



DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

TDT4237 SOFTWARE SECURITY AND DATA PRIVACY

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**Exercise 1, 2022: Information Gathering**

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GROUP 21

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# 1 Introduction

The objective of this report is to perform information gathering of TrustedSitters website. We will first look at the site's layout and draw up a page map using OWASP ZAP. We will then take a deeper look at the services Trustedsitters employs. This includes the website's web server, frontend technology stack, backend technology, and choice of database.

## 2 Page map

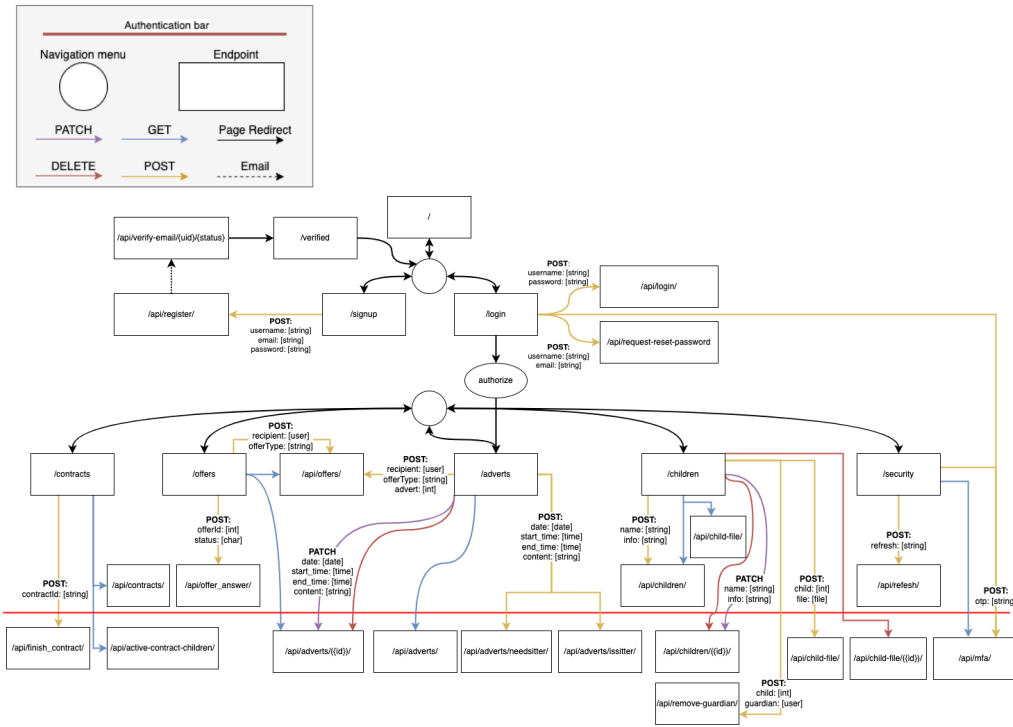


Figure 1: Pagemap

### 2.1 Stages listed

The website's page map is displayed in figure 1. We decided to follow the example provided in the exercise description in terms of labels for the page map. We maneuvered through the website using the OWASP ZAP application to find the information necessary to create the page map. To find the variable type of the POST requests, we examined the source code, request and made educated guesses as we do not have access to the database.

The user has to be authenticated to access the navigation bar, letting them navigate through the site. The authentication bar separates */api/* requests that ask for authentication and those accessed without an authentication token. Even if the user navigates the Trustedsitters website in the developers' intended way, the user would not be able to access the */contracts* and */offers* endpoints because it would be hidden for the user. The only way to reveal that menu would be to log in and let the server redirect you to */adverts*. But anyone can access other endpoints without being logged in by directly typing in the URL. We used Postman and the browser to test each URL endpoint to find the endpoint that asked for authentication and others that did not. Every endpoint that returned an error for not being authenticated is placed under the authentication bar. We did not include */api/contracts* that return a Django error because it does not explicitly return an authentication error. If the user has enabled two-factor identification for their account, a POST request is sent to */api/mfa* after the username and password are entered.

