Day in Life of a Threat Intelligence Researcher

What the heck is threat intel anyways?

Still



whoami

Still Hsu / Azaka Sekai 安坂星海

Threat Intelligence Researcher @ TeamT5

Topic of interest

- .NET
- Windows
- Gaming & malware reverse engineering

Non-binary (they/them)



Story Time!





how did i get here tho



IT ALL BEGAN...

Here at the CTF club back in 2018!



ok not really



文組做資安?





國小

對電腦有興趣

亂看一堆工具書

- 電腦病毒技術分析與防範
- 奇怪的 Office 工具書

開始接觸多人電腦遊戲

• 不小心開始用英文(?



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國中/高中

YouTube 製片狂熱期

• 不小心學會了剪片跟音樂製作

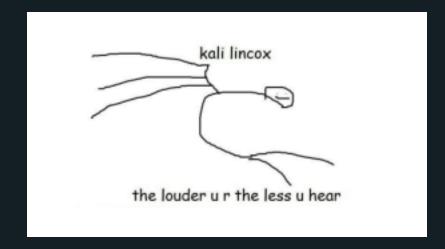
開打 TF2 架伺服器

• 不小心學了基礎 networking

看防毒檢測影片

• 開始亂玩惡意程式

屁孩時期









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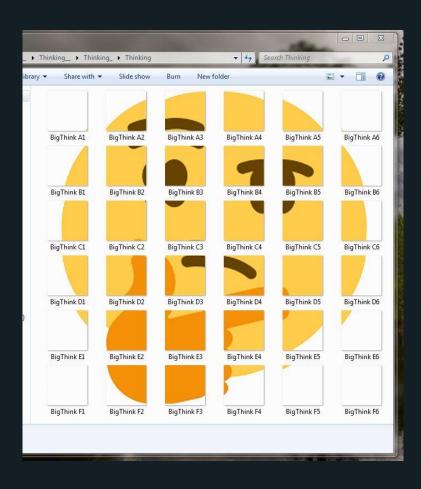
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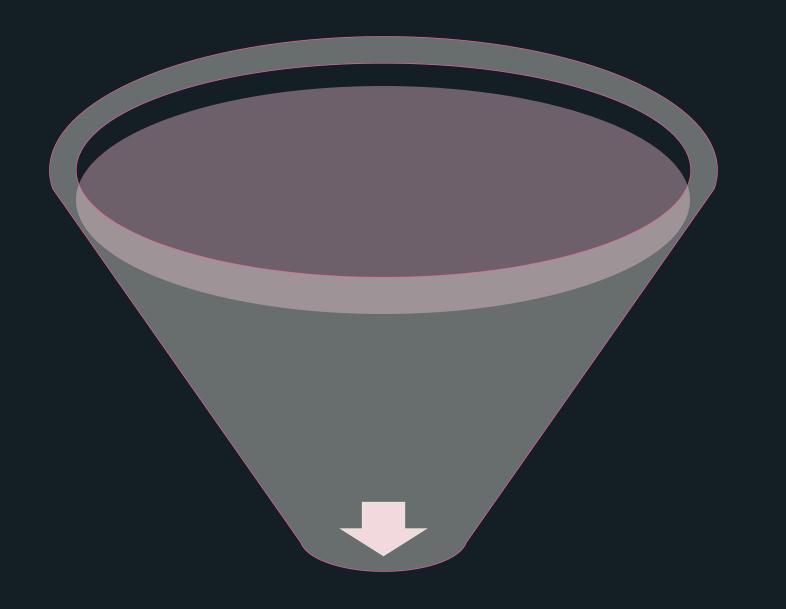
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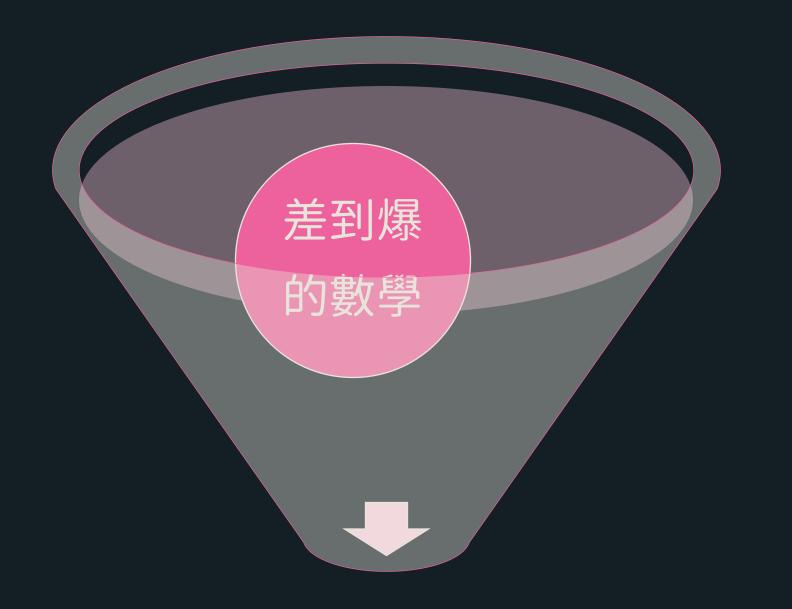


大學要念啥?

