EternalBlue

One of the most potent exploits ever seen!

IST 623 – Introduction to Information Security
Case Study Presentation
2/25/2020

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Case Summary

- Per NY Times: “Since 2017, when the N.S.A. lost control of the tool, EternalBlue.
- It has been picked up by state hackers in North Korea, Russia and, more recently, China, to cut a path of destruction around the world, leaving billions of dollars in damage.”
- Ransomware is a type of malicious software designed to block access to a computer system until a sum of money is paid.
- Although ransomware aims at individuals, it also caters to Institutions for financial profit.

Origination

- The National Security Agency discovered vulnerabilities in Microsoft's system that could be used as an exploitation device but did not notify Microsoft until a breach had occurred.
- Microsoft then created a patch to fix the vulnerabilities but not in enough time for widespread affect before attack was carried out.
- A group of hackers known as **Shadow Brokers** were able to obtain information from the NSA regarding the vulnerabilities.
- The **Shadow Brokers** group then released the secrets on the internet which were then picked up by such groups who created the **WannaCry** ransomware attack which targeted systems across the globe.

Victims

- Governments
- Businesses
- Constituents
- Possibly Critical Information

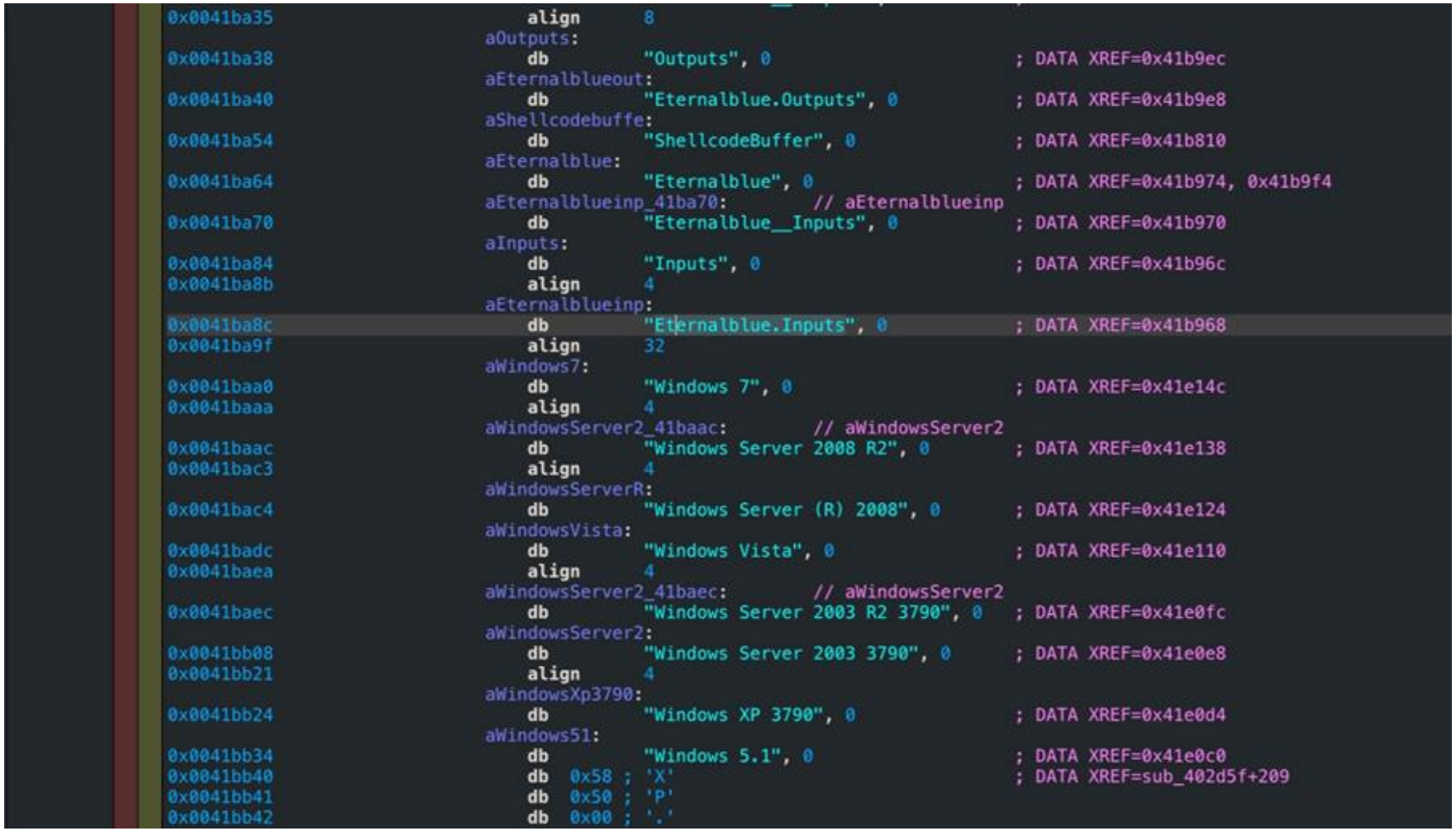
Question & Answer

EternalBlue – Case Summary - Victims

Mechanism of attack

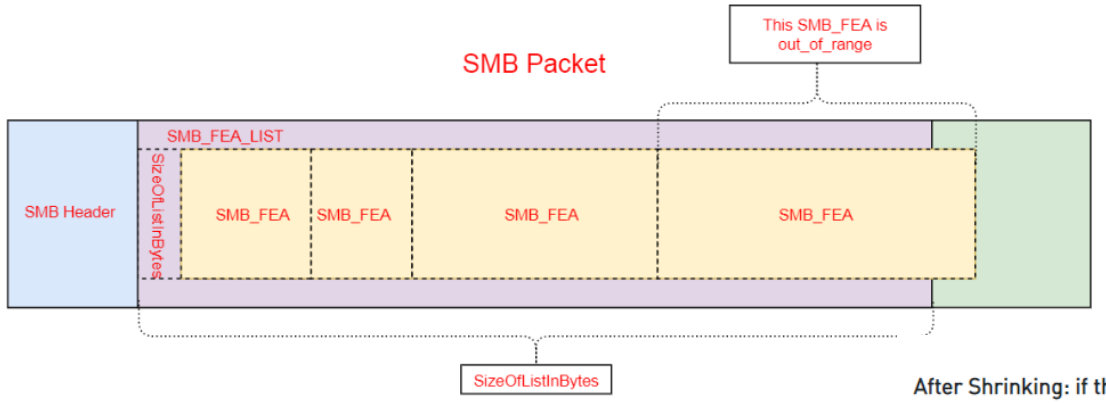
- EternalBlue exploited “vulnerabilities in the windows implementation of Windows Server Message Block protocol.”
- Three bugs were exploited
- Once the attacker takes control of the system, they can use a multi-layered encryption approach to encrypt a victim’s files and hold them for ransom.
- Unpatched systems are still vulnerable to this day.

[1]Vulnerable Windows Systems:



`SrvOs2FeaListSizeToNT` shrinking illustration:

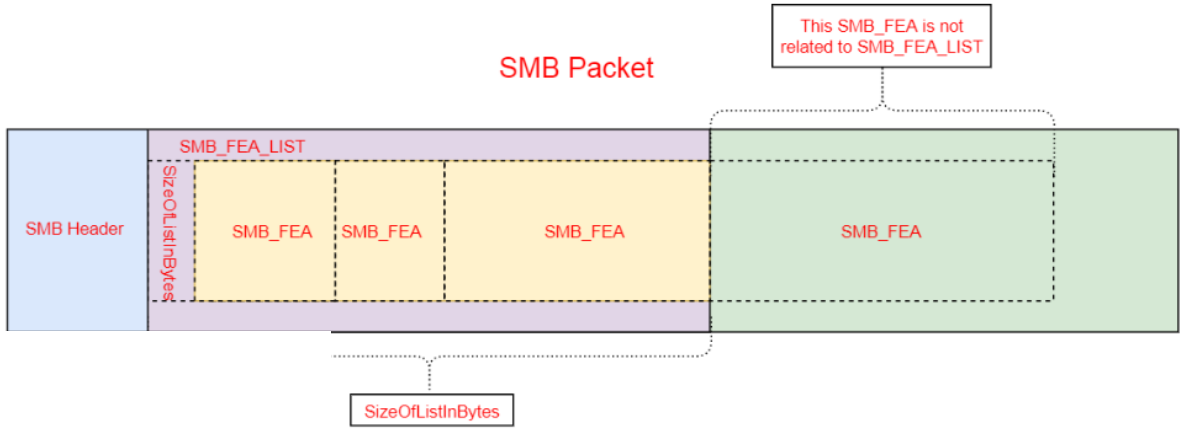
Before Shrinking:



