

Incident handler's journal

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| Date: 25/11/2025 | Entry: Journal Entry #1 |
| Description | This entry documents a ransomware incident at a healthcare clinic where phishing emails led to system-wide file encryption and business disruption. |
| Tool(s) used | SIEM logs, Email security gateway, Antivirus/malware scanner, Incident reporting system. |
| The 5 W's | <p>Capture the 5 W's of an incident.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who: An organized cybercriminal group known for targeting healthcare organizations launched the attack using phishing.• What: Employees received phishing emails with malicious attachments that deployed ransomware, encrypting critical files and displaying ransom notes.• When: The incident occurred on Tuesday morning at approximately 9:00 a.m.• Where: The incident occurred at a small U.S. healthcare clinic across multiple employee workstations and network systems.• Why: Employees unknowingly downloaded malicious attachments, which allowed attackers to deploy ransomware due to a lack of security awareness and insufficient email filtering. |
| Additional notes | This is a targeted attack on a vulnerable sector with weak email security and limited incident preparedness. Incident response procedures, backup strategies, and employee phishing awareness training should be regularly reviewed and updated as needed. It is unclear whether data backups were available or if law enforcement was contacted. |

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| Date: 26/11/2025 | Entry: Journal Entry #2 |
| Description | Investigated a suspicious file hash using VirusTotal and extracted related indicators of compromise (IoCs) categorized using the Pyramid of Pain model. |
| Tool(s) used | VirusTotal, MITRE ATT&CK database, OSINT threat intelligence sources |
| The 5 W's | <p>Capture the 5 W's of an incident.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who: Likely external threat actors using malware delivered through phishing and malicious attachments. • What: A password-protected spreadsheet executed a malicious payload, creating unauthorized executable files. VirusTotal confirmed the hash as malicious with multiple IoCs. • When: Activity timeline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 1:11 p.m. – Email received → 1:13 p.m. – File opened → 1:15 p.m. – Malicious files created → 1:20 p.m. – IDS alert triggered • Where: On an employee workstation connected to the organization's internal network, triggering alerts at the SOC. • Why: The Phishing email bypassed security controls, and a malicious attachment was executed due to a lack of user awareness and insufficient email filtering. |
| Additional notes | The file was flagged as malicious by multiple vendors and had a negative community score. Malware behavior included creating new processes, contacting a remote server, and using PowerShell to download additional payloads. IoCs should be blocked across endpoints, firewalls, and SIEM threat feeds. |

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| The 5 W's | Capture the 5 W's of an incident. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who caused the incident? • What happened? • When did the incident occur? • Where did the incident happen? • Why did the incident happen? |
| Additional notes | Include any additional thoughts, questions, or findings. |

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Need another journal entry template?

If you want to add more journal entries, please copy one of the tables above and paste it into the template to use for future entries.

Reflections/Notes: Record additional notes.