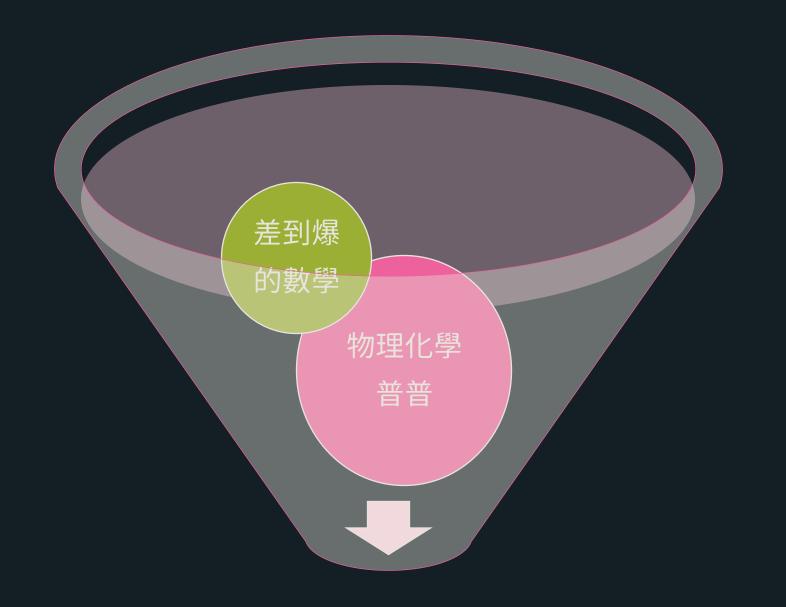




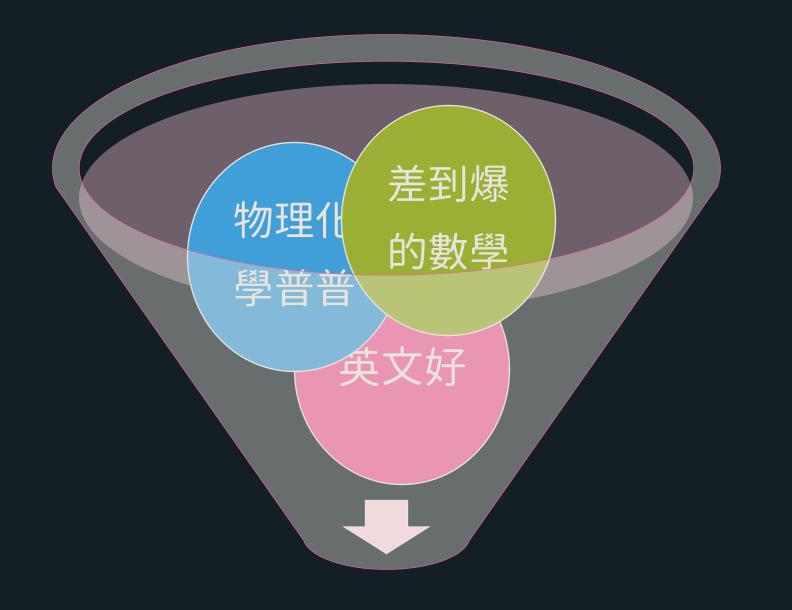




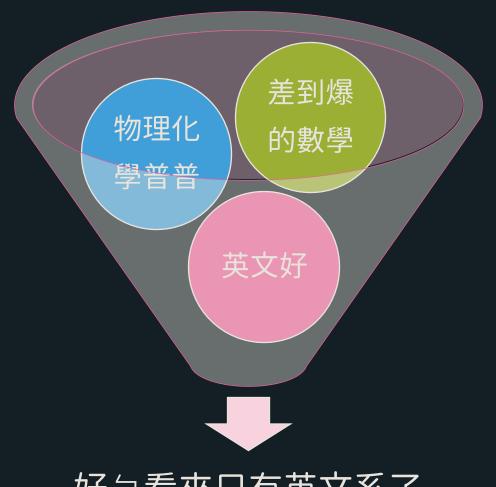












好与看來只有英文系了





然後就這樣惹





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大學 (2016~2020)

HITCON/各種研討會

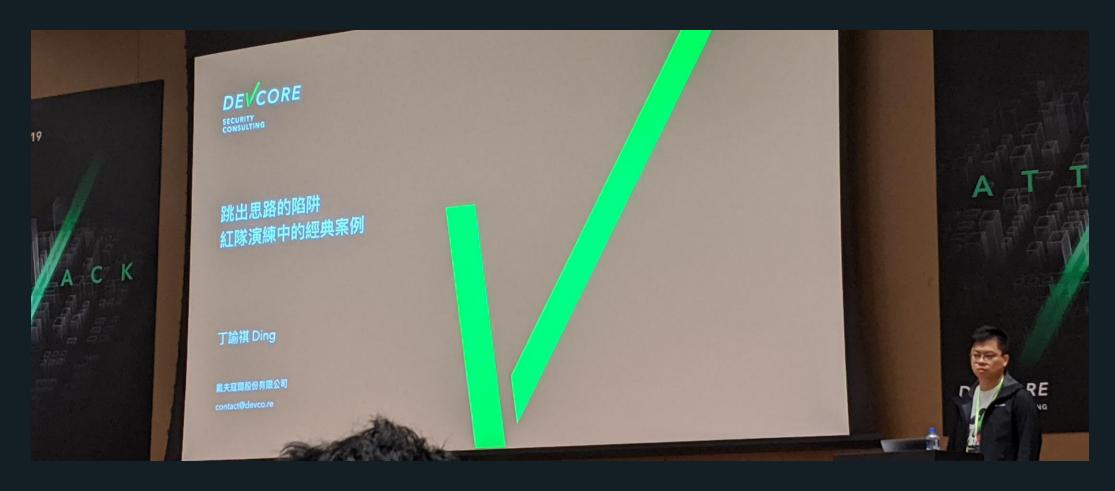
HITCON

HITCON 2018



HITCON 2019





DEVCORE Conf 2019





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CTF???