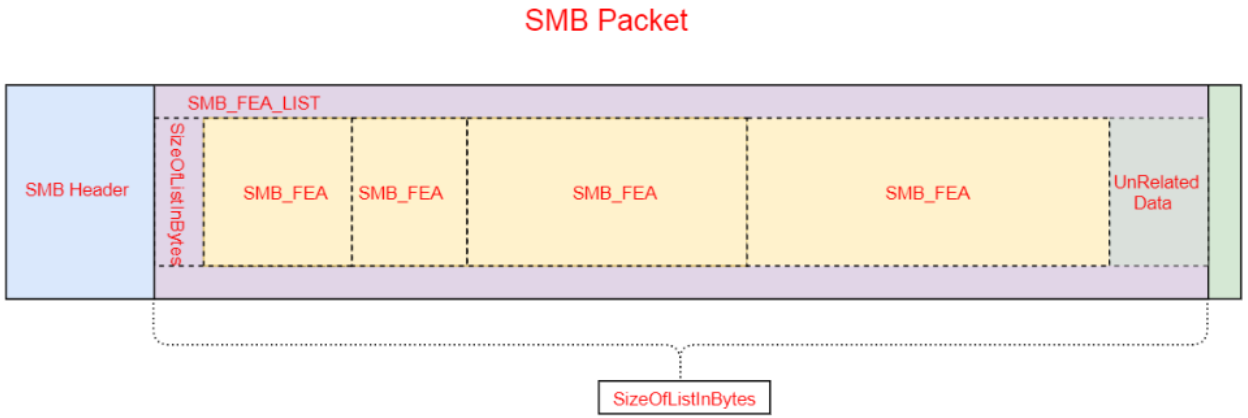
1st Bug Illustration
From checkpoint.com
Research By: Nadav Grossman

https://research.checkpoint.com/2017/eternalblue-everything-know/

After Shrinking: if the size of `SizeOfListInBytes` is below 2^{16}:



After Shrinking (bug): if the size of `SizeOfListInBytes` is above 2^{16}:



Hack Windows 7 Remotely Using DOUBLEPULSAR — NSA Hacking Tool
Video by: ArcaneHacks

Question & Answer

EternalBlue – Mechanism of Attack

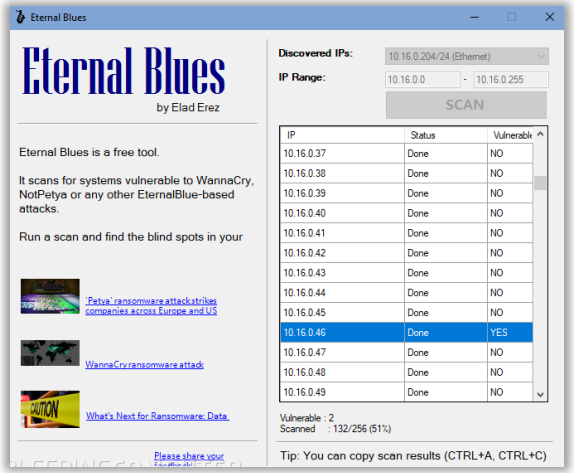
Fallout

- Affected over an estimated 500,000 computers across 150 countries in 2017.
- Estimated damage range from hundreds of millions to billions of dollars for businesses and governments
  - Cybercriminals asked for 13 bitcoins ($113,000) from Balitmore authorities
- Governments had to pay to get data back
  - Baltimore decided not to pay Wannacry – had to pay $18 million
  - Citizens now pose the question, "should the government be responsible and liable to cover the costs of damages just like any other war/military or state-created weapon?"
  - No such thing as a *safe* cyber weapon
  - Active war – not an act for profit, but more of resent
- Buy/replace new IT equipment
  - Even after purchasing data back, they need to cover the software damages to take care of virus in devices
    - Users had to update their programs and system for patch updates
- Public fear that their data is not safe/secure anymore

Eternal Blues Scan Statistics

- Eternal Blues app found more than 50,000 vulnerable computers around the world in the past two weeks, since official release date

- Users scanned over **eight million IPs**
- **53.8%** of scanned hosts still had the **SMBv1** protocol **enabled**
- **Most** had applied MS17-010 patch, leaving 50,000 still vulnerable




"Eternal Blues" Tool Tests Computers Against NSA's ETERNALBLUE Exploit

By Catalin Cimpanu June 30, 2017 03:56 PM

*"Security researcher Elad Erez has created a tool named Eternal Blues that system administrators can use to test if computers on their network are **vulnerable to exploitation** via NSA's ETERNALBLUE exploit. Erez released his tool on **Wednesday, a dafter the NotPetya ransomware** caused damages to thousands of computers across the globe." – BleepingComputer.com*

Social Media Clippings

Sergio Caltagirone @cnoanalysis · May 29, 2019

Question: Is every use of MS17-010 the use of an "NSA weapon"? Will it always be the fault of the NSA? For two years anyone could reverse the patch to get an exploit. Where does the causal chain end? #infosec #cybersecurity #MS17010 **#ETERNALBLUE**

12 6

Ira Winkler @irawinkler · May 29, 2019

Replying to @cnoanalysis

When you're looking for a sensational headline, promoting a book, and/or outright ignorant, it will always be NSA's fault.

