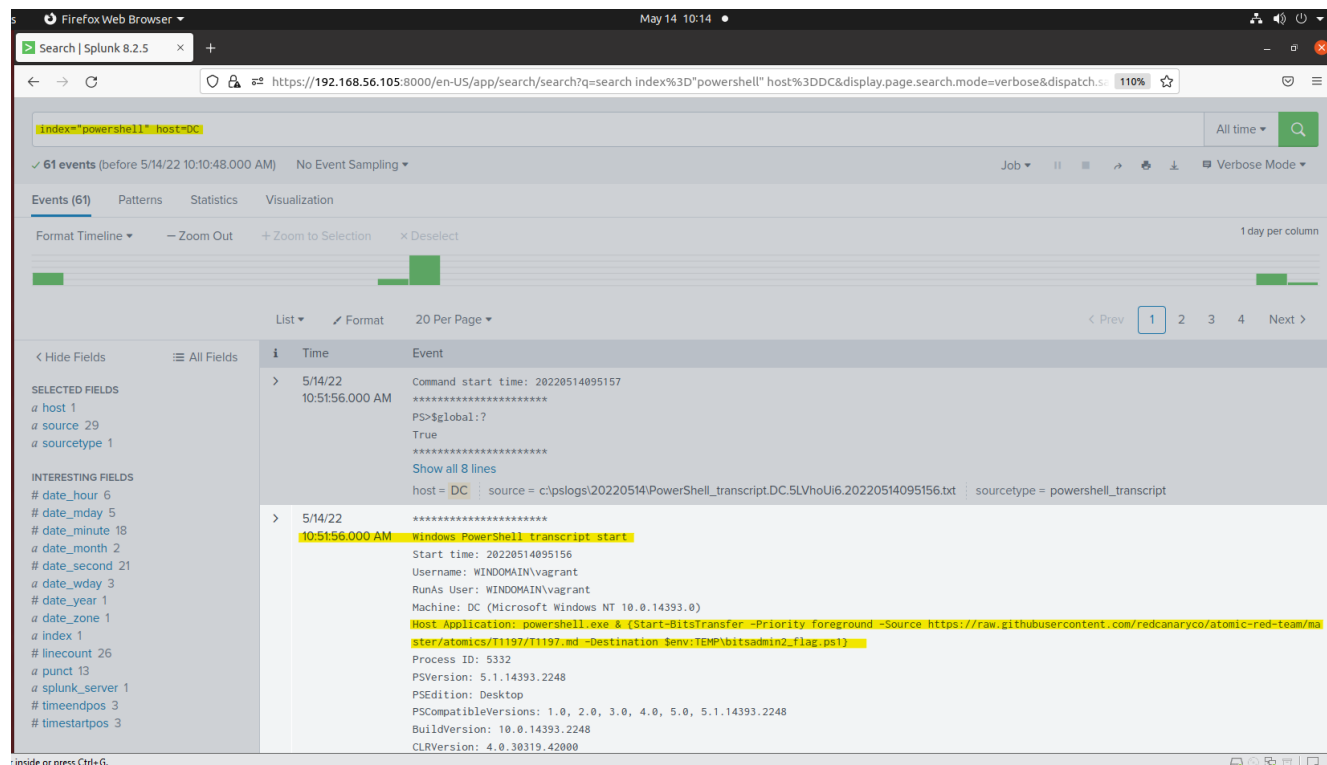
Figure 12: BITS Jobs ID1197. Full report source:

#### Background of mentioned Attack in Mitre ATT&CK:

Adversaries might employ BITS tasks to execute or clean up after harmful payloads repeatedly. The Component Object Model exposes the Windows Background Intelligent Transfer Service (BITS), a low-bandwidth, asynchronous file transfer method (COM). BITS is often used by updaters and messengers, while other apps prefer to run in the background (using available idle bandwidth) to avoid interfering with other networked applications. BITS jobs with a queue of one or more file operations are used to accomplish file transfer tasks. PowerShell and the BITSAdmin program provide an interface for creating and managing BITS tasks. Adversaries may utilize BITS to download, execute, and clean up after malicious code has been executed. BITS jobs are self-contained in the BITS job database, requiring no additional files or registry changes, and are frequently allowed by host firewalls. (The MITRE Corporation., 2022)