系上大量電腦管理工作

• 不小心學會了 AD 架構跟大量部署

因緣際會接觸了學校資安社

CTF/資安學界

MFCTF 2019



MT.Hack 隊,



參加 教育部資訊安全人才培育計畫 108 年度 資安初學者挑戰活動 MyFirstCTF 表現突飛猛進,榮獲

潛力獎

特頒此狀 , 以資獎勵 。

AIS3 2019



教育部資訊安全人才培育計畫

108年度新型態資安暑期課程

修業證明



108年7月29日至8月4日參加 教育部資訊安全人才培育計畫108年度 新型態資安暑期課程共計63小時,修習成績及格,特頒此證書。

CTF/資安學界

AIS3 2020



教育部資訊安全人才培育計畫 109年度新型態資安暑期課程

合格證明

君

109年7月27日至8月2日參加 教育部資訊安全人才培訓計劃109年度新型態資安暑期課程共計63小時,修息成績及格,特頒此證書。

臺灣好厲駭2020

教育部資訊安全人才培育計畫

結訓證書



於108年9月-109年8月參加教育部資訊安全人才培育計畫主辦之第四屆資安實務導師(mentor)制度~臺灣好厲駭的培訓。

特頒此證, 以茲證明

教育部資訊安全人才培育計畫推動辦公室

到處亂講(

逢甲黑客社2020

感謝狀

兹感謝 先生 於一百零九年八月十九日 擔任『CTF經驗分享』講師,教學 期間盡心盡力。

謹致感謝狀以表謝忱

逢甲大學黑客社鄭羽辰中華民國109年08月19日

中山資安社

<沒有證明>

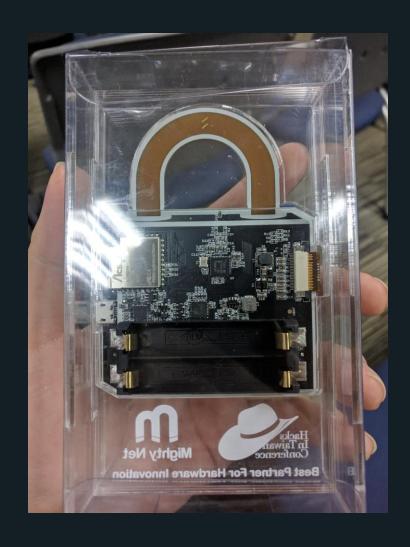
於是乎,大學畢業後找工作



然後就誤打誤撞進了T5



Back in HITCON 2018





Then I joined the CTF club

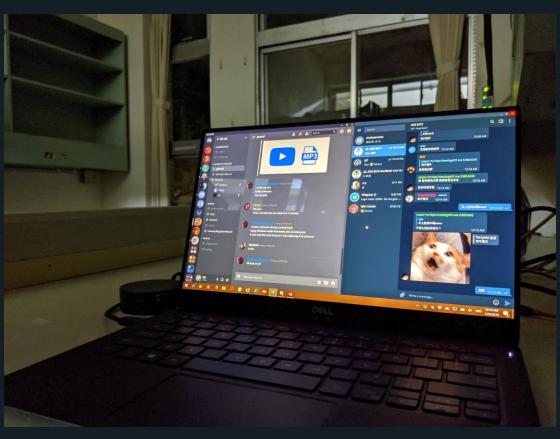


And a bunch of other things just kinda happened

HITCON 2019

AIS3 2019





And a bunch of other things just kinda happened

DEVCORE 2019



ZYXEL 2020



Quick Q&A



Threat Intelligence



Threat Intelligence

「知彼知己者,百戰不殆。」

《孫子. 謀攻》



Definition



Shed light on the adversaries

Understand WHO
 exactly you're dealing
 with

(CrowdStrike, 2021)

Definition



Shed light on the adversaries

Understand WHO exactly you're dealing with

Understand the motives and TTPs

- Why?
- How?
 - Tactics
 - Techniques
 - Procedures

(CrowdStrike, 2021)

Definition



Shed light on the adversaries

Understand WHO exactly you're dealing with

Understand the motives and TTPs

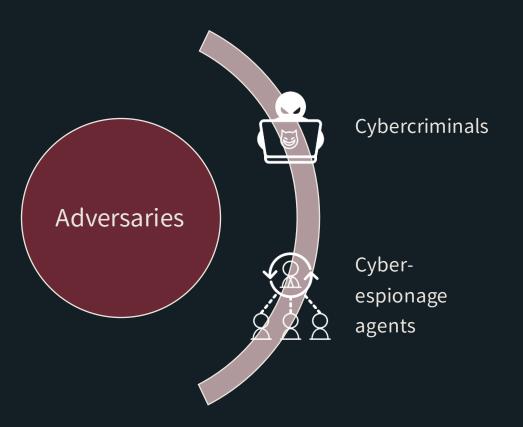
- Why?
- How?
 - Tactics
 - Techniques
- Procedures

Help mitigate risks and boost efficiency

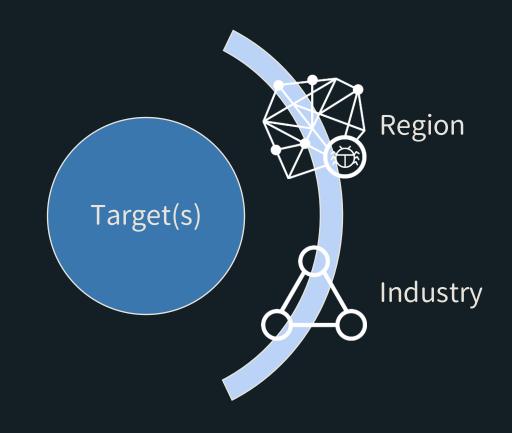
(CrowdStrike, 2021)

Cyber Attacks

Type of adversaries



Information about the target(s)



Learning from a backdoor attack: the takeaways of Operation Shadow Hammer

In January 2019, it was discovered that users of Asus Live Update, a preinstalled utility that delivers software updates to Asus computers, were <u>impacted by a backdoor attack</u>. In March 2019, <u>Motherboard</u> reported on Operation ShadowHammer, a cyberattack that targeted users of Asus Live Update, a preinstalled utility that delivered software updates to Asus computers.

More than 57,000 users installed the infected version of the utility on their machines, but it's estimated that the infected software had been distributed to more than 1 million people.

What happened?

Operation ShadowHammer was a classic backdoor attack: It breached victims' networks and installed programs to enter and exit the network at will. It's also an example of a supply chain attack, which targets the less secure elements of a company's supply chain network, such as software vendors and third-party suppliers.