1 4

Dan Kelly @int0x00 · May 29, 2019

Replying to @cnoanalysis

* Next generation government grade uncontrollable NSA CIA Mossad illuminati virus blockchain cyber-nuclear exploit weapon

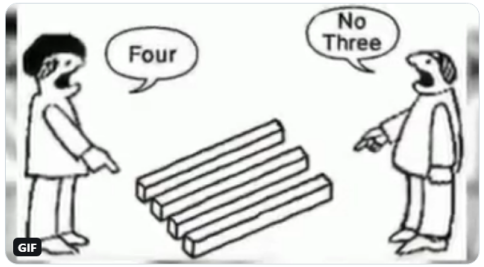
Fixed that for you

2

Chase Dardaman @CharlesDardaman · May 29, 2019

Replying to @cnoanalysis

I'll draw an arbitrary line at 1 year. At that point the NSA isn't to blame anymore and the issue lies elsewhere feel free to debate



1 1

Coleman Kane @colemankane · May 29, 2019

I would argue that MS17-010 is the fault of Microsoft (and not NSA). DoublePulsar & EternalBlue are credited to NSA, who, it could be argued, shares some blame in their leakage. In 2019, still getting pwned with these tools is something private sector deserves most blame for.

1 3

Silas Cutler @silascutler · May 29, 2019

Replying to @cnoanalysis

The routine beating on it feels like folks pushing political agendas. Thank you for bringing up patch reversing because it's an interesting area and really complicates exploit proliferation tracking. @schneierblog noted the technique in 2008 - schneier.com/blog/archives/...

1

your loopback interface AKA (::1) @enginestart2 · May 29, 2019

Replying to @cnoanalysis

reversing patch to find bug is doable but writing exploit for it is whole different story

1

Peter Cap @pcapdata · May 29, 2019

Replying to @cnoanalysis

NSA reserved the vulnerability for their own use instead of disclosing responsibly. It entered circulation through their negligence and DoublePulsar made it a one-two knockout punch.

I'm gonna go with "forever minus one year" on this one in terms of accountability.

1

Brian in Pittsburgh @arekfurt · May 29, 2019

Replying to @cnoanalysis

The fun part is that, by contrast, the portion of blame (if you want to use that word) that people think MS itself should bear for having a buffer overflow vuln in a key Windows network service component seems to expire at about "a reasonable interval for folks to patch".

1

Brian in Pittsburgh @arekfurt · May 29, 2019

Not that I think MS should be getting more blame here. But that there's rather a double standard being applied to one player in this who made errors years ago compared to literally everyone else.

Christian Rencken @Chrencken14 · May 29, 2019

Replying to @cnoanalysis

Interesting question. I've never thought about it that way

Silas Cutler @silascutler · May 29, 2019

Replying to @cnoanalysis

The routine beating on it feels like folks pushing political agendas. Thank you for bringing up patch reversing because it's an interesting area and really complicates exploit proliferation tracking. @schneierblog noted the technique in 2008 - schneier.com/blog/archives/...

1

Schneier on Security

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Reverse-Engineering Exploits from Patches

This is interesting research: given a security patch, can you automatically reverse-engineer the security vulnerability that is being patched and create exploit code to exploit it?

Turns out you can.

> What does this mean?
>
> Attackers can simply wait for a patch to be released, use these techniques, and with reasonable chance, produce a working exploit within seconds. Coupled with a worm, all vulnerable hosts could be compromised before most are even aware a patch is available, let alone download it. Thus, Microsoft should redesign Windows Update. We propose solutions which prevent several possible schemes, some of which could be done with existing technology.

Full paper here.

Tags: academic papers, exploits, patching, vulnerabilities

Posted on April 23, 2008 at 1:35 PM • 64 Comments

Question & Answer

EternalBlue - Fallout

Texas

- 22 cities or counties hit in single attack, Federal Investigation [4,5]

- Keene, TX [4,5]
  - No Credit Card payments
  - No Utility payments
  - Analog
  - Ransom demand $2.5 million
  - State IT Dept. Restoring

- Lubbock County, TX [5]
  - Lubbock's IT department isolate the ransomware before it spread
  - Infected computer, not network

Florida

- Lake City, FL [6]
  - Paid $485,000 in bitcoin (Insurance paid all but $10,000)
  - Hackers: control phone and email system
  - Emergency system not effected
    - Phone calls rerouted through emegency system: no delays to emergency calls
  - Key received: some emails restored, many inoperable
  - Adding training

- Marion County, FL [6]
  - 2 computers infected
  - No important information was jeopardized
  - Increased cyber security and
  - Developed counter measures.

