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Reverse Engineering of msrll.exe

GIAC Reverse Engineering
Malware (GREM)
Practical Assignment
Version 1.0

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Abstract:

Behavioral analysis and code analysis are used to learn about the capabilities of the malware specimen msrll.exe. The specimen is using AsPack compression and MD5 passwords to make analysis harder.

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Introduction

This is the Practical Assignment for GIAC Reverse Engineering Malware. I thank Lenny Zeltser for an informative course.

Laboratory Setup

This section describes the laboratory setup used in this assignment.

Hardware

My host computer for the laboratory setup is an Intel Pentium IV 3GHZ with 1GB RAM running Windows XP SP2. Two virtual machines were set up with VmWare, one Red Hat Linux 9.0 and one Windows XP SP2.

Networking

For the networking part of the laboratory setup, I follow the recommendations from the course material and use VmWare host-only networking. This provides isolation; communication is only possible between virtual machines (VM) and host, virtual machines cannot reach machines not on the laboratory network. The network infrastructure is illustrated in Figure 1.

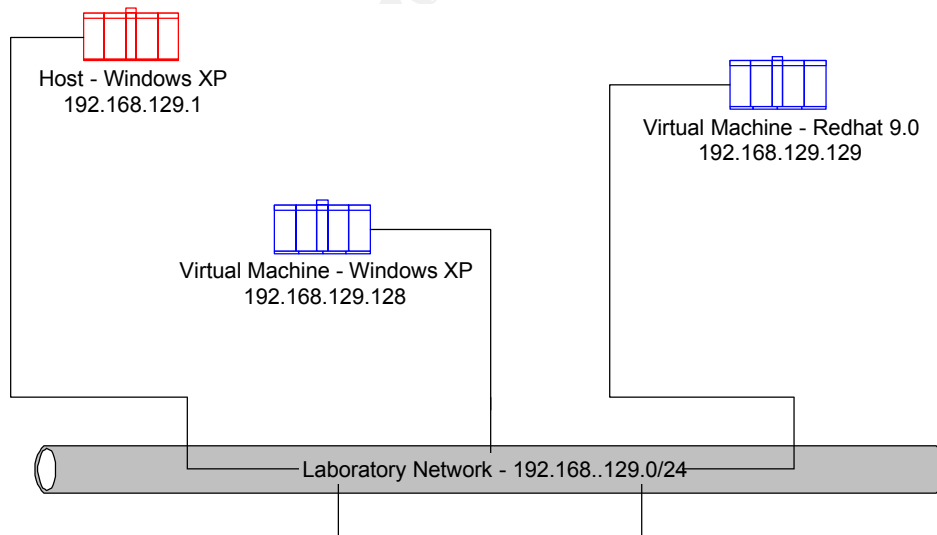


Figure 1 - Network infrastructure

The DHCP server in VmWare provides IP-addresses for the virtual machines.

Software resources

The following software is used in the analysis:

Name	Description	How/Where used
WinZip	Does File Extraction.	Extracting of malware.
NetCat	Network Swiss Army Knife.	Connecting to backdoor of malware and faking services for the malware to connect to.
VmWare	Emulator for Intel hardware. Makes it possible to run many virtual computers simultaneously on one workstation.	Running multiple machines in the lab and for enforcing system isolation.
MD5sum	Checksum application.	Creating checksum of malware specimen.
FileMon	Logs access to files.	Finding files accessed by the malware specimen.
RegMon	Logs access to registry.	Finding registry keys accessed by the malware specimen.
TDIMon	Logs network connections.	Finding network connections opened by the malware specimen.
RegShot	Snapshots file system and registry.	Finding differences in file system and registry before/after running the malware specimen.
BinText	Finds strings embedded in a binary file.	Finding strings in the malware specimen.
IDA Pro	Interactive Disassembler	Disassembly and debugging of the malware specimen.
PEInfo	PE file info	Finding type of file, size, OS etc of the malware specimen.
AsPackDie	Extracts executables packed with AsPack	Uncompressing the malware specimen.
Snort	Packet sniffer	Packet sniffing
ircd	Internet Relay Chat Server	Analyzing network connections to port 6667 from the malware specimen.
Process Explorer	Shows Process Detail	Getting summary of process resources.
passwd	Sets Linux MD5 password	Making MD5 password

Properties of the Malware Specimen

Using the shared folders of Vmware (Read-Only), I transfer the malware specimen (msrll.zip) to the Windows VM. On the VM, the specimen is unpacked to C:\malware\msrll.exe.

Type of file and size

To find the file type of msrll.exe, I open it in PEInfo and IDA Pro. As shown in Figure 2 the file is an executable file of size 41984 bytes. As shown in Figure 3, the message from IDA Pro at startup indicates that the executable is packed/compressed. This means that it will be harder to analyze, because it needs to be unpacked before Code Analysis can take place.