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## 3 Services

### 3.1 Webserver

To find out what webserver Trustedsitters uses, we can inspect the browser requests. We open the browser inspector tool and go over to the network tab that shows all requests sent to `molde.idi.ntnu.no`. As you can see in figure 2, the response headers in the subcategory Server say `nginx/1.21.4`. The webserver used on Trustedsitters is `nginx`.

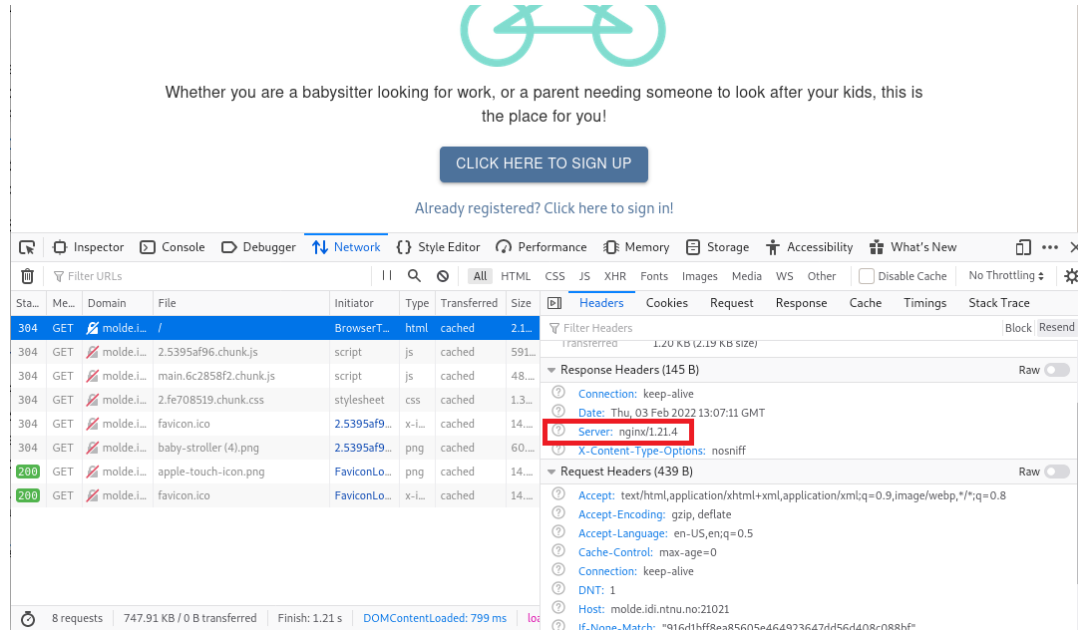


Figure 2: Screenshot webserver browser http response

### 3.2 Frontend

We can use two options to determine which technology stack the website uses as a frontend. In the first option, the group used is a browser extension tool called Wappalyzer[1]. This tool scans the websites for different technologies it uses. By using the tool, we find out that the frontend used is React, as shown in figure 3.

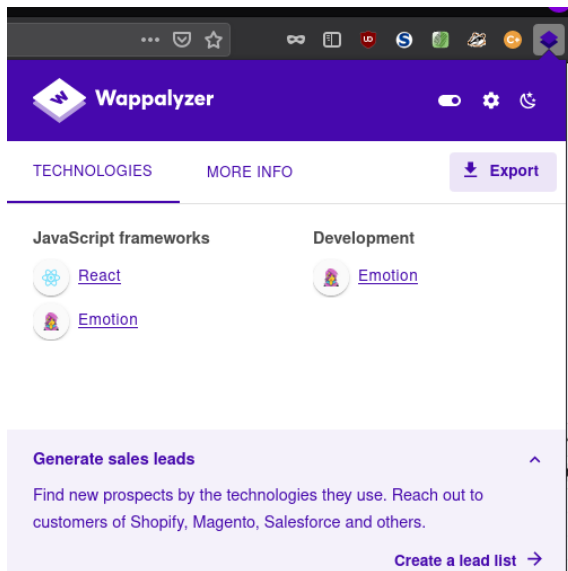


Figure 3: Screenshot wrappalyzer

The other option we can use is to go in the Debugger in the browser console. The debugger menu gives you the option to find the application's source code. We can find the source code by moving to the static folder, then under folder js, and see a file named App.jsx. We can look in the App.jsx file, and we can see in the first import statement that this file imports the React module, illustrated in figure 4.