How to Protect Against EternalBlue

- EternalBlue **exploits** a **vulnerability** in **outdated** versions of **Microsoft Server Message Block**.
  - Only known mechanism to protect against EternalBlue is to download the **latest Windows** software **update** and install the **patch**.
  - Additionally, ensure that the following **safeguards** are in place:
    - **Anti-virus** software
    - Secure **offsite backup** with "attack-loop" prevention
    - **Filter** for **.exe attachments** in emails
    - **Encrypt** sensitive data

What Should I Do?	Why Should I Do It?
Anti-virus	Keep your corporate data sources up to date with the latest anti-malware software to filer known ransomware strains.
Firewalls	Deploy firewalls and block access to SMB ports over the network or internet to control access to your IT environment.
Configure Webmail Server to Block Attachments	Include extensions like .exe, .vbs, or .scr. After filtering, you can scan the files in an isolated environment to verify or destroy.
User Training	Train staff to stay alert for suspicious attachments and download links, such as double-checking a business domain or spot-checking links.
File Versioning	Automatically store multiple versions of files at a time. This enables flexible restores in a disaster recovery scenario.
Upgrade OS and Applications	I really hope this is clear by now. Strains like EternalBlue expose out-of-date Windows software as an entry point into your environment

https://www.keepitsafe.com/blog/post/eternalblue-whats-going-on-and-how-to-protect-your-data/

Question & Answer

EternalBlue - Mitigations

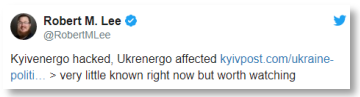
NotPetya - Variants of EternalBlue

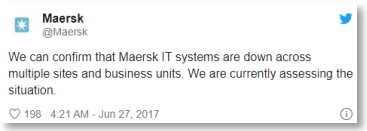
JUNE 27, 2017

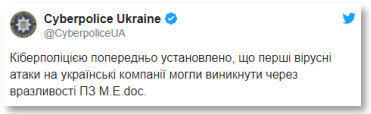
- At the end of 2018, millions of systems were still vulnerable to EternalBlue
  They aren't just viruses. They are worms…

- On June 27, 2017, a digital attack campaign struck **banks**, **airports** and **power** companies in **Ukraine**, **Russia** and **parts of Europe**.

- Combined, caused over **$1 billion** worth of **damages** over **65 countries**







13:00 EDT – JUNE 27, 2017

Security researchers begin to share ways by which affected users and businesses can counteract the ransomware. Some note NotPetya runs on boot. As a result, victims can prevent the ransomware from encrypting their files by quickly powering down before Window boots or if they see a "Check Disk" message.

05:00 – 06:00 EDT

- The **first signs** of a digital attack.
- Other affected organizations coming forward:

08:00 EDT

Symantec Security Response confirms that **Petya ransomware** is **responsible** for the digital attacks.

10:00 EDT

- **Kaspersky** Lab tweets out a statement clarifying that the ransomworm is **not a variant of Petya** but is actually a **new ransomware** they named "**NotPetya**."

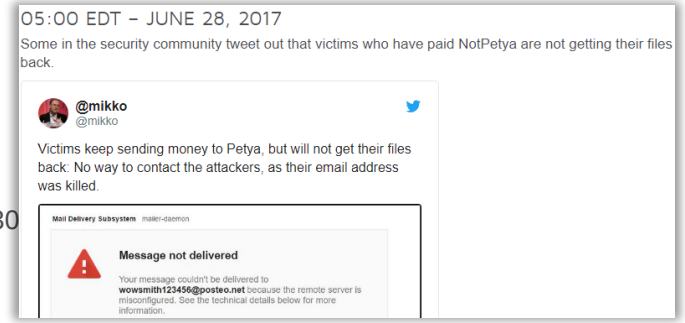
12:00 EDT

- **Ukraine's** police confirm **MeDoc**, an accounting software package that many Ukrainians use to pay their taxes, as a **NotPetya infection vector**.
- Security researchers' belief that an **update released** by MeDoc at 10:30 GMT on June 27, 2017, allegedly **installed the malware** on the "victim zero" system.