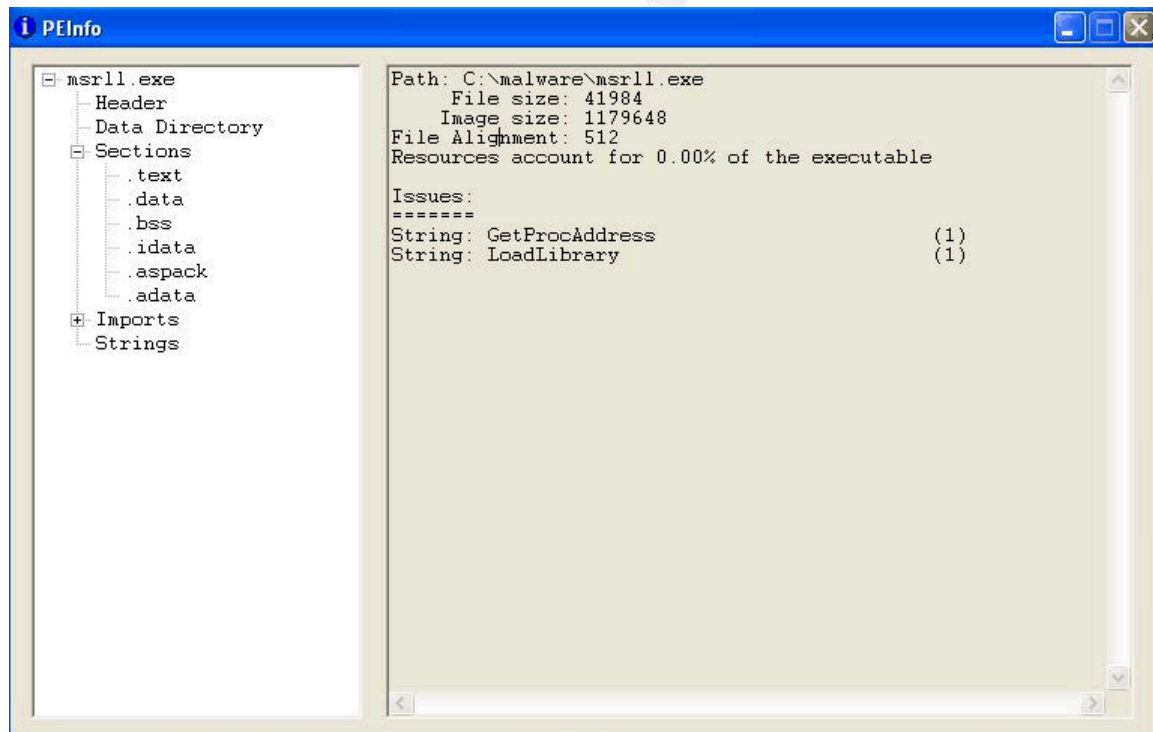


Figure 2 – PEInfo

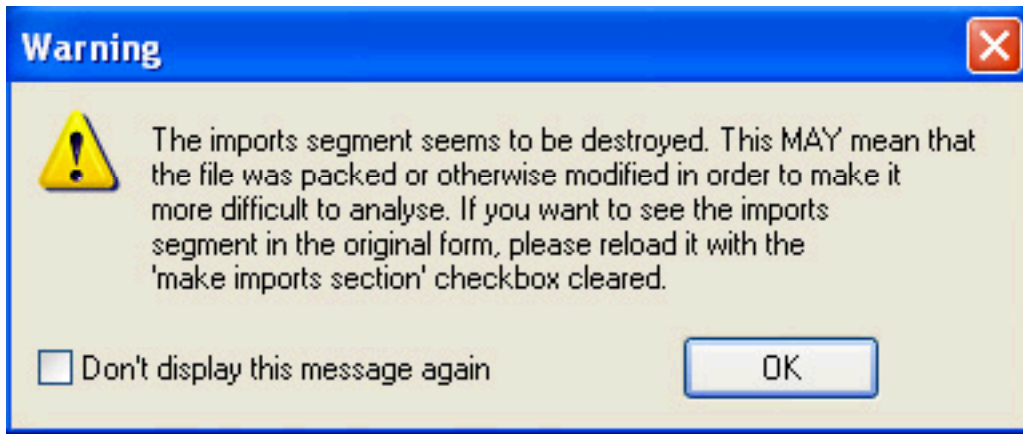


Figure 3 - IDA Pro

MD5 hash

To make an md5 hash I use the application md5sum. As shown in Figure 4 the file has the checksum 84acfe96a98590813413122c12c11aaa.

```
C:\malware>md5sum msr11.exe
84acfe96a98590813413122c12c11aaa *msr11.exe
C:\malware>
```

Figure 4 - md5sum

Operating systems

As shown in Figure 5, the OperatingSystemVersion field in the PE-header of the executable is set to 4.00, which corresponds to Windows NT 4.0. That means that the executable will run on Windows versions newer than or equal to Windows NT 4.0. The file is a Win32 executable.