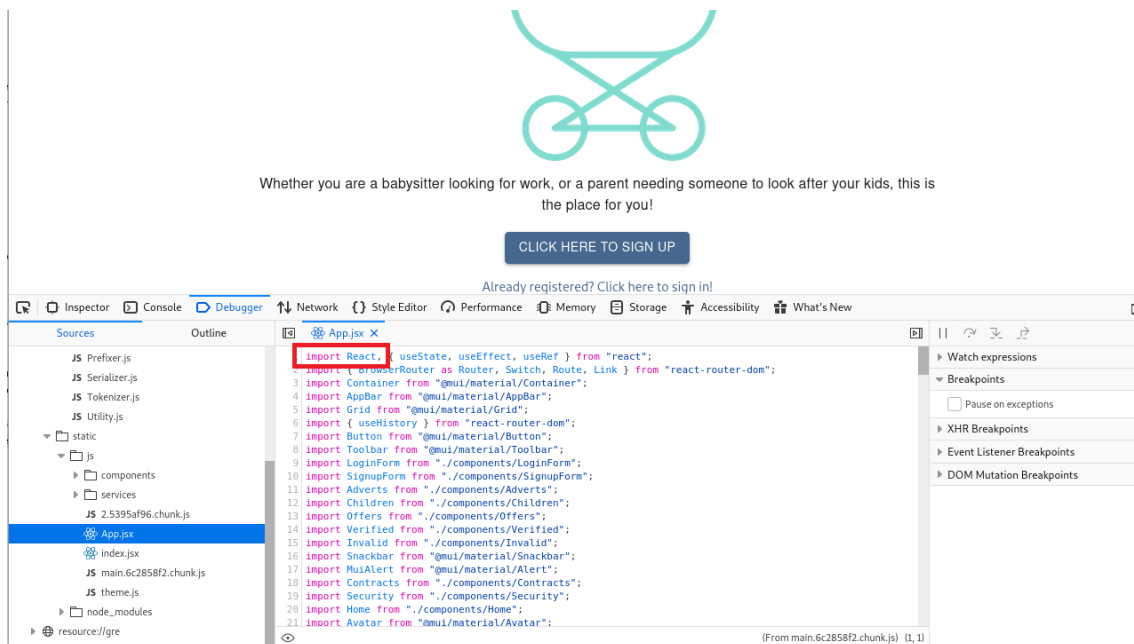


Figure 4: Screenshot React code

### 3.3 Backend

To find out the technology used for the backend for TrustedSitters, we need to check if there is an error in the code that could return very revealing errors. From the analysis of requests using the ZAP tool present on the website, we found out that the frontend uses a `/api/` to send requests

to the backend. If these API requests are poorly configured, the backend could return errors in its HTTP response, and we could use these HTTP response errors to gather more information about the backend. We bypass all the frontend user verification by directly sending a request to the backend. We can try to access an incorrect URL using `/api/`. We try using this URL: `http://molde.idi.ntnu.no:21021/api//contracts/`. By requesting this URL, the backend returns a 404 HTTP error but also returns more information, as shown in figure 5. In this return message, we can see all the different URLs that have been created as endpoints in the backend. We also see that this is a Django error message in this message. We also learned that this website has Django debug mode enabled with this message.