To facilitate the attack, hackers altered an old version of the Asus Live Update Utility software and distributed their modified version to Asus computers around the world. The software looked legitimate: It was signed with legitimate Asustek certificates, it was stored on official servers, and it was even the same file size. Once planted, the backdoor program gave the attackers control of the target computers through remote servers, letting them install additional malware.

<u>Wired</u> traces the attacks back to a Chinese hacker group known as Barium. Barium is known to deploy advanced persistent threat attacks, which often remain undetected well after the initial infection.



Over several years, Kaspersky researchers have witnessed how progressively financial malware families originating from Latin America have expanded their operations outside the region. Those families renew their toolsets and employ various new, innovative techniques, which have enabled them to reach globally. The attacks scope is broad, covering PoS, ATMs, Android devices, and Windows-based machines. Subsequently, we see how local LatAm cybercriminal groups target Financial Institutions in Europe, Asia, and North America today.

To discover more, join our webinar with **Dmitry Bestuzhev**, Head of Kaspersky's Latin America Global Research and Analysis Team (GReAT), and **Fabio Assolini**, Senior Security Researcher with GReAT, for an analysis of the Latin American banking malware landscape. They will be joined by colleague **Oleg Gorobets**, security evangelist and Senior Product Marketing Manager at Kaspersky, to share:

- 1 The techniques and tactics most frequently used by cybercriminals.
- 2 The most widespread financially motivated malware families targeting financial institutions.
- 3 Insights on how to detect and contain such threats and how Kaspersky's offering can help companies prevail in this fight.

Have you got any questions? We will serve a Q&A session at the end.

Collection

Data Information Intelligence

Collection

External Source

Community

Social Media

Threat Data Feed

Open-source Intelligence

Deep Web

Dark Web

Internal Source

SIEM / Sensors

Incident Response Network Visibility

Endpoint Visibility

Malware Analysis

Research Lab

Diamond Model

- Reconnaissance techniques
- Delivery methods
- Attacking exploit / vulnerability
- Remote control malware / backdoor
- Lateral movement skills and tools
- Data stealing techniques





- Purpose
- Target countries / regions
- Target sectors
- Target individuals
- Target data



- Where are they from?
- Who are they?
- Who is sponsoring them?
- Why do they attack?
- Campaign timeline and plan



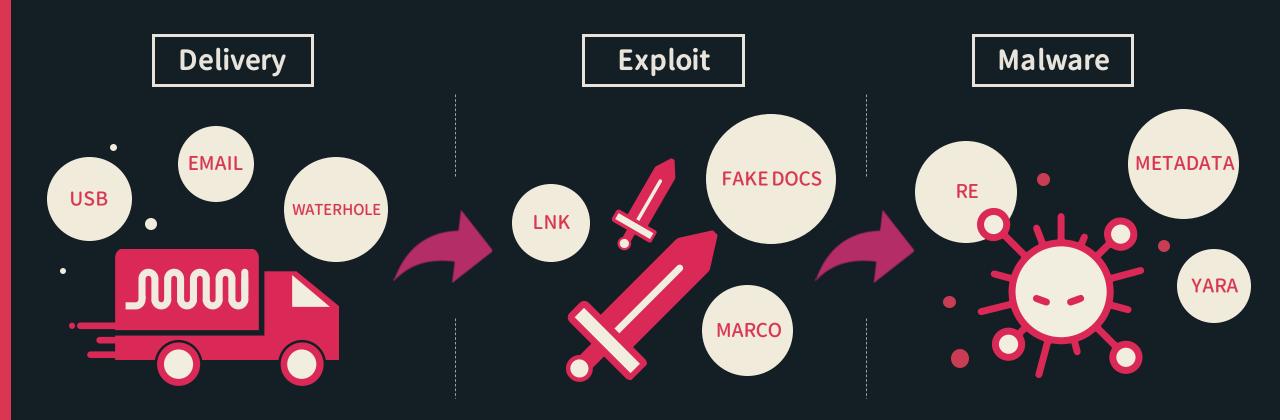
INFRASTRUCTURE

- C2 Domain names
- Location of C2 servers
- Type of C2 servers
- Compromised machines
- C2 management mechanism and structure
- Path of Control and data leakage





Capability Analysis



How this first unfolded

Initial entry was using a zero day vulnerability in Kaseya VSA. This was CVE-2021–30116 (details have not been entered into CVE database, however it has been allocated for this). More CVEs may be issued.

So even if the latest version is used, at time of attack, attackers could remotely execute commands on the VSA appliance. Technical details of how to exploit the vulnerability are not being provided until the patch is available.

It is not a great sign that a ransomware gang has a zero day in product used widely by Managed Service Providers, and shows the continued escalation of ransomware gangs — which I've written about before.

(Beaumont, 2021)

Analysis

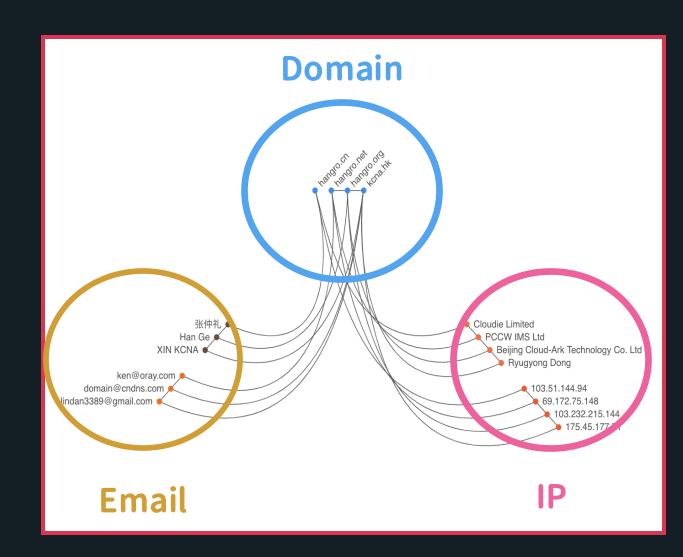
Several documents identified from May to June 2021 by Twitter users were identified as being linked to the Lazarus group. Documents observed in previous campaigns lured victims with job opportunities for Boeing and BAE systems. These new documents include:

- Rheinmetall_job_requirements.doc: identified by ESET Research.
- General_motors_cars.doc: identified by Twitter user @1nternaut.
- Airbus_job_opportunity_confidential.doc: identified by 36oCoreSec.