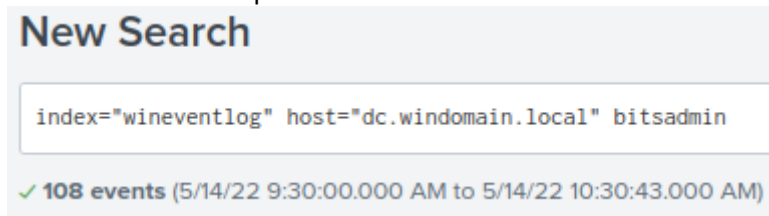
### 3.3.1 Attack Identification ID: T1197

Let us see what happened in Splunk:



**Attacker's objective:** To run BITS jobs to execute or clean up after malicious payloads persistently. (The MITRE Corporation., 2022)

**Investigation:** Run the below command in Splunk search.



From the given report below (complete report source: <https://rb.gy/cnjbav> ) we find that payload T1197 runs a bitadmin.exe file in PowerShell to clean up after an attack.

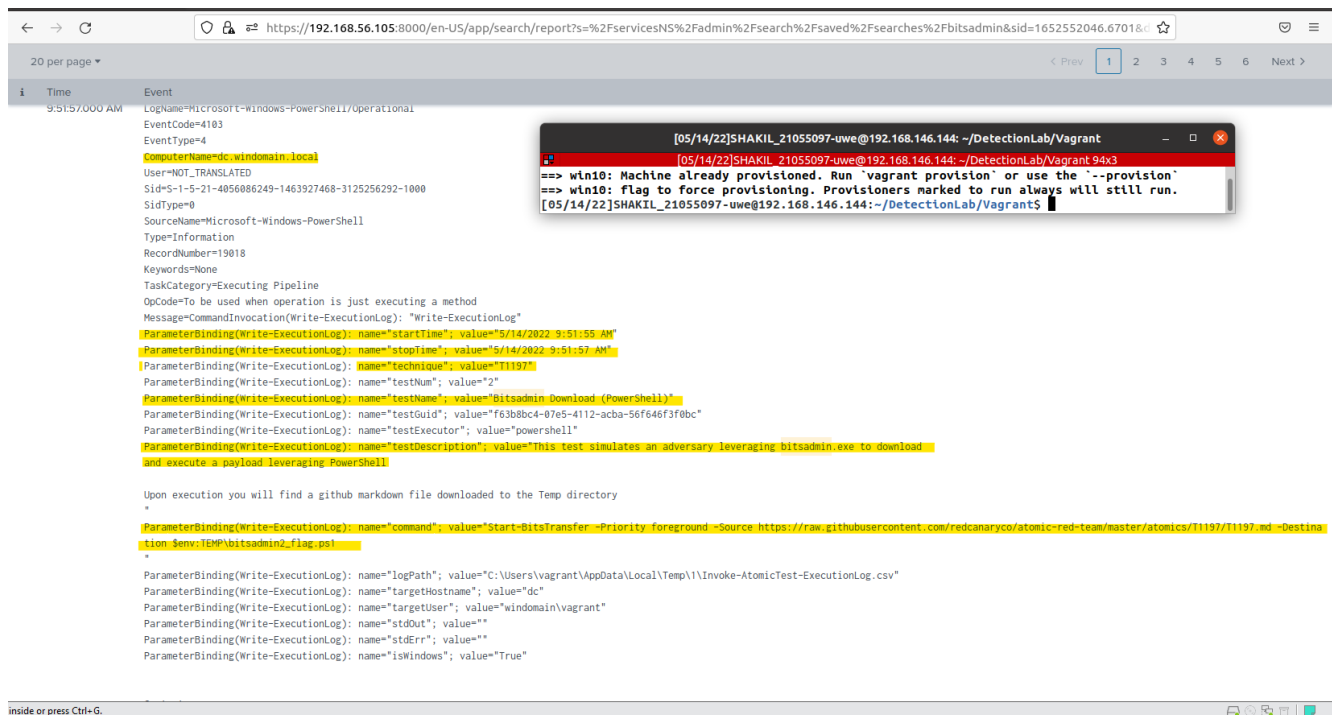


Figure 15: bitsadmin winlogs for T1197. Full report Source: <https://rb.gy/cnjbav>

### 3.3.2 Mitre ATT&CK Mitigation T1197

This attack technique cannot be easily mitigated with preventive controls since it is based on the abuse of operating system design features. For example, disabling all BITS functionality will likely have unintended side effects, such as preventing legitimate software patching and updating. Instead, efforts should be focused on preventing adversary tools from running earlier in the activity chain and identifying subsequent malicious behavior. (The MITRE Corporation., 2022)