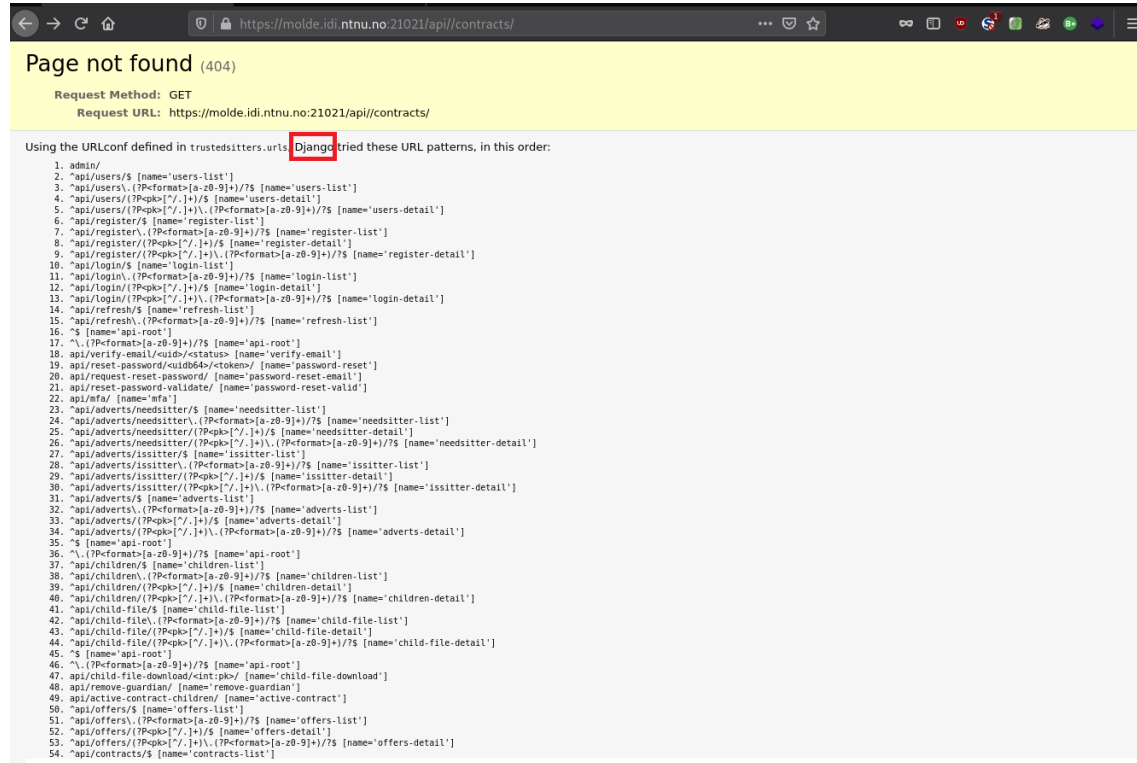


Figure 5: Screenshot Django error 404 request

We can also access the admin panel to be sure and confirm that the backend is using Django. See figure 6.