The documents attempted to impersonate new defense contractors and engineering companies like Airbus, General Motors (GM), and Rheinmetall. All of these documents contain macro malware, which has been developed and improved during the course of this campaign and from one target to another. The core techniques for the three malicious documents are the same, but the attackers attempted to reduce the potential detections and increase the faculties of the macros.

Infrastructure Analysis

- Domain
 - ♦ WHOIS -> Email
 - ◆ Passive DNS -> IP
- ◆ IP
 - ◆ Passive DNS -> Domain
- ◆ Email
 - ◆ Reverse WHOIS > Domain



There are 7 samples in our repository that share the IP, 101.36.125.203, and one other sample that shares the domain, vitedannews.com. All of these samples contain the xxxxxxxx config value check making them the Mustang Panda variant. This RedDelta variant (ec1c29cb6674ffce989576c51413a6f9cbb4a8a41cbd30ec628182485a937160) makes the second instance where the IP/Domains overlap with the "original" Mustang Panda PlugX variant. More about the first instance can be found on ThreatConnect's blog. This second infrastructure overlap further strenghtens our theory of them being the same group or at least sharing personnel/infrastructure.

(xorhex, 2021)

Adversary Analysis

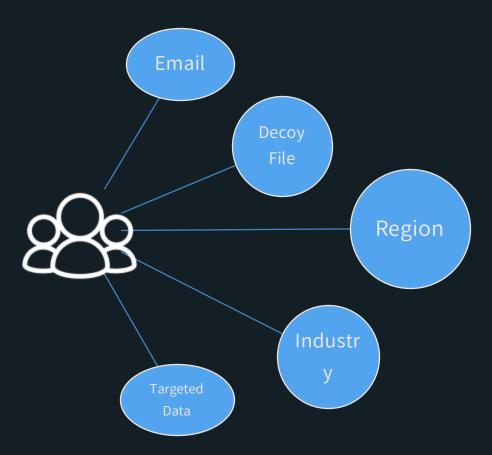




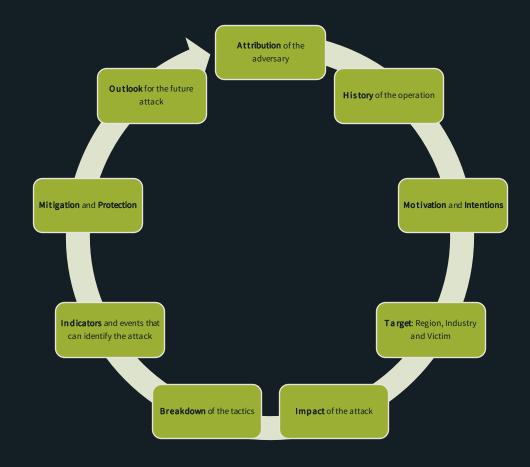
- Actors
 - Language
 - ◆ Tools
 - Infrastructure
 - Time zone
- Motivations, intentions
- Cooperation relationship between different groups
 - Shared Tool
 - Shared C2

Target Analysis

Victim Analysis



Threat Analysis Report



Dissemination & Integration



Strategic Planning



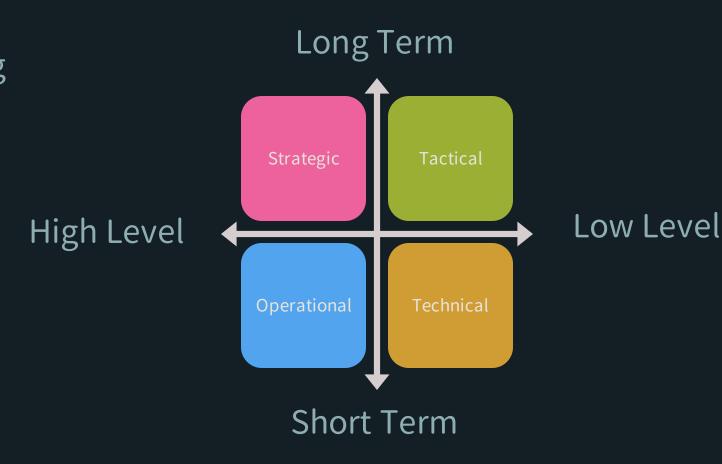
ISCT / CERT Community



IT Staff CSIRT Team



Firewall SIEM Triage



Adversaries Tracked @ T5



GouShe





Targets

- IN, TW, PH, TH, VN
- Media, Education, Government, IT

Aliases

Tropic Trooper, Pirate Panda, APT23, KeyBoy

Description

- GouShe first drew the world's attention with the name Keyboy in 2013, but it became more widely known as Tropic trooper in 2015.
- The group shows great interest in countries like Taiwan, Vietnam, Philippines, and Australia.
- GouShe's actors have long been targeting government and military units.

GuDiao



- Targets
 - ♦ HK, MY, PH, VN
 - Dissident, Military, Government
- Description
 - Related to other Chinese APT groups
 - The group mainly aims at governments and military units in Southeast Asia, such as Vietnam and Malaysia.
 - In recent years, it has developed its own malwares and adopted the RoyalRoad exploit, which is popular among Chinese APT groups.



Polaris





Targets

- JP, MN, MM, PH, TH, KR, VN
- Dissident, Government, Media, Telecommunications

Aliases

Mustang Panda, HoneyMyte

Description

- The Polaris group has long been a threat to Asian countries, using spear-phishing email to lure their victims.
- The group was found attacking government departments, media, and journalism-related industries. The group shares common features with other APT groups.