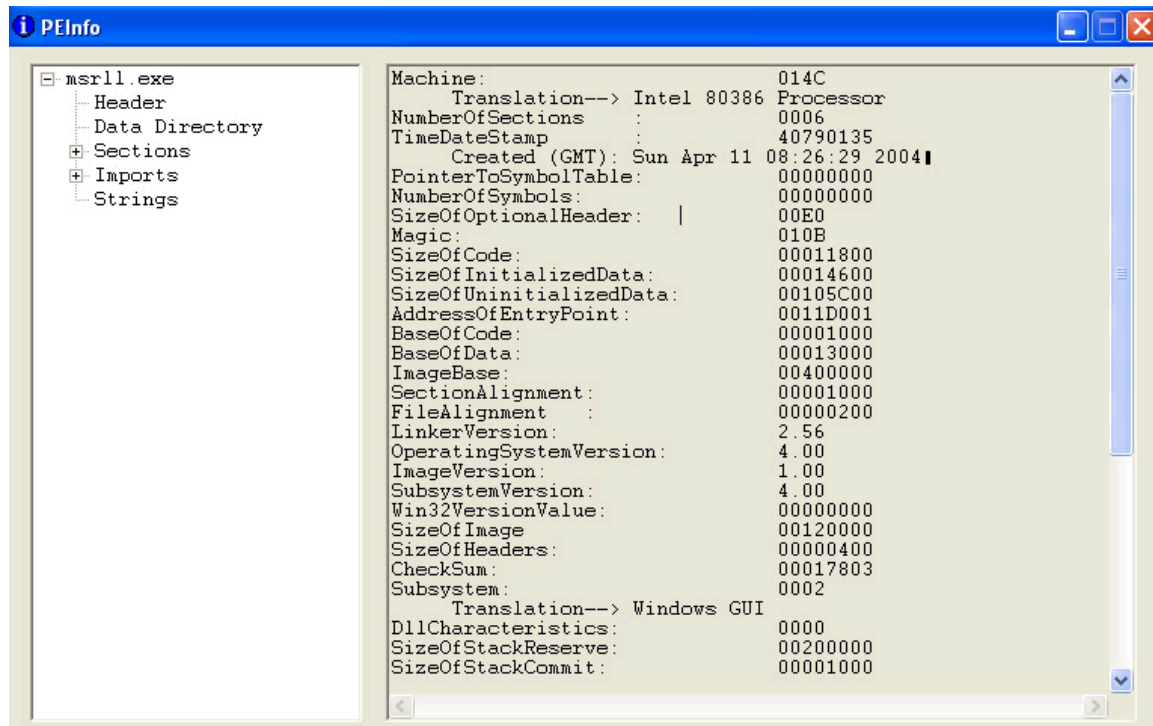


Figure 5 - Operating System version from PEInfo

Embedded strings

I use BinText to extract strings embedded into the malware specimen. This is shown in Figure 6. The strings give no info about the executable since it is compressed. An exception is the PE section names, but those can also be found with PEInfo.

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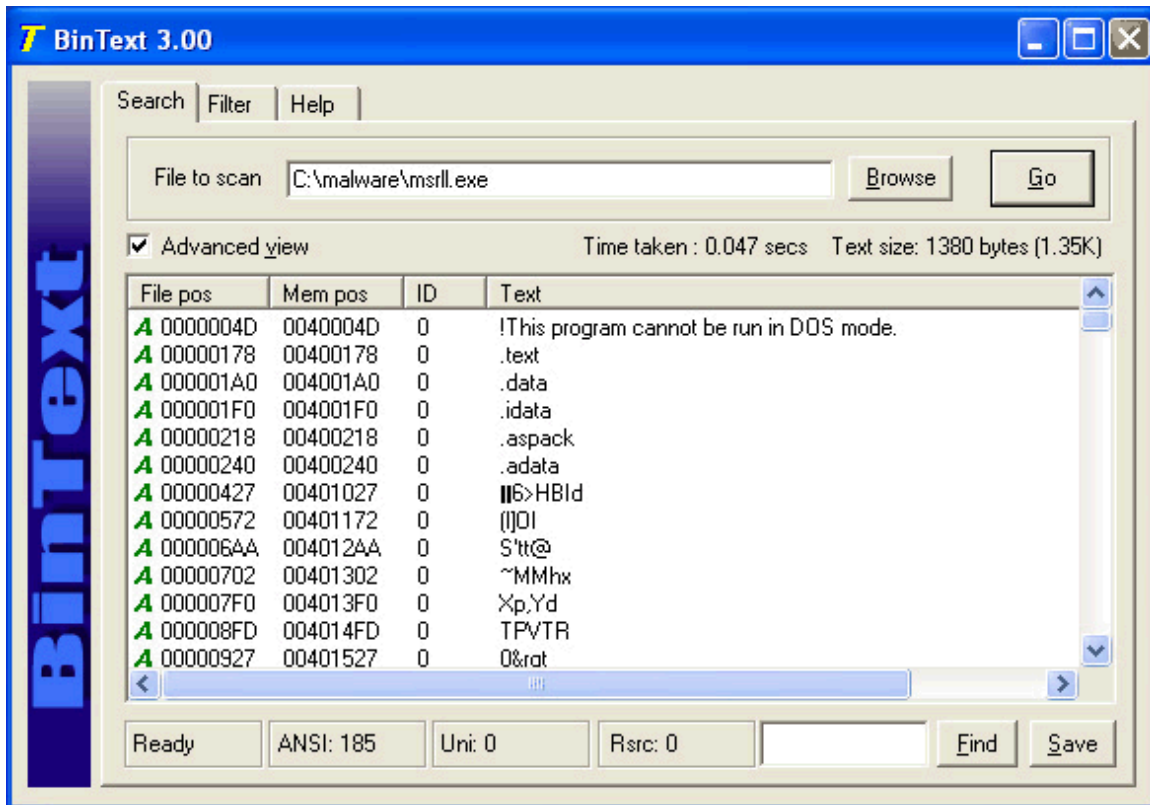


Figure 6 - BinText

Behavioral Analysis

I begin the behavioral analysis with starting monitoring tools:

- I start RegMon, FileMon and TDIMon
- I take a snapshot of the system with RegShot

I then launch msrll.exe and let it run for about 30 seconds. Afterwards I kill it with the task manager. Finally I pause the monitoring tools.