13:00 EDT

05:00 EDT – JUNE 28, 2017

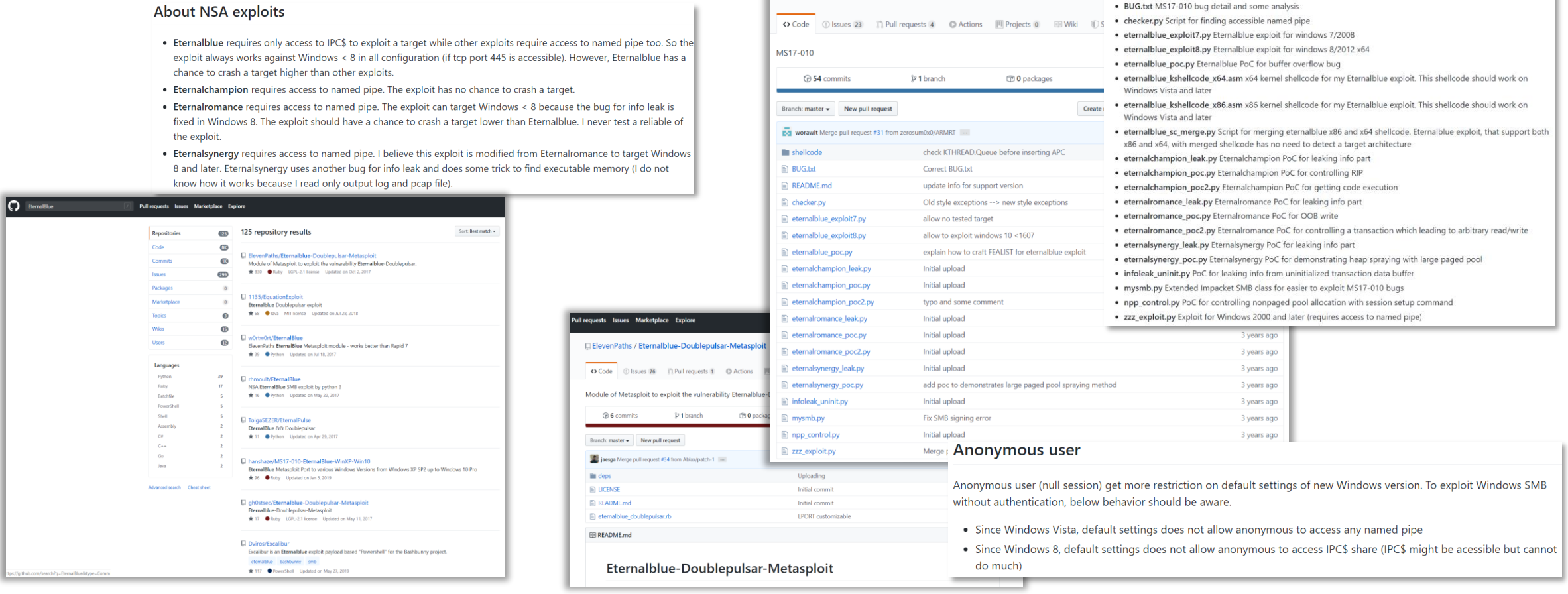
Some in the security community tweet out that victims who have paid NotPetya are not getting their files back.



05:00 EDT

EternalBlue OpenSource Code…

- Following the massive impact of WannaCry, both **NotPetya** and **BadRabbit** caused over **$1 billion worth of damages in over 65 countries**, using EternalBlue as either an initial compromise vector or as a method of lateral movement.



NotPetya -Variants of EternalBlue

- *Operation* -

"The superficial resemblance to Petya is only skin deep. Although there is significant code sharing, the real Petya was a criminal enterprise for making money. This is definitely not designed to make money. This is designed to spread fast and cause damage, with a plausibly deniable cover of 'ransomware.'"

- Researchers at **Kaspersky** Lab reveal that the ransomware does use **EternalBlue**, as well as **EternalRomance**, **another exploit** targeting some **Windows** machines as **infection vectors**.
- **Kaspersky** also discloses NotPetya's ability to use **Mimikatz** to extract **administrative credentials** from an infected system using the **lsass.exe** process. The threat can then use other tools, such as Windows Management Instrumentation (**WMI**) or **PsExec**, to **infect other computers** on a network.
- **Encryption** routine was **modified** so that the malware could **not revert** its **changes**
- **Low** unlock fee of $300
- **Single**, fixed Bitcoin **wallet** to collect ransom payments
- Due to the above, Researchers speculate that this **attack** was **not** intended to be a **profit-generating** venture
- Rather, to **damage devices quickly**, and ride off the media attention WannaCry received by claiming to be ransomware.

NotPetya - Variants of EternalBlue

- *Mitigation* -

13:00 EDT – JUNE 27, 2017

Security researchers begin to share ways by which affected users and businesses can counteract the ransomware. Some note NotPetya runs on boot. As a result, victims can prevent the ransomware from encrypting their files by quickly powering down before Window boots or if they see a "Check Disk" message.