HUAPI



Targets

- HK, JP, TW, US, KR
- Media, Military, Dissidents, Telecommunication, Think tank, IT, Political Party, Heavy Industry, Education & Research Institutions

Aliases

◆ PLEAD, BlackTech, 黑凤梨, Palmerworm

Description

- The HUAPI actors have focused on Taiwan, including entities affiliated with Taiwan in other countries, for the first ten years.
- However, they have started to expand their scope to include Japan since 2017.
- These actors have the ability to create custom packers to avoid antivirus detection.



CloudDragon





- Targets
 - ◆ JP, US, KR
- Aliases
 - Kimsuky, Thallium
- Description
 - Two groups were created, named CloudDragon and KimDragon, as we observed different TTP in the recent years.
 - Main target is South Korea.
 - Recently began to attack United States and Japan as well.

Andariel



- Targets
 - → DE, IN, JP, KR
- Description
 - Andariel is a state-sponsored North Korean APT which has been active since at least 2013.
 - According to U.S. Army report, the group is under North Korea's Cyber Warfare Guidance Unit (commonly known as Bureau 121).
 - Andariel has sniped at critical infrastructure in Asian countries with its propriety malwares.



Getting Started on Threat Intelligence Research



Threat/Intel Hunting Resources



- Twitter
 - #APT
 - @vxunderground
 - ◆ @namazso
 - ◆@Unit42_Intel
 - @ShadowChasing1
 - ♠@h2jazi

- Curated Resources
 - https://start.me/p/rxRbpo/ti
- ◆ TLP White Resources
 - Abuse.ch
 - Malpedia
 - vx-underground

Threat/Intel Hunting Resources



- Yara rules
 - ◆ Yara-Rules/rules @ GitHub
 - ◆ InQuest/awesome-yara @ GitHub
 - ◆ Neo23x0/signature-base @ GitHub
- CAPA
 - ◆ Mandiant/CAPA @ GitHub

- Manual analysis
 - Behavior analysis via sandboxes
 - e.g., Triage, CAPEv2, etc.
 - Static analysis via disassemblers
 - e.g., IDA Pro, Ghidra, etc.
 - Dynamic analysis via contained environments
 - e.g., virtual machines, physical barebones

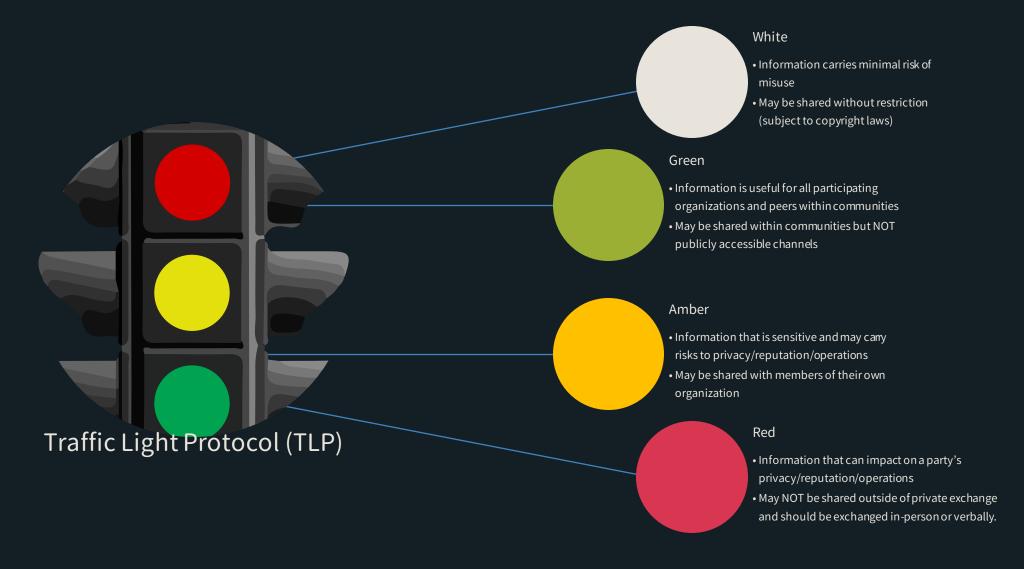
Understanding TLP



► [TLP:WHITE] - • • rule - { author = "Slavo Greminger, SWITCH-CERT" malpedia_version = "20180408" malpedia_license = "CC BY-NC-SA 4.0" malpedia sharing = "TLP:GREEN" A. Branch B. A. C. Branch and the first term of the control of the companion of the control of APPENDING TO THE STATE OF THE S the first of the control of the cont والمسترك A CAR BERTH APPENDED TO A CONTRACTOR OF A Policy and a property grande i despera de la companya de 建二甲基二甲基磺胺 医二碘磺胺苯基

What is TLP?

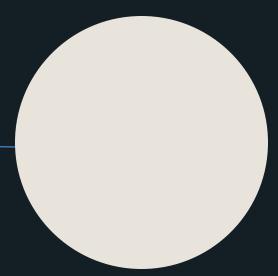




White







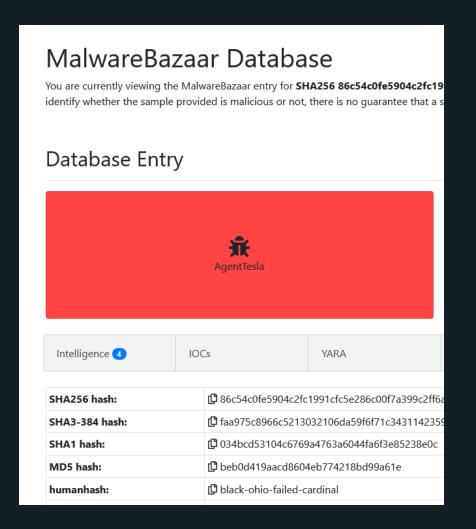
White

- Information carries minimal risk of misuse
- May be shared without restriction (subject to copyright laws)

Examples of TLP:White



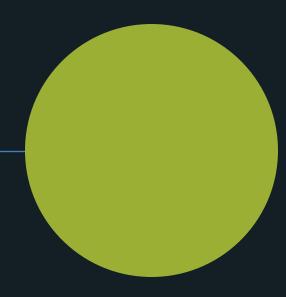
- Malware Bazaar (bazaar.abuse.ch)
- #APT
- @vxunderground
- Malpedia (public)



What is TLP?