## 3.4 Valid Accounts: Default Accounts T1078.001

To execute mentioned attack, run the following commands at win10 VM in Powershell module and atomics-path:

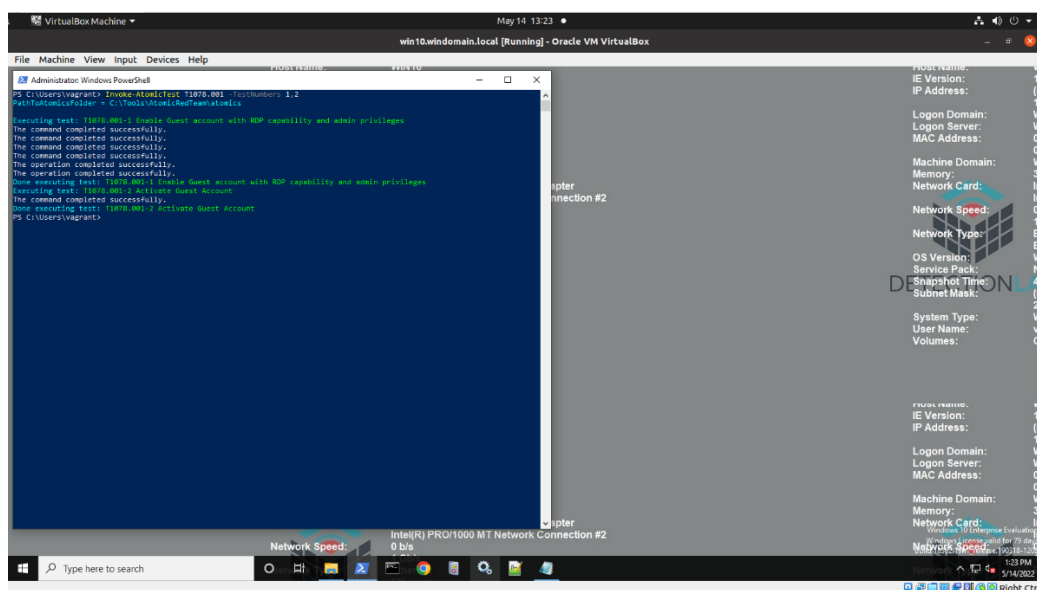


Figure 16: Attack for T1078.001

**Background of mentioned Attack in Mitre ATT&CK:**

Adversaries can utilize default account credentials to acquire Initial Access, Persistence, Privilege Escalation, or Defense Evasion. Default accounts, such as the Guest or Administrator accounts on Windows computers, are incorporated into the OS (Operating System). Default accounts also include the root user account in AWS and the default service account in Kubernetes and default factory/provider set accounts on other systems, applications, or devices. Default accounts do not just apply to client PCs; they also apply to network devices and computer programs, whether internal, open-source, or commercial.(The MITRE Corporation., 2022)

### 3.4.1 Attack Identification ID: T1078.001

Let us see what happened in Splunk:

The screenshot shows a Splunk search interface in a Firefox browser window. The search bar contains the query `index="powershell" host="win10"`. Below the search bar, a timeline visualization shows three green bars representing events. The main results pane displays a list of events:

Time	Event
5/14/22 1:23:40.000 PM	Windows PowerShell transcript start Start time: 20220514122340 Username: WIN10\vagrant RunAs User: WIN10\vagrant Show all 115 lines host = WIN10 : source = c:\pslogs\20220514\PowerShell_transcript.WIN10.b8E9thxL.20220514122339.txt : sourcetype = powershell_transcript
5/14/22 1:23:39.000 PM	Windows PowerShell transcript start Start time: 20220514122339 Username: WIN10\vagrant RunAs User: WIN10\vagrant Show all 80 lines host = WIN10 : source = c:\pslogs\20220514\PowerShell_transcript.WIN10.b8E9thxL.20220514122339.txt : sourcetype = powershell_transcript
5/14/22 1:20:19.000 PM	Executing test: T1078.001-1 Enable Guest account with RDP capability and admin privileges The command completed successfully. The command completed successfully. Show all 19 lines host = WIN10 : source = c:\pslogs\20220514\PowerShell_transcript.WIN10.ecb77h1h.20220514123311.txt : sourcetype = powershell_transcript

The bottom of the interface shows search options: Highlight All, Match Case, Match Diacritics, Whole Words, and 2 of 10 matches.