Others like Dave Kennedy, founder of TrustedSec and Binary Defense, reveal administrators can stop NotPetya from writing/executing by creating a file "C:\Windows\perfc.dat".

> Use this.
>
> Just confirmed it stops execution.
>
> At lease for this variant. https://t.co/YmYKFdqdKJ
>
> — Dave Kennedy (ReL1K) (@HackingDave) June 27, 2017

The ransomware looks for this file on an infected computer. If it discovers it, it exits its encryption routine. Administrators must install this file on every computer to forestall encryption, however. As a result, the file proves to be more of a vaccine than a killswitch.

WebAppDev @MATTERmedia · Jun 27, 2017

Replying to @HackingDave and @hacks4pancakes

Instead just CREATE C:\Windows\perfc to stop it.

> **PT Security** @PTsecurity_UK · Jun 27, 2017
>
> #StopPetya We have found local "kill switch" for #Petya: create file "C:\Windows\perfc"

```
  q_privilege_flags = flags;
  dword_1001F104 = q_find_process();
  if ( GetModuleFileNameW(dll_hmodule, dll_path, 0x30Cu) )
    q_read_dll();
}

int __stdcall q_gen_windows_dll_path(LPWSTR pszDest)
{
  signed int res; // esi@1
  const WCHAR *file_name; // eax@1
  LPWSTR extension_ptr; // eax@2

  res = 0;
  file_name = PathFindFileNameW(dll_path);
  if ( PathCombineW(pszDest, L"C:\\Windows\\", file_name) )
  {
    extension_ptr = PathFindExtensionW(pszDest);
    if ( extension_ptr )
    {
      *extension_ptr = 0;
      res = 1;
    }
  }
  return res;
}
```

22,245 views | Jun 28, 2017, 11:03am

3 Things You Can Do To Stop 'NotPetya' Ransomware Wrecking Your PC

Thomas Brewster Forbes Staff

Cybersecurity

Associate editor at Forbes, covering cybercrime, privacy, security and surveillance.

1. **Trick** the malware into thinking it's **already on the computer**
   a. %WINDIR%perfc – **kill switch**
2. Check whether computer is **already infected**, look for **two** "**rundll32.exe**" files **running** in Windows Task Manager
   a. If found, power off PC and **reinstall windows**.
3. Employ sensible **digital hygiene**.
   a. Make sure your running **latest version** of your **Windows OS**
   b. Ensure Windows **firewall** is turned on
   c. Check **antivirus** is **up-to-date**
   d. Ensure all **third-party software** has been **patched**

- To protect against ransomware campaigns such as NotPetya, users and businesses alike must **update their operating system** software **regularly**, **don't click** on **suspicious attachments**, and **back up** their **critical data** on a **regular** basis.

Variants of EternalBlue

- Impact - "While there was no loss of life, it was equivalent of using a nuclear bomb to achieve a small tactical victory," Bossert says.

NotPetya

US: Russia's NotPetya the most destructive cyberattack ever

Both the US and the UK attributed last year's NotPetya attack to the Russian military. The Trump administration said the attack would be met with "international consequences."

Security

Cyber-insurance shock: Zurich refuses to foot NotPetya ransomware clean-up bill – and claims it's 'an act of war'

Snack company client disagrees, sues for $100m

Insurance Journal

Was It an Act of War? That's Merck Cyber Attack's $1.3 Billion Insurance Question.

NotPetya's impact on Merck that day—June 27, 2017—and for weeks afterward was devastating. Dellapena, a temporary employee, couldn't ...

Dec 3, 2019

Slate Magazine

Sandworm excerpt: How NotPetya hit American hospitals.

The malware known as NotPetya hit Ukraine on June 27, 2017, and quickly became the most devastating cyberattack in history. The virally ...

Nov 5, 2019

EE Times

Unsupported, Unpatched: New Windows Security Holes

Besides older malware like WannaCry and NotPetya, newer Windows vulnerabilities like BlueKeep and DejaBlue continue to be discovered in ...

14 hours ago

- ✓ Maersk
- ✓ Merck – Pharmaceutical giant
- ✓ TNT Express - FedEx's European subsidiary
- ✓ Saint-Gobian - French construction company
- ✓ Mondelez – Food producer
- ✓ Reckitt Benckiser – Manufacturing
- ✓ Rosneft – Russian oil company
- ✓ Chernobyl - Nuclear Power Plant
- ✓ Several Ukrainian Ministries
- ✓ WPP – British advertising company
- ✓ Etc…

The Cost of NotPetya

In 2017, the malware NotPetya spread from the servers of an unassuming Ukrainian software firm to some of the largest businesses worldwide, paralyzing their operations. Here's a list of the approximate damages reported by some of the worm's biggest victims.