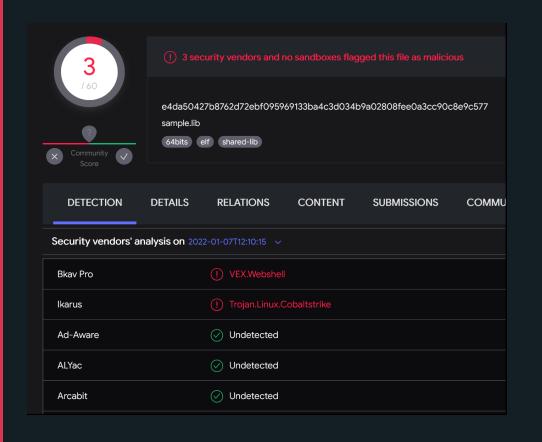


Green

- Information is useful for all participating organizations and peers within communities
- May be shared within communities but NOT publicly accessible channels

Examples of TLP:Green



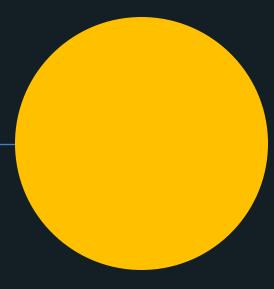


- Samples on public sandbox
 - VirusTotal (Enterprise API)
 - Hybrid-analysis (manual approval)
 - CAPE (manual approval)
- Intelligence from private community
 - Malpedia (manual approval)

What is TLP?







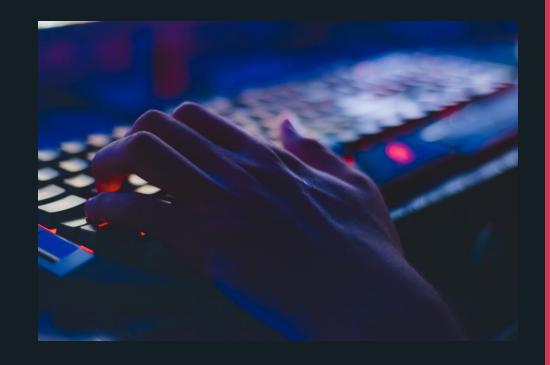
Amber

- Information that is sensitive and may carry risks to privacy/reputation/operations
- May be shared with members of their own organization

Examples of TLP:Amber



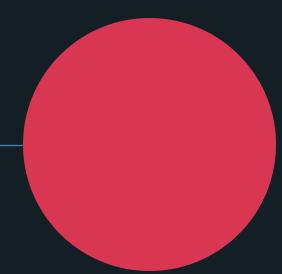
- Samples passed from private sources
 - Friends
 - Fellow researchers
 - Colleagues
- Customer data



What is TLP?







Red

- Information that can impact on a party's privacy/reputation/operations
- May NOT be shared outside of private exchange and should be exchanged in-person or verbally.

Writing a CTI Report



Standard Operating Procedures



Intel hunting

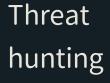
 Stay ahead of cyberthreat intel

Sample analysis

- Analyze behavior and if signatures exist
- e.g., yara rules, CAPA

Report

For future comparisons/references



- Collect valuable samples
- e.g., unseen C2 stations, zero-day, new backdoors

Identifying relations

 Compare with existing or known reports and identify whether a connection exists

Content of a Report



How did the incident occur?

- Delivery method(s)
- Phishing method(s)/theme(s)
- Exploitation method(s)

Content of a Report



How did the incident occur?

- Delivery method(s)
- Phishing method(s)/theme(s)
- Exploitation method(s)

What did it cause?

- Summary of the malicious behaviors
- IOC (Indicator of Compromise)

Content of a Report



How did the incident occur?

- Delivery method(s)
- Phishing method(s)/theme(s)
- Exploitation method(s)

What did it cause?

- Summary of the malicious behaviors
- IOC (Indicator of Compromise)

Who did it?

- Source infrastructure analysis
- Piece everything together with existing reports

How did the incident occur?







Spear-phishing email



Watering hole attack



Supply chain attack



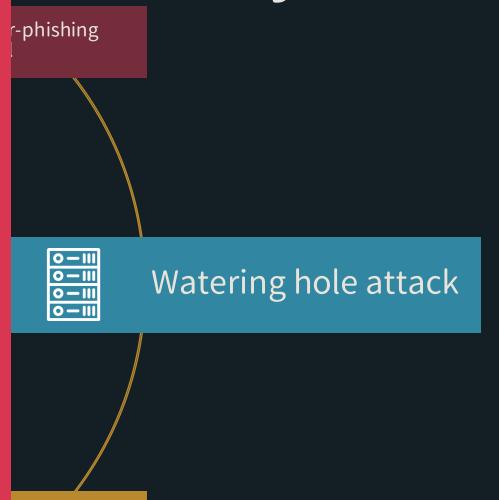


ring hole

Spear-phishing email

- Targeted attack
 - Typically used against high-profile individuals or company head
 - e.g., CEO, head of a division, activists
- Social engineering
 - Sensitive subject matter
 - e.g., something that involves sense of urgency
- Disguised as legitimate corporate email
 - Potentially contains malicious attachments or links