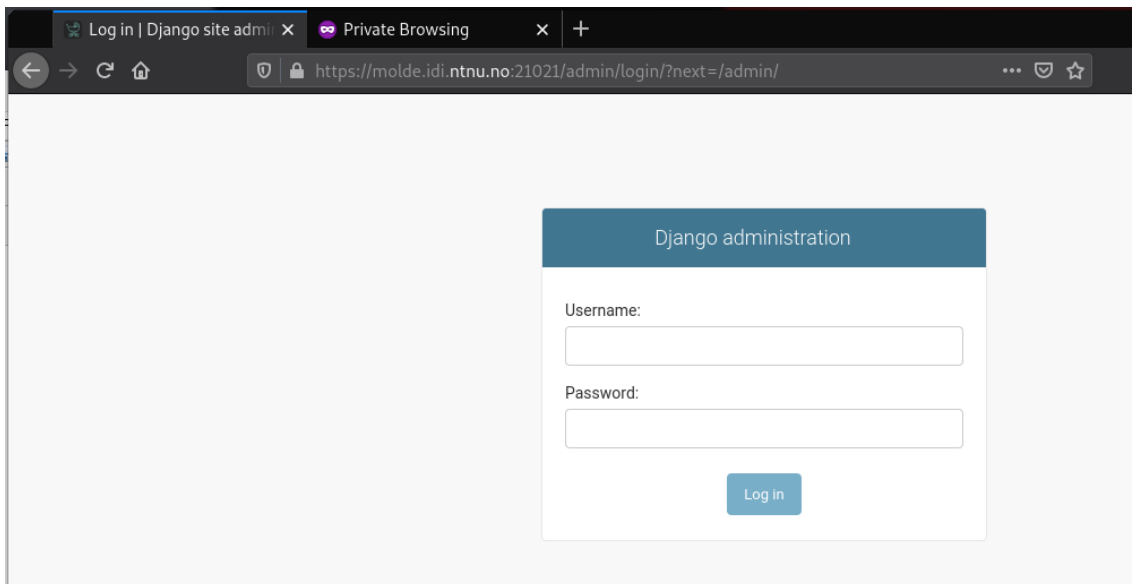


Figure 6: Screenshot Django admin panel

### 3.4 Database

To find out what is used as the database is a little bit trickier. From figure 5, we got access to all the `/api/` endpoints present in the server. To find out what database Django uses, we need to get more information from other more revealing error messages. We know that Django debug mode is enabled, and we got a list of all the API requests available in the backend. We are looking for an internal server error with HTTP code 500. After multiple attempts, we found that `/api/contracts` return us an HTTP 500 error. See figure 7. It says that Django expects an id along with the API request, but instead, Django received a `django.contrib.auth.models.AnonymousUser` object.

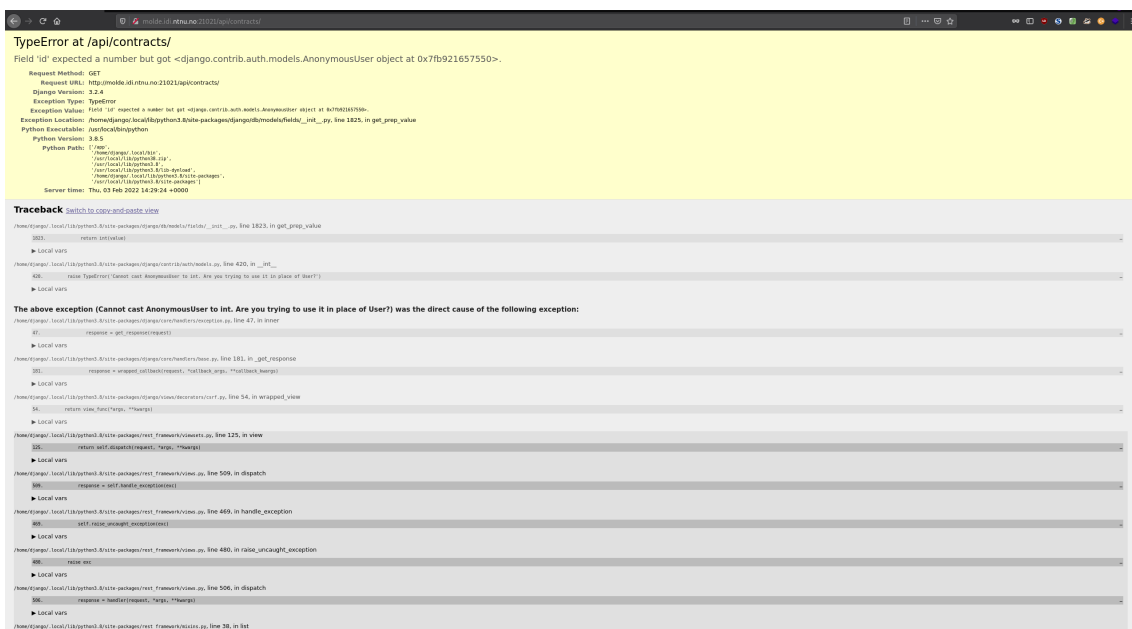


Figure 7: Screenshot Django http 500 internal server error message

This error is caused by the user not being authenticated on the website. By looking through the code, we see that the user receives a random access token used as authentication to access the

/api/ request of the application, as shown in figure 8. The token is named access in this response message.

Figure 8: Screenshot response request access token

This token is included in the request when it is send from the frontend by invoking the method `TokenService.getLocalAccessToken()`; See figure 9. This method fetches the token stored in the local storage of the browser, illustrated in figure 10.

Figure 9: Screenshot api.js frontend code

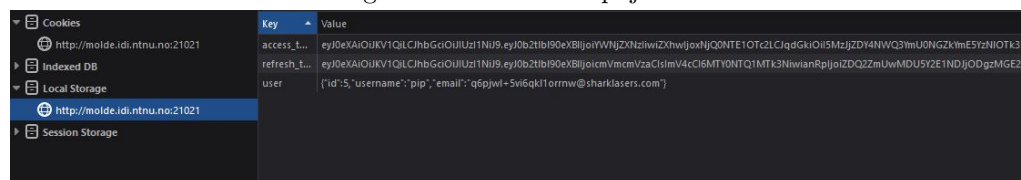


Figure 10: Screenshot browser local storage

When the frontend source code is calling the backend uses the api interceptor to fetch contracts. It calls the method `api.get("/contracts/")` which request the `api/contracts/` endpoint. See figure 11.