Findings

I notice the following events after disregarding changes to files and registry keys that are not related to the malware specimen:

The following files are added:

C:\WINDOWS\system32\mfj\jtram.conf
C:\WINDOWS\system32\mfj\msrll.exe

The following files are deleted:

C:\malware\msrll.exe

The following registry keys are added:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\mfm
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\mfm\Security

The following registry values are added:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\ControlSet001\Services\mfm\Security\Security: 01
 00 14 80 90 00 00 00 9C 00 00 00 14 00 00 00 30 00 00 00 02 00 1C 00 01 00 00 00 02
 80 14 00 FF 01 0F 00 01 01 00 00 00 00 00 01 00 00 00 00 02 00 60 00 04 00 00 00 00
 00 14 00 FD 01 02 00 01 01 00 00 00 00 00 05 12 00 00 00 00 00 18 00 FF 01 0F 00 01
 02 00 00 00 00 00 05 20 00 00 00 20 02 00 00 00 00 14 00 8D 01 02 00 01 01 00 00 00
 00 00 05 0B 00 00 00 00 00 18 00 FD 01 02 00 01 02 00 00 00 00 00 05 20 00 00 00 23
 02 00 00 01 01 00 00 00 00 00 05 12 00 00 00 01 01 00 00 00 00 00 05 12 00 00 00
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\ControlSet001\Services\mfm\Type: 0x00000120
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\ControlSet001\Services\mfm\Start: 0x00000002
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\ControlSet001\Services\mfm>ErrorControl:
 0x00000002
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\ControlSet001\Services\mfm\ImagePath:
 "C:\WINDOWS\system32\mfm\msrll.exe"
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\ControlSet001\Services\mfm\DisplayName: "Rll
 enhanced drive"
 HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\ControlSet001\Services\mfm\ObjectName:
 "LocalSystem"

In other words, msrll.exe copies itself to C:\windows\system32\mfm\, deletes itself from the former location (C:\malware), and creates a new Windows Service for the executable in C:\windows\system32\mfm. As shown in Figure 7, the new service is set to start automatically at boot, but is not started yet.

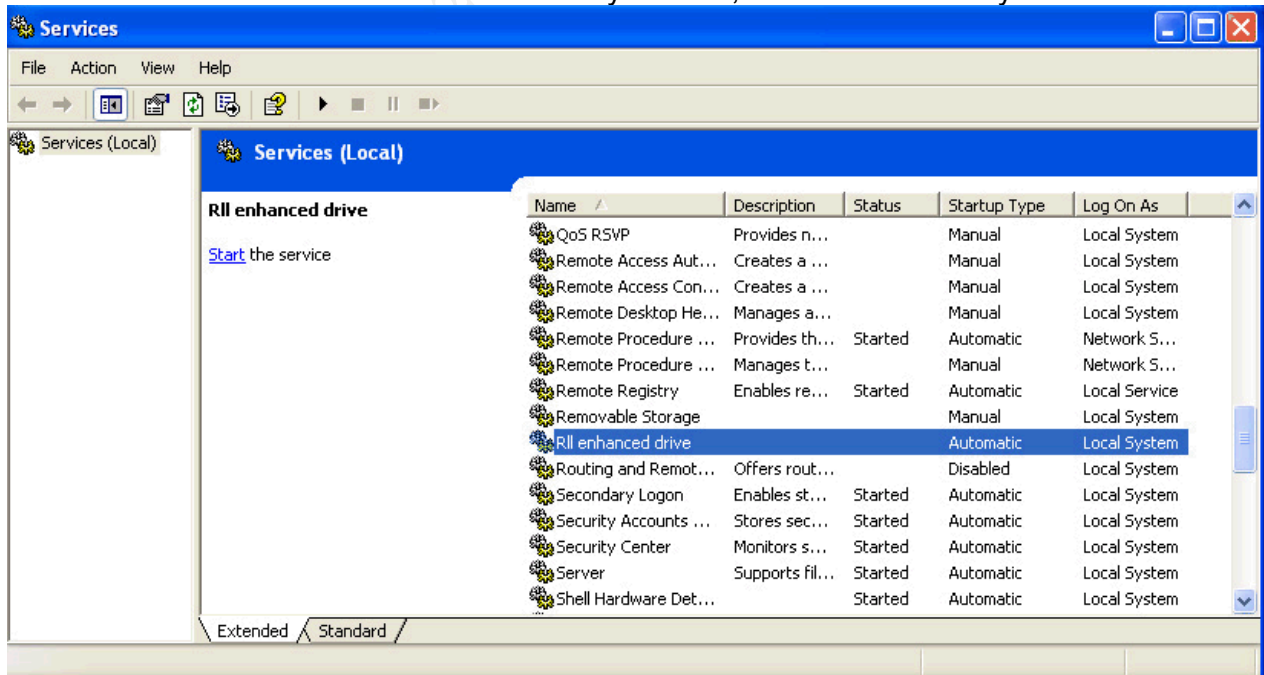


Figure 7 - Service added

The checksum for the copied file is:

84acfe96a98590813413122c12c11aaa *msrll.exe

This is the same as the original C:\malware\msrll.exe had. This shows that the copy is identical to the original file.