$870,000,000

Pharmaceutical company Merck

$400,000,000

Delivery company FedEx (through European subsidiary TNT Express)

$384,000,000

French construction company Saint-Gobain

$300,000,000

Danish shipping company Maersk

$188,000,000

Snack company Mondelez (parent company of Nabisco and Cadbury)

$129,000,000

British manufacturer Reckitt Benckiser (owner of Lysol and Durex condoms)

$10 billion

Total damages from NotPetya, as estimated by the White House

Question & Answer

Variants of EternalBlue

Works Cited:

1 https://www.sentinelone.com/blog/eternalblue-nsa-developed-exploit-just-wont-die/
2 https://research.checkpoint.com/2017/eternalblue-everything-know/
3 https://techterms.com/definition/smb
4 https://www.govtech.com/security/How-Texas-Cities-Are-Handling-Recent-Ransomware-Attacks.html
5 https://www.npr.org/2019/08/20/752695554/23-texas-towns-hit-with-ransomware-attack-in-new-front-of-cyberassault
6 https://www.govtech.com/security/Lake-City-Fla-Authorizes-Nearly-500K-Ransomware-Payment.html
7 https://www.forbes.com/sites/thomasbrewster/2017/06/28/three-things-you-can-do-to-stop-notpetya-ransomware-wrecking-your-pc/#4280effe77b0
8 https://twitter.com/PTsecurity_UK/status/879779707075665922
9 https://www.tripwire.com/state-of-security/security-data-protection/cyber-security/notpetya-timeline-of-a-ransomworm/
10 https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/software/-eternal-blues-tool-tests-computers-against-nsas-eternalblue-exploit/
11 https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/app-finds-more-than-50-000-computers-vulnerable-to-eternalblue-exploit/
12 https://www.schneier.com/blog/archives/2008/04/reverseengineer.html
13 https://www.wired.com/story/notpetya-cyberattack-ukraine-russia-code-crashed-the-world/

The scary reality of the new cyberwarfare landscape is that we are highly susceptible to this risk and cannot defend our digital systems fast enough. We are faced with the reality of being only as secure as our weakest systems. Governments, hospitals, airports, water treatment plants and food manufacturers and distributors — you name it— are all at risk.

Appendix

Maersk
– Response / Recovery to NotPetya

"Maersk was not alone [in being hit by NotPetya] and anybody that thinks that Maersk was the single biggest example, is wrong. There were a lot of companies bigger than Maersk suffering even worse, but they were not as transparent as Maersk," Powell said.

Therefore, the first key lesson learned from NotPetya is that "transparency is everything," Powell explained. "Our clients at Maersk loved us for the fact that we told them, from day one, what was going on, and we included them throughout in what we were doing."

Another lesson learned was that "the world has changed," Powell continued. "From a company perspective, NotPetya told us that, unless you are a government organization or a very, very highly invested-in bank, you are not going to stop a state-sponsored weapon [such as NotPetya] if it is targeted at you. We were the collateral victim of a state-sponsored attack and look what it did, so if you are trying to build a company to stop 100% of state-sponsored weapons, forget it. If you adopt a strategy around that, you will fail."

What organizations must do, is adopt a two-part strategy. "First and foremost, you need a balance of proactive and reactive [capabilities]. You need to retain the ability to manage an incident because you will assume that it will occur." In an era when there are going to be a lot of state-sponsored weapons being used in cyber-attacks, you need to implement a reactive and proactive balance.

"The first thing we did was to make some fairly big decisions about how to manage this. Mearsk is an asset-centric business with an asset-centric crisis management approach," but that was not going to be effective in dealing with the global fallout of NotPetya, Banks explained. "I abandoned corporate crisis management and implemented a financial services crisis management model, because financial services normally only ever have global crises."

In the first one to three days of the outbreak of NotPetya, Maersk:

- Worked with Deloitte in cyber-forensics
- Decided to be as open as possible about the incident, both internally and externally
- Designed a new Windows build
- Strengthened as far as possible
- Retrieved an undamaged copy of the Active Directory

In the first four to nine days of the outbreak of NotPetya, Maersk:

- Built 2000 laptops
- Rebuilt the Active Directory
- Spoke to the individual responsible for creating the NotPetya malware

From nine days onwards following the outbreak of NotPetya, Maersk:

- Continued to work through the ever growing list of affected applications: in two weeks all global applications were restored and in four weeks all laptops were rebuilt