Figure 17: Splunk log for executing attack T1078.001. Full report from Splunk: <https://rb.gy/mvmilj>

**Attacker's Objective:** Adversaries may obtain and abuse credentials of a default account as a means of gaining Initial Access, Persistence, Privilege Escalation, or Defense Evasion. Default accounts are built into an OS, such as the Guest or Administrator accounts on Windows systems. (The MITRE Corporation., 2022)

**Investigation:** According to the T1078.001 attack's winlogs (full winlogs from Splunk: <https://rb.gy/hkjmida>) attacker has successfully added a remote guest user as an administrator.



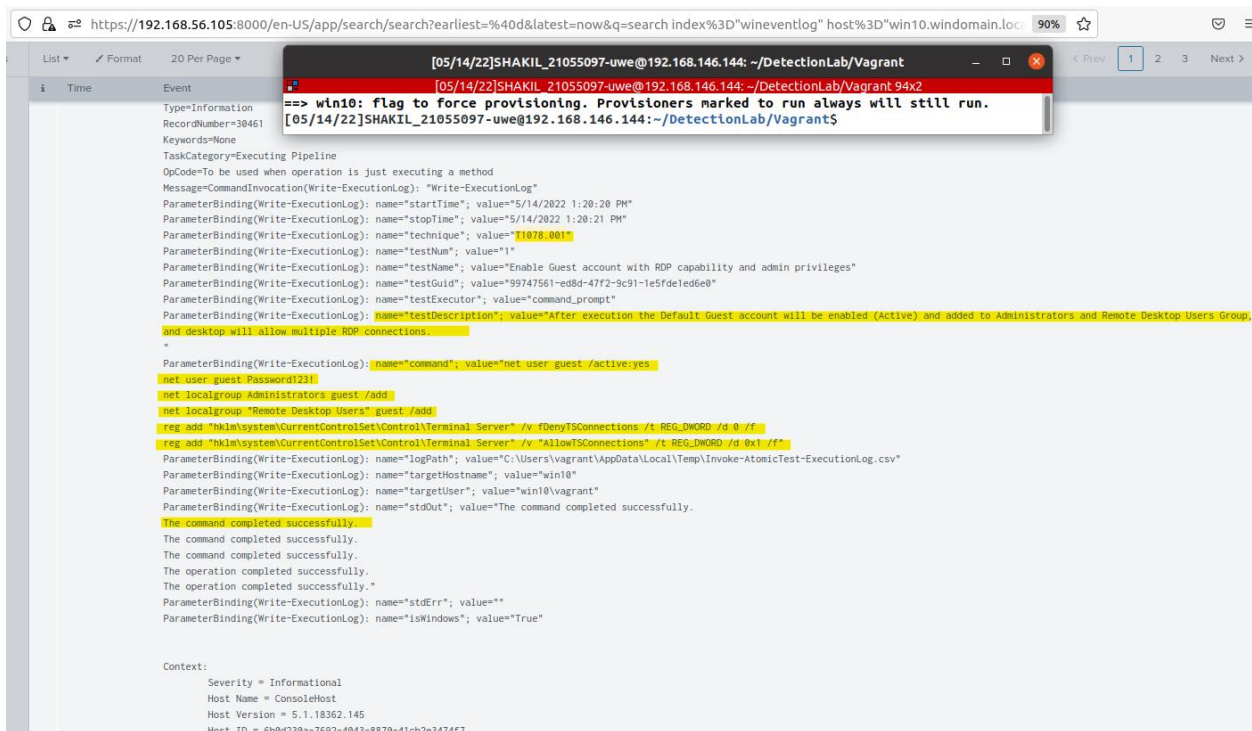


Figure 18: Investigate T1078.001 winlogs. Source: <https://rb.gv/hkimda>

### 3.4.2 Mitre ATT&CK Mitigation T1078.001

Applications and appliances that utilize default username and password should be changed immediately after the installation and before deployment to a production environment. (The MITRE Corporation., 2022)

## 3.5 Boot or Logon Initialization Scripts: Logon Script (Windows) T1037.001

To execute mentioned attack, run the following commands at wef VM in Powershell module and atomics-path:

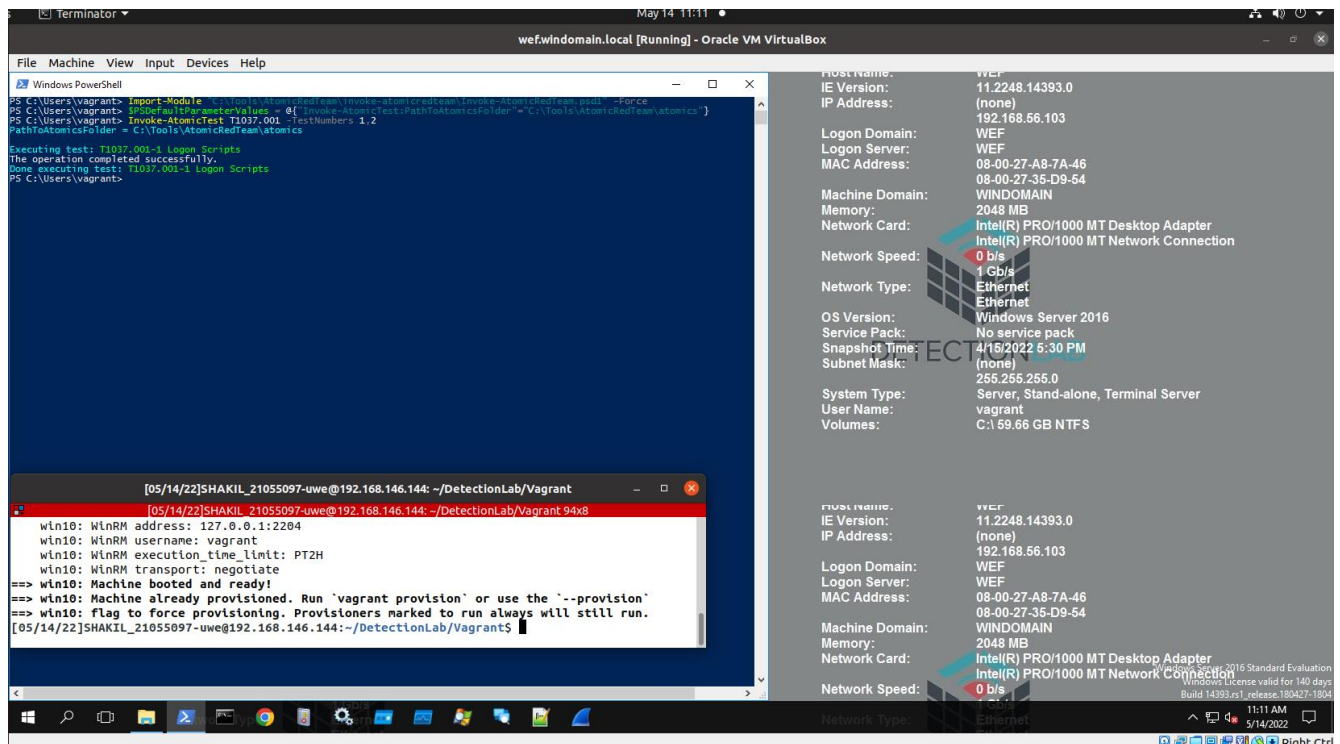




Figure 19: Attack for T1037.001

### Background of mentioned Attack in Mitre ATT&CK:

To achieve persistence, adversaries may employ Windows logon scripts automatically performed during logon. When a specified user or group logs into a system, Windows enables logon scripts to be launched. The HKCU\Environment\UserInitMprLogonScript Registry key is used to add a path to a script. Adversaries might use these programs to keep a single system persistent. Local credentials or an administrator account may be required depending on the access setup of the logon scripts. (The MITRE Corporation., 2022)

### 3.5.1 Attack Identification ID: T1037.001

Let us see what happened in Splunk:

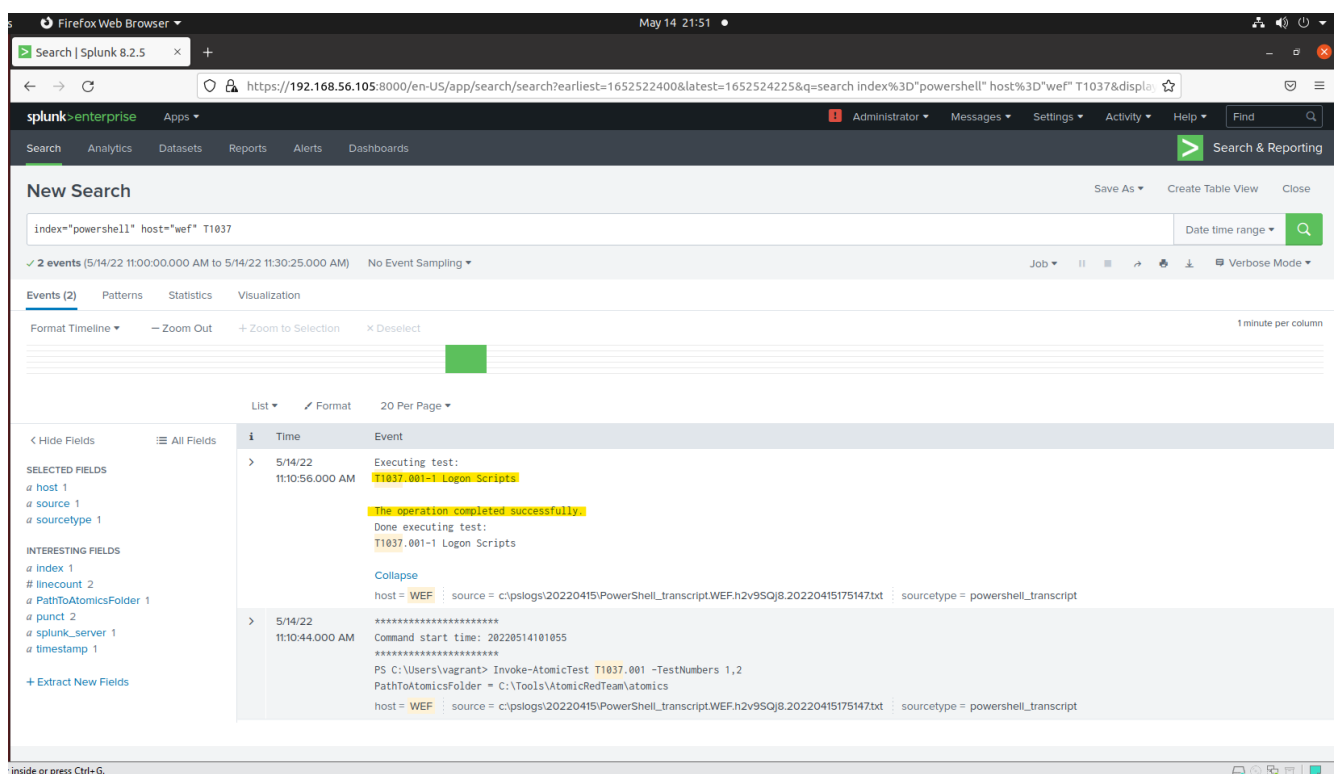


Figure 20: Splunk log event for T1037.001

**Attacker's Objective:** Adversaries may use Windows logon scripts automatically executed at logon initialization to establish persistence. (The MITRE Corporation., 2022)

**Investigate:** As per Winlogs (Full winlogs report from Splunk for T1037.001 <https://rb.gy/alsdhd> ), the HKCU\Environment\UserInitMprLogonScript has been executed.

```
Process Information:
New Process ID:0x1180
New Process Name:C:\Windows\System32\cmd.exe
Token Elevation Type:%%1938
Mandatory Label:S-1-16-8192
Creator Process ID:0x844
Creator Process Name:C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe
Process Command Line:"cmd.exe" /c "echo "echo Art "Logon Script" atomic test was successful. >> %
USERPROFILE%\desktop\T1037.001-log.txt" > %temp%\art.bat & REG.exe ADD HKCU\Environment /v
UserInitMprLogonScript /t REG_SZ /d "%temp%\art.bat" /f"
```

Figure 21: Investigation from Splunk winlogs report for T1037.001

### 3.5.2 Mitre ATT&CK Mitigation T1037.001

Ensure proper permissions are set for Registry hives to prevent users from modifying keys for logon scripts that may lead to persistence. (The MITRE Corporation., 2022)

## 4 Conclusion

SIEM combines security information management (SIM) with security event management (SEM) for real-time monitoring, analysis, tracking, and logging of security data for compliance or auditing. So, SIEM is a security solution that helps firms identify possible security risks and vulnerabilities. For security and compliance management use cases, it reveals user behavior abnormalities and employs artificial intelligence to automate numerous manual operations related to threat identification and incident response. SIEM has evolved beyond its log handling roots. AI and machine learning enable SIEM's sophisticated user and entity behavior analytics (UEBA). In addition to handling emerging threats, it also manages regulatory compliance and reporting.

## 5 References

1. The MITRE Corporation. (2022) *ATT&CK Matrix for Enterprise The MITRE Corporation. MITRE ATT&CK and ATT&CK are registered trademarks of The MITRE Corporation.*2022 [online]. Available from: <https://attack.mitre.org/> [Accessed 15 May 2022].