The Inside-Out Firewall Vulnerability
Richard Hammer – hammer@lanl.gov

My subnet is located behind 2 firewalls so I don’t worry about a lot of the dangers that Network Administrators directly exposed to the internet worry about. The institutional firewall limits incoming connections and our firewall limits them even more as well as most outgoing ports. My policy has been to not open a port in either direction unless there is a very good programmatic reason. Scanning my network for known vulnerabilities and password sniffing from the outside is almost impossible. In the past I had pondered the concept of hackers having our clients connecting out to sites, but dismissed it as unlikely. I was actually feeling pretty safe until the PrettyPark Trojan/Worm visited a month ago. In this paper I will walk you through my PrettyPark experience and discuss the possibility of hackers targeting your systems from the inside of your firewall.

PrettyPark

A full description of PrettyPark can be found at the following sites:

http://www.symantec.com/avcenter/venc/data/prettypark.worm.html
&
http://vil.nai.com/vil/wm98500.asp

This was the first time that we had a known instance where one of our machines was infected with a Trojan that actually tried to make connections out of our firewalls. We were fortunate to have tcp port 6667 (out bound) closed at our firewall. I played around with the infected machine and actually opened our outgoing firewall port 6667 for about 1 minute and was able to capture the infected machine connecting to IRC sites. Listed below is a screen capture from SessionWall3 showing a successful connection:

Client IP = 172.16.164.60
Server IP = 207.152.95.10
Client physical address = 00:A0:24:D5:B2:4F
Server physical address = 00:A4:C0:91:D2:9C
Client port = 4155
Server port = 6667 TCP

Client -> Server
NICK Fzi`Vb|
USER z|e[ c_oPWq eehg_VW :cMGNpnXT

You can get an evaluation copy of SessionWall3 at the following site:

http://www.cai.com/solutions/enterprise/etrust/intrusion_detection/
Here is a NetStat Capture of the Client trying to connect when the outgoing port is closed.

In a little over a minute the infected machine connected to 3 of the 8 known IRC sites that...
PrettyPark makes connections to. Here is a listing from my firewall showing one of the
connections:

Mar 30 16:34:56 2000 f_rgeneric tcppproxy a_server t_nettraffic p_major
pid: 1878 ruid: 2115 euid: 2115 pgid: 200 fid: 2000001 cmd: 'tcpgsp'
domain: RGnx edomain: RGnx srcip: 172.16.164.60 srcregion: NIS6A
dstip: 207.152.95.10 dstport: 6667 dstregion: BLUE-YELLOW protocol: 6
service_name: Internet Relay Chat acl_id: outgoing rules:SERVICE:0 result: 1
encrypted: 0 netsessid: 38e3e4a000066129

Mar 30 16:34:56 2000 f_rgeneric tcppproxy a_server t_nettraffic p_major
pid: 1878 ruid: 2115 euid: 2115 pgid: 200 fid: 2000001 cmd: 'tcpgsp'
domain: RGnx edomain: RGnx srcip: 172.16.164.60 srcregion: NIS6A
dstip: 207.152.95.10 dstport: 6667 dstregion: BLUE-YELLOW protocol: 6
bytes_client_written: 0 bytes_server_written: 51
service_name: Internet Relay Chat reason: closing connection
netsessid: 38e3e4a000066129

According to Norton and McAfee, PrettyPark will send info to these sites to stay
connected and will retrieve any commands received from the IRC channel. I did not
allow this machine to stay connected long enough to get some sniffer output of someone
sending commands to our infected machine. I noticed that PrettyPark cycles through the
8 sites quit rapidly. When one fails to connect it tries the next site almost immediately.

The user of the infected machine was pretty good about updating his virus definition files.
He was using McAfee Viruscan with 2/23/2000 dat files. The time stamp on
FILES32.VXD was 3/1/2000 and this version of the virus definition files did not detect
PrettyPark. A week later I installed Computer Associate’s SessionWall3 Intrusion/Virus
detection program. SessionWall3 is a pretty good, easy to use program for scanning your
network. SessionWall actually caught two other cases of PrettyPark entering our
network. One evening I cleared the SessionWall scanner and noticed IRC connect
attempts to a site that rang a bell in my brain (banana.irc.easynet.net:6667). I was lucky
that I had cleaned a system infected with PrettyPark and one of the sites was named
banana something.

Even if you can get your users to update their virus protection your machines are
vulnerable to this type of attack until the dat files include the Trojan signature. Mass
distributed worms like PrettyPark will always be relatively easy to detect and clean.
Writers of this type of Trojan will not have our machines connect to machines that can be
traced to them. Only opening outgoing ports that are required for business will stop most
of these mass distributed Trojans.

Scary Stuff
Selective targeting of my subnet is the vulnerability that I worry about the most right now. PrettyPark tells us a lot about how to do these things:

1) Deliver the code to the target.
2) Execute the code
3) Create outgoing connection to hacker’s machine.
4) Get the information
5) Trash/disable the infected system and cover tracks.

I have been thinking about selective targeting for some time now and have discussed it recently with a fellow colleague. It seems far fetched but I found a paper on the internet, “Placing Backdoors Through Firewalls” by van Hauser / [THC] - The Hacker's Choice, that gives instruction, lists dangers, and supplies scripts to do exactly what I listed above.