Figure 11: Screenshot contract.js frontend code





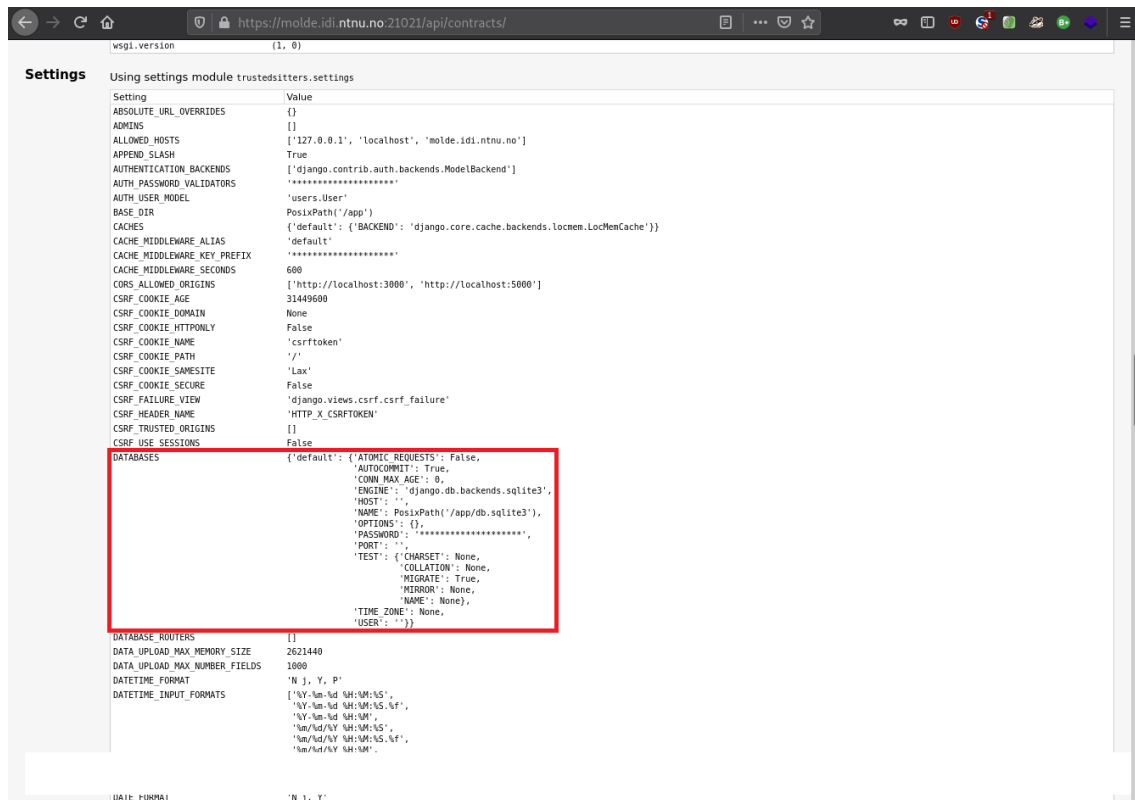


Figure 14: Screenshot over Django error message database list

## 4 Conclusion

We managed to map out the Trustedsitters website by finding most of the relevant endpoints. We also managed to find out the webserver, the frontend, the backend, and the database used for this website. The group found out that Django was misconfigured and exposed sensitive information about the web application. To prevent the web application from leaking data and provide better security overall. The web application should be hosted on an HTTPS domain with a certificate where someone malicious could not intercept the traffic. Each API request should be protected by checking the authentication token of an authenticated user. The Trustedsitters should also disable debugging mode in Django because this leaks information about the application we do not want to expose to users. Looking at the pagemap we can conclude that the authentication bar should be higher up and Trustedsitters should protect with authentication more of the api request to provide better security for both the webserver and the users.

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## References

- [1] wappalyzer. *wappalyzer*. 2022. URL: <https://www.wappalyzer.com/> (visited on 02/06/2022).