From the filename, C:\WINDOWS\system32\mf\jtram.conf seems to be a configuration file for the malware specimen. The file seems to be encrypted, so no information can be gained from it. (See Figure 8)

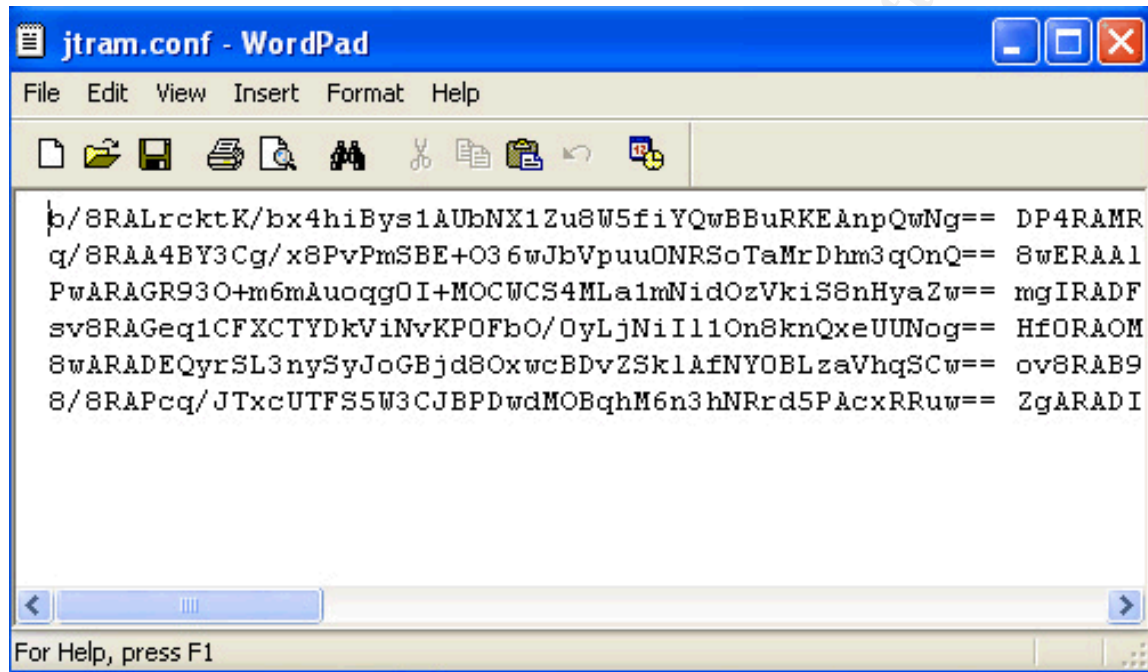


Figure 8 - jtram.conf

The following interesting information shows up in TDIMon:

```
15.81876495 msrll.exe:1032819C8480 IRP_MJ_CREATE TCP:0.0.0.0:2200
          SUCCESS Address Open
22.08134972 svchost.exe:1036 819C9A38 TDI_SEND_DATAGRAM
          UDP:0.0.0.0:1025 192.168.129.1:53 SUCCESS Length:38
22.09424913 msrll.exe:103281AACEA0 IRP_MJ_CREATE TCP:0.0.0.0:113
          SUCCESS Address Open
```

Msrll.exe listens on TCP-port 2200 and 113. It also connects to 192.168.129.1 on UDP-port 53.

In this stage of the analysis I assume that port 2200 is a backdoor and that port 113 is used for an ident daemon. The use of an ident daemon indicates that msrll.exe wants to connect to IRC; because many IRC servers require that the clients run identd to be allowed to connect.

The connection to port 192.168.129.1 on UDP-port 53 is probably an attempt to resolve a domain name, since port 53 belongs to DNS and 192.168.129.1 is set as DNS server on the Windows VM. To find which domain name that is attempted resolved, I launch snort on the Linux VM with the following command line and relaunch msrll.exe.

```
snort -vd -l /root/log
```

With snort I discover that msrll.exe attempts to resolve collective7.zxy0.com. (See Figure 9)

```
[root@localhost /]# cat /root/log/192.168.129.128/UDP\:\:1025-53
10/19-10:15:04.434895 192.168.129.128:1025 -> 192.168.129.1:53
UDP TTL:128 TOS:0x0 ID:212 IpLen:20 DgmLen:66
Len: 38
B8 F3 01 00 00 01 00 00 00 00 00 00 0B 63 6F 6C .....col
6C 65 63 74 69 76 65 37 04 7A 78 79 30 03 63 6F lective7.zxy0.co
5D 00 00 01 00 01 m.....
```

Figure 9 - snort dns

I telnet to port 2200 and 113 on the Windows VM to gain more information about the services running there.

```
[root@localhost /]# telnet 192.168.129.128 113
Trying 192.168.129.128...
Connected to 192.168.129.128.
Escape character is '^]'.
adf
adf : USERID : UNIX : YdGbQoJPc
Connection closed by foreign host.
[root@localhost /]#
```

Figure 10 - identd is running on port 113

```
[root@localhost /]# telnet 192.168.129.128 2200
Trying 192.168.129.128...
Connected to 192.168.129.128.
Escape character is '^]'.
#:auth
a
Connection closed by foreign host.
```

Figure 11 - backdoor?

Figure 10 confirms that identd is running.
Figure 11 shows that some kind of backdoor is running on port 2200, but doesn't give any more information.