I can think of two low tech ways to deliver and execute the code. One would be to have an insider install the code, another would be to use e-mail and let the double click syndrome install the code. My experience tells me that the average user will double click on anything that looks funny, interesting, business related, or comes from someone they know. I would guess that the double click syndrome is the most popular way to execute malicious code. Making the outgoing connection look legitimate is important, van Hauser offers several suggestions, tunnel from Phrack 52, ssh, netcat, ack-telnet, and http (example script supplied). Once the code is executed getting data from a targeted machine looks easy. With a legitimate looking connection there is a real good chance that this kind of attack will not even be noticed. Virus protection will not work unless the hacker uses a known piece of malicious code and since the traffic will look legitimate so our network scanners won’t detect it. The smart hacker will then get the info and start covering his/her tracks. Deleting the malicious code and corrupting a couple system files will look like just another system failure.

Possible Solutions

1) Closing unneeded outgoing ports. Better have strong support before you do this, because users will start to whine when they can’t chat with their aol buddies during work hours.

Sites with Good port lists:
http://home2.freegates.be/bchicken/index2.html
http://www.dark-e.com/lowfi.html
http://www.sans.org/y2k/ports.htm

2) Use Personal firewall programs, port scanners and port blockers. I use one of these at home and it works pretty well. Host based protection should be able to stop and detect these types of attacks. Getting users to accept and understand these types of solutions will be difficult since most double clickers can barely update their virus dat files.
Personal Port Scanners, Blockers and Firewalls:
http://www.agnitum.com/products/jammer/jtour1.phtml
http://home2.freegates.be/bchicken/index2.html
http://net-security.org/variables/download/
http://davidovv2.homestead.com/freetoolsservices.html
http://www.zonelabs.com/
http://grc.com/su-firewalls.htm
http://www.symantec.com/sabu/nis/

3) Scan and delete known Viruses/Trojans/Worms at your gateway. Do not allow them to get to the double clickers of the world! I use SessionWall3 and it works pretty well for me.
http://www.cai.com/solutions/enterprise/etrust/intrusion_detection/

4) Train users NOT to DOUBLE CLICK on attachments that are not business related.

Clearly critical data should not be stored on networks that have liberal outgoing connection policies and no personal protection.

Resources

You can find van Hauser’s Paper at:

Much thanks to Richard Kandarian – He was the first person that I ever heard actually talk about selective targeting! He has other Solutions that I will not go into here!

Good Sites for information on Trojans:
http://anti-trojan.virtualave.net/page6.html
http://home2.freegates.be/bchicken/index2.html
http://www.commodon.com/threat/threat-all.htm
http://www.dark-e.com/lowfi.html
# Upcoming Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Venue Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor-Led Training</td>
<td>Apr 27</td>
<td>Baltimore, MD</td>
<td>Apr 27, 2020 - May 02, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor-Led Training</td>
<td>May 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>May 04, 2020 - May 09, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANS Security West 2020</td>
<td>San Diego, CA</td>
<td>May 11, 2020 - May 16, 2020</td>
<td>CyberCon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn Australia Live Online 2020</td>
<td>Sydney, Australia</td>
<td>May 18, 2020 - May 29, 2020</td>
<td>CyberCon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-Cybersecure Catalyst New Canadians Academy SEC401</td>
<td>Brampton, ON</td>
<td>May 19, 2020 - May 24, 2020</td>
<td>Community SANS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-Cybersecure Catalyst New Career Academy SEC401</td>
<td>Brampton, ON</td>
<td>May 19, 2020 - May 24, 2020</td>
<td>Community SANS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS Cybersecure Catalyst Women Academy SEC401</td>
<td>Brampton, ON</td>
<td>May 19, 2020 - May 24, 2020</td>
<td>Community SANS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor-Led Training</td>
<td>Jun 1</td>
<td>IL</td>
<td>Jun 01, 2020 - Jun 06, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANSFIRE 2020</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>Jun 13, 2020 - Jun 20, 2020</td>
<td>CyberCon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyber Defence Australia Online 2020</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Jun 22, 2020 - Jul 04, 2020</td>
<td>CyberCon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor-Led Training</td>
<td>Jun 22</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>Jun 22, 2020 - Jun 27, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANS Japan Live Online July 2020</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Jun 29, 2020 - Jul 11, 2020</td>
<td>CyberCon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor-Led Training</td>
<td>Jul 6</td>
<td>VA</td>
<td>Jul 06, 2020 - Jul 11, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANS Rocky Mountain Summer 2020</td>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Jul 20, 2020 - Jul 25, 2020</td>
<td>CyberCon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor-Led Training</td>
<td>Jul 27</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Jul 27, 2020 - Aug 01, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor-Led Training</td>
<td>Aug 3 ET</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Aug 03, 2020 - Aug 08, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor-Led Training</td>
<td>Aug 10 MT</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>Aug 10, 2020 - Aug 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor-Led Training</td>
<td>Aug 17 ET</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>Aug 17, 2020 - Aug 22, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANS Melbourne Live Online 2020</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Aug 17, 2020 - Aug 22, 2020</td>
<td>CyberCon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor-Led Training</td>
<td>Aug 24 MT</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Aug 24, 2020 - Aug 29, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANS Tampa-Clearwater 2020</td>
<td>Clearwater, FL</td>
<td>Sep 08, 2020 - Sep 13, 2020</td>
<td>Live Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANS Baltimore Fall 2020</td>
<td>Baltimore, MD</td>
<td>Sep 08, 2020 - Sep 13, 2020</td>
<td>Live Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANS Network Security 2020</td>
<td>Las Vegas, NV</td>
<td>Sep 20, 2020 - Sep 27, 2020</td>
<td>Live Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANS Canberra Spring 2020</td>
<td>Canberra, Australia</td>
<td>Sep 21, 2020 - Oct 03, 2020</td>
<td>Live Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANS San Antonio Fall 2020</td>
<td>San Antonio, TX</td>
<td>Sep 28, 2020 - Oct 03, 2020</td>
<td>Live Event</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>