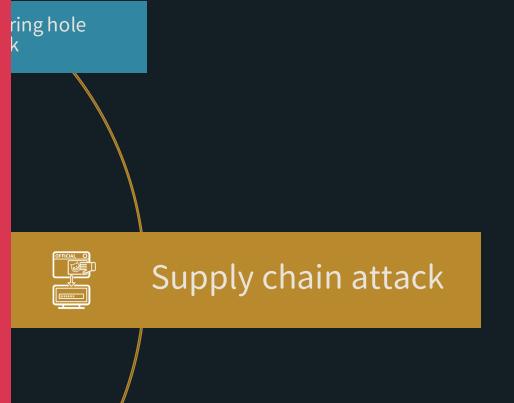




ly chain attack

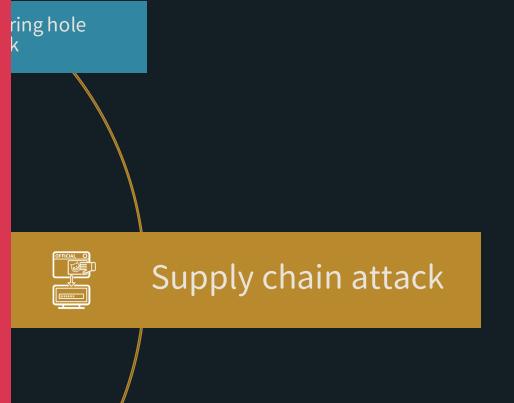
- Compromise sites that victim frequents
- Drive-by via malvertisements or domain redirection
- Example
 - Holy Water campaign in 2020
 - Targeted religious and charity websites





- Compromise components from supply chains
 - e.g., software update hosts
- Easily wide-spread as these software components may be mass distributed (i.e., from part of a supply chain)
- Example
 - ASUS ShadowHammer in 2019





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- Example
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What exactly happened?



Malware Analysis





Containerized environment

- Preferably offline
- Otherwise, connect to a VPN/TOR at host-level

Malware Analysis



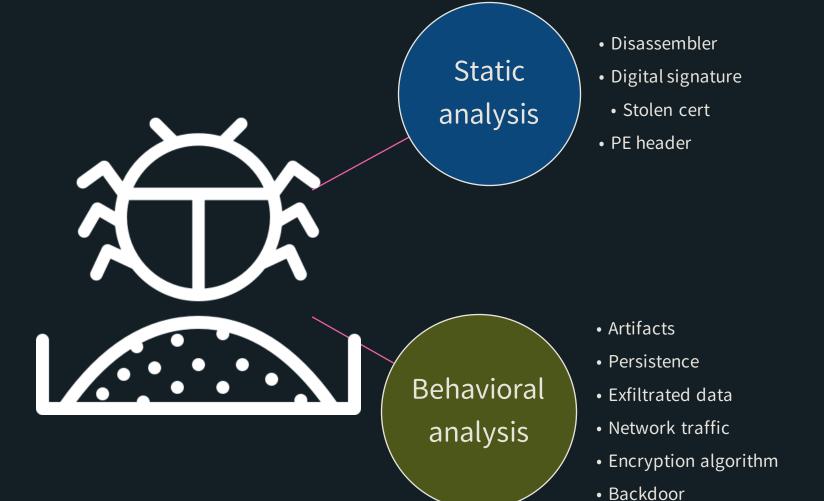


Static analysis

- Disassembler
- Digital signature
 - Stolen cert
- PE header

Malware Analysis





Who did it?



Infrastructure Analysis



overtaken by threat

actor



Virtual Private Server (VPS)



- Rented or bought by the threat actor
- Usually assigned a fixed and unique IP
- Threat actor has complete control over the server
 - Open certain ports or services for backdoor connection
 - Connect via SSH/RDP

Web Hosting



- Free/paid
- Two or more users may share the same machine
 - More than one domain may resolve to the same IP address or set of addresses
 - Threat actors could only access the frontend
 - Implemented alongside simple backdoors or only used to serve malicious files

Compromised Server



- Unauthorized access via…
 - Web application vulnerabilities
 - Software vulnerabilities
 - Compromised credentials
- Access level highly depends on the method of intrusion
- Backdoors are generally wellhidden to avoid raising suspicion

Compare Findings



- Collect OSINT resources
 - Other analysists' view or thoughts
 - Twitter, Medium, blogs, etc.
 - Existing reports on the sample published by another security firm or researcher
 - FireEye, Kaspersky, CrowdStrike, Malwarebytes, etc.
- Personal or internal documents
 - Look for past records in the archive, if any
 - Cross-compare C2 used, behaviors exhibited, peculiar strings, etc.



工商時間



TeamT5 - 世界級的專業資安團隊

台灣自主研發團隊



資安顧問服務

Threat Intelligence

Incident Response

Consulting Service

網路威脅情資追蹤研究

資安事件處理與調查

綜合資安諮詢顧問





10年以上網路威脅研究經驗

◆ 於Black Hat、CODE BLUE等國際頂尖研討會發表多篇研究成果

◆ 實驗室多位成員參與DEF CON CTF等國際比賽獲獎無數





擅長亞太區網路間諜防護,服務客戶範圍遍及全球

◆ 台灣:政府單位、金融業、科技業、顧問業、各大SOC

日本:電信集團、電機製造商、綜合商社、政府單位

▶ 美國、歐洲、韓國:結盟知名資安大廠,服務金融業客戶















TeamT5 高雄辦公室



公司福利



電玩大賽 吃喝玩樂 國內外員工旅遊 部門聚餐





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PS4、Switch、 按摩椅、飛鏢機 遊戲空間應有盡有

遊戲空間

各種獎金

社團多元

績效、年終 生日、佳節 各種\$\$\$\$



我也想加入!



We Want You



Vulnerability Researcher

- ◆ 熱愛產品安全研究,熟悉韌體分析相關程序及細節
- ◆ 熟悉 IDA、Ghidra、GDB 等逆向分析及動態分析工具

Cyber Threat Intelligence Researcher

- ◆具備 Python, C 等程式語言撰寫能力
- ◆熟悉 IDA、x64dbg 等逆向分析及動態分析工具,有 YARA rule 撰寫經驗者佳

Cyber Threat Intelligence Analyst

- ◆ 非資工科系背景,關心國際政治局勢變化
- ◆具備英文報告撰寫能力、批判性思考、邏輯分析能力

THANK YOU!



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Persistent Cyber Threat Hunters

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