Molding the laboratory environment

DNS

To advance the analysis process it's now needed to change the laboratory environment. I begin with redirecting traffic for collective7.zxy0.com to the Linux VM. Entering 192.168.129.129 as the address for collective7.zxy0.com in C:\Windows\system32\drivers\etc\hosts does this.

```
7.21099330 msrll.exe:1632 818F6678 TDI_CONNECT TCP:0.0.0.0:1091
          192.168.129.128:6667 CONNECTION_REFUSED-150
44.58069392 msrll.exe:372 818D00B0 TDI_CONNECT TCP:0.0.0.0:1102
          192.168.129.129:9999 CONNECTION_REFUSED
74.79998100 msrll.exe:372 818DB1C0 TDI_CONNECT TCP:0.0.0.0:1103
          192.168.129.129:8080 CANCELLED
```

The redirection of network traffic to the Linux VM shows that msrll.exe tries to connect to port 6667, 9999 and 8080 on collective7.zxy0.com. Port 6667 indicates an IRC connection.

IRC Port 6667

To continue the analysis, I launch an IRC server on the Linux VM.

```
[root@localhost ~]# su - ircd
[ircd@localhost ircd]$ ./ircd
[ircd@localhost ircd]$ ps -u ircd
  PID TTY          TIME CMD
 2270 tty1        00:00:00 bash
 2311 ?            00:00:00 ircd
```

Figure 12 - Starting ircd

I then restart msrll.exe. Process Explorer shows that msrll.exe has established a connection with port 6667 on the linux VM.

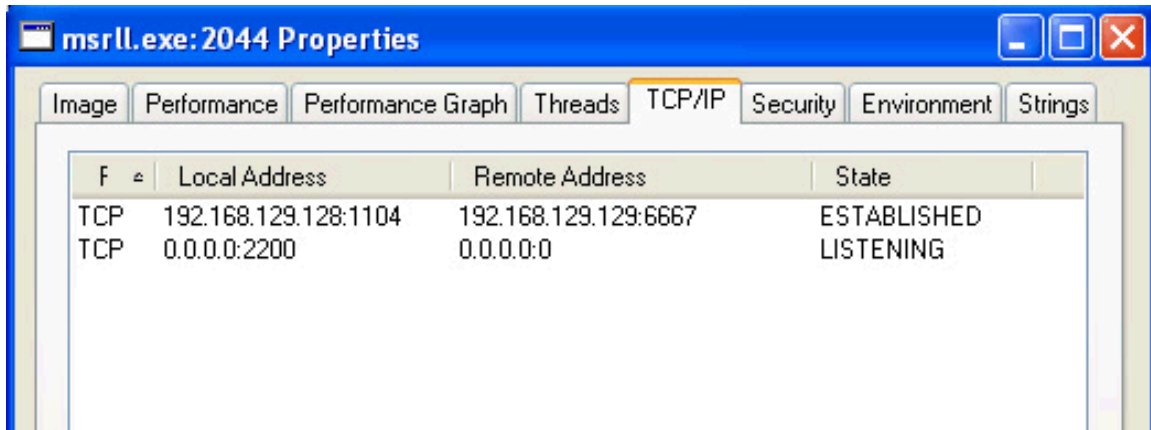


Figure 13 - Process Explorer

I launch an IRC client on the Linux VM and lists all created channels with the /list command. A channel #mils has been created. I join this channel and list all clients there with the command /who #mils. This is shown in Figure 14.

```

*** Your host is localhost.localdomain[localhost.localdomain/6667], running
+version 2.8/hybrid-6.3.1
*** This server was created Tue Jun 4 2002 at 16: 59:45 EDT
*** umodes available oIwyszcrkfydxb, channel modes available biklmopstve
*** WALLCHOPS PREFIX=(oO)O+ CHANTYPES=#& MAXCHANNELS=20 MAXBANS=25 NICKLEN=9
+TOPICLEN=120 KICKLEN=90 NETWORK=EFnet CHANMODES=b,k,l,impst MODES=4 are
+supported by this server
*** There are 0 users and 2 invisible on 1 servers
*** 1 channels have been formed
*** This server has 2 clients and 0 servers connected
*** Current local users: 2 Max: 2
*** Current global users: 2 Max: 2
*** Highest connection count: 2 (2 clients) (5 since server was (re)started)
*** - localhost.localdomain Message of the Day -
*** - This is an IRC server. Authorized users only.
*** Mode change "+i" for user root by root
*** Channel  Users  Topic
*** #mils      1
*** root (~root@127.0.0.1) has joined channel #mils
*** #mils 1098199350
*** No argument specified
#mils      root      H    ~root@127.0.0.1 (root)
#mils      tlrKIMLgH H    ksJdsPyBxK@192.168.129.128 (uYhNZs)
[1] 01:22 root (+i) on #mils (+nt) * type /help for help

```

Figure 14 - irc

The malware specimen is joined as tlrKIMLgH on the channel. The nickname seems to be randomly generated, and repeated connections show that the nickname changes each time. I try to talk to the process to find commands, but to no avail.

Port 9999 and 8080

To find out what msrll.exe expects on port 9999 and 8080, I launch NetCat on

the Linux VM with the command “nc -l -p 8080” and “nc -l -p 9999”. Then I restart msrll.exe. The ircd is stopped. As shown in Figure 15, msrll.exe expects an IRC server on port 9999 and 8080.

```
root@localhost /l# nc -l -p 9999
^I      USER yCUWbjDPts localhost 0 :YDUiLDuZNwWQJfJygnlKKUNu jRKZgtmxSpE
NICK byDYFaJGRle
pant!
root@localhost /l#
root@localhost /l# nc -l -p 8080
USER iQmPIJEc localhost 0 :XPipxGG0
NICK hnUbFWTxu
```

Figure 15 - Port 9999 and 8080

At this stage in the reverse engineering process behavioral analysis doesn't seem to give any more information about the malware specimen. I therefore proceed with code analysis.

Code Analysis

Before I can disassemble and debug the binary, I need to unpack it.

Unpacking

Earlier in the analysis I established that the malware specimen was encrypted or compressed. Before code analysis can take place the malware specimen need to be unpacked/decrypted.

The aspack segment in the file indicates that the executable was packed with AsPack. Because of this, I try to extract the executable with the application AsPackDie, which was downloaded from <http://scifi.pages.at/yoda9k/files/AspackDie141.zip>. AsPackDie was able to extract the executable successfully, as shown in Figure 16.

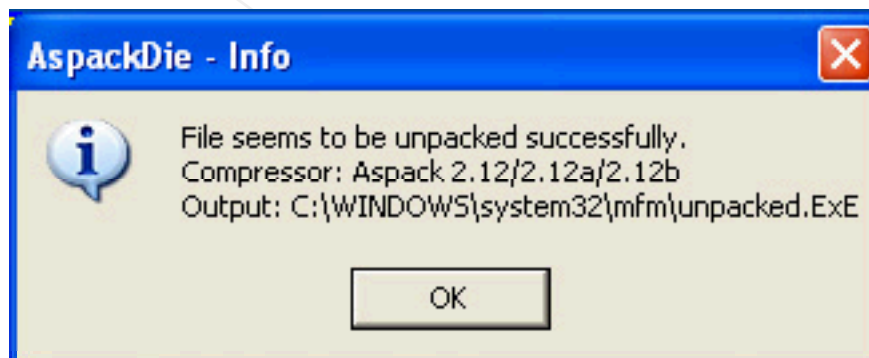


Figure 16 - Extracting msrll.exe with AspackDie

Running the new unpacked executable shows that the unpacking worked; the malware specimen is acting exactly like before.

I can then proceed with disassembly and debugging.

First I check if there are any interesting strings in the executable with BinText now that it is unpacked. The following strings seems to be potential commands to control the malware:

0000934E	0040934E	0	?clone
00009355	00409355	0	?clones
0000935D	0040935D	0	?login
00009364	00409364	0	?uptime
0000936C	0040936C	0	?reboot
00009374	00409374	0	?status
0000937C	0040937C	0	?jump
00009382	00409382	0	?nick
00009388	00409388	0	?echo
0000938E	0040938E	0	?hush
00009394	00409394	0	?wget
0000939A	0040939A	0	?join
000093A9	004093A9	0	?akick
000093B0	004093B0	0	?part
000093B6	004093B6	0	?dump
000093C6	004093C6	0	?md5p
000093CC	004093CC	0	?free
000093D7	004093D7	0	?update
000093DF	004093DF	0	?hostname
000093EE	004093EE	0	?!fif
000093FE	004093FE	0	?play
00009404	00409404	0	?copy
0000940A	0040940A	0	?move
00009415	00409415	0	?sums
00009423	00409423	0	?rmdir
0000942A	0040942A	0	?mkdir
00009436	00409436	0	?exec
00009440	00409440	0	?kill
00009446	00409446	0	?killall
0000944F	0040944F	0	?crash
0000946E	0040946E	0	?sklist
00009476	00409476	0	?unset
0000947D	0040947D	0	?uattr
00009484	00409484	0	?dccsk
00009490	00409490	0	?killsk

I try to control the bot with the strings that BinText gave, but there is still no

response.

Disassembly

I proceed with disassembly in IDA Pro.

Address 40BDE0 seems to contain a MD5 hashed password. (String begins with \$1\$) This can be seen in Figure 17.

```

* .text:0040BD4E ; char ServiceName[]
.text:0040BD4E ServiceName db 'mfm',0 ; DATA XREF: sub_40BE48:loc_40BF1B↓
.text:0040BD4E ; sub_40BFEF+B↓o ...
* .text:0040BD52 a2200 db '2200',0 ; DATA XREF: .data:00413B64↓o
* .text:0040BD57 aJtr_id db 'jtr.id',0 ; DATA XREF: sub_40BE48+89↓o
.text:0040BD57 ; .data:00413B68↓o
* .text:0040BD5E aRun5 db 'run5',0 ; DATA XREF: .data:00413B6C↓o
* .text:0040BD63 aIrc_quit db 'irc.quit',0 ; DATA XREF: .text:0040C788↓o
.text:0040BD63 ; .data:00413B70↓o
* .text:0040BD6C asc_40BD6C db ' ',0 ; DATA XREF: .data:00413B74↓o
* .text:0040BD6E aServers_0 db 'servers',0 ; DATA XREF: .data:00413B78↓o
.text:0040BD76 align 10h
* .text:0040BD80 aCollective7_zx db 'collective7.zxy0.com,collective7.zxy0.com:9999!,collective7.'
.text:0040BD80 ; DATA XREF: .data:00413B7C↓o
.text:0040BD80 db 'zxy0.com:8080',0
* .text:0040BDCA aIrc_chan db 'irc.chan',0 ; DATA XREF: .data:00413B80↓o
* .text:0040BDD3 aMils db '#mils',0 ; DATA XREF: .data:00413B84↓o
* .text:0040BDD9 aPass_0 db 'pass',0 ; DATA XREF: .data:00413B88↓o
.text:0040BDD9 align 10h
* .text:0040BDE0 a1Kz1p1kdfW8k18 db '$1$KZLPLKDF$W8k18Jr1X8D0HZsmIp9qq0',0
.text:0040BDE0 ; DATA XREF: .data:00413B8C↓o

```

Figure 17 - configuration

A different password is located at address 40BE20. Since the passwords are MD5, the passwords to be used while authenticating won't be found in the binary file. I then have several options, I can find the authentication routine and patch it to always return true, or I can generate my own MD5 password and replace the original ones. I choose to replace the passwords.

Patching to change MD5 passwords

I open msrll.exe in a hex editor and locate the addresses 40BDE0 and 40BE20. I then replace the original MD5 strings with the string "\$1\$Ec0wBmCq\$1P9cBkJQWQqpsiQNeuqGT.", which I generated with 'passwd' on a linux machine. The corresponding password is "!Nanoics".

The assembly snippet in Figure 18 is probably part of the authentication procedure. From the "%s logged in" part, I deduct that the authentication process uses a username in addition to a password.

```

.text:00405B2D      push    ebp
.text:00405B2E      mov     ebp, esp
.text:00405B30      push   esi
.text:00405B31      push   ebx
.text:00405B32      mov     edx, [ebp+8]
.text:00405B35      mov     esi, [ebp+0Ch]
.text:00405B38      mov     ebx, [ebp+14h]
.text:00405B3B      mov     eax, [esi+205Ch]
.text:00405B41      test   eax, 2
.text:00405B46      jnz    short loc_405B9B
.text:00405B48      cmp    dword ptr [edx+4], 0
.text:00405B4C      jz     short loc_405B9B
.text:00405B4E      test   eax, 10h
.text:00405B53      jz     short loc_405B9B
.text:00405B55      sub    esp, 8
.text:00405B58      push   offset aPass      ; "PASS"
.text:00405B5D      push   dword ptr [edx+4]
.text:00405B60      call   sub_405B72
.text:00405B65      add    esp, 10h
.text:00405B68      test   eax, eax
.text:00405B6A      jz     short loc_405B9B
.text:00405B6C      mov    eax, [ebx+0FCh]
.text:00405B72      test   eax, 10000h
.text:00405B77      jnz    short loc_405B9B
.text:00405B79      or     eax, 10000h
.text:00405B7E      mov    [ebx+0FCh], eax
.text:00405B84      sub    esp, 0Ch
.text:00405B87      push   ebx
.text:00405B88      push   offset aSLoggedIn ; "%s logged in"
.text:00405B8D      push   esi
.text:00405B8E      push   dword ptr [ebp+10h]

```

Figure 18 - Authentication routine?

After changing the password I proceed with trying to login to the backdoor. I use NetCat to connect to the Windows VM on port 2200. Then I try to authenticate with an arbitrary username and the password "!Nanoics". The login is successful, the malware responds to the command "?hostname" and "?exec". This is shown in Figure 19.

```

[root@localhost tmp]# nc 192.168.129.128 2200
#:Erlend
?!Nanoics
?hostname
host: reverser.localdomain ip: 192.168.129.128
?exec C:\windows\system32\cmd.exe /c dir
C:\windows\system32\cmd.exe exited with code 0

```

Figure 19 – login

Finding Capabilities

To get an overview of the bots capabilities, I tested all the potential commands found earlier. To save space, I will not use screenshots in this part. The results are presented in the following table:

Command	Action
?clone	Make clones on ircserver
?clones	Control clones (say/join/part)
?uptime	show uptime of system and bot
?reboot	Reboot the computer
?status	show status information about the bot
?jump	Probably change to next ircserver
?nick	Change nickname on irc
?echo	print argument
?hush	unknown
?wget	get file from ftp/http
?join	join channel on irc
?akick	kick host from irc?
?part	part channel on irc
?dump	unknown
?md5p	compute md5 password
?free	unknown
?update	update Trojan from URL ?
?hostname	Print hostname
?play	play audio file on infected host?
?copy	Copy file
?move	Move file
?sums	Show checksums for msrll.exe and config file
?rmdir	Delete directory
?mkdir	Make directory
?exec	Execute program
?kill	Kill process
?killall	Kill all processes?
?crash	Crash computer?
?sklist	List active network sockets
?unset	unknown
?killsk	Kill socket?
?ping	Pingflood target
?smurf	Smurf-attack target
?jolt	Unknown attack on target

With that I conclude the code analysis.

Analysis Wrap-Up

In this section I will summarize the findings in my analysis.

Capabilities

The malware specimen is capable of installing itself to a system directory, adding itself as a legal-looking service and connecting to IRC to wait for instructions from an attacker. It looks like it is intended to be part of a botnet belonging to the attacker. Based on the built in commands for attack, an attacker can use such a botnet for distributed denial of service attacks targeting sites on the Internet. In addition, the malware specimen can be controlled via a backdoor on port 2000. The attacker can easily update the Trojan software with the built in “?update“ command.

Potential Users

Potential users for this program could be script kiddies wanting to build a botnet for DDOS attacks.

Defence

To eliminate current infections of msrll.exe, it would be enough to kill the msrll.exe process, delete C:\windows\system32\mf\msrll.exe and remove the NT service. To prevent future infections, it could be possible to build a signature from the malware specimen which can be added to antivirus scanners. It could also be possible to use a firewall that could filter away IRC traffic based on layer 7 (application data) instead of fixed service ports.

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