University
POLITEHNICA
of Bucharest

Challenges in cyber security – Ransomware Phenomenon

Authors

Vlad-Raul Pașca

Email: vvladd_pasca@yahoo.com

Emil Simion

Email: emil.simion@upb.ro

Ransomware

- The most popular malware nowadays
- Huge profit for cybercriminals, Cryptowall produced 325 millions of dollars in 2015
- Ransomware as a service (RaaS) is giving cybercriminals (even beginners) the oportunity to launch sophisticated attacks
- Numerous families: Locky, CryptoWall, CryptoLocker, Spora, DMA Locker, Petya, Cerber, WannaCry, NotPetya/GoldenEye

Multiple distribution methods:

- Phising emails (the most popular method)
- Social Media
- Infected websites dropping malicious payload
- Exploits and 0-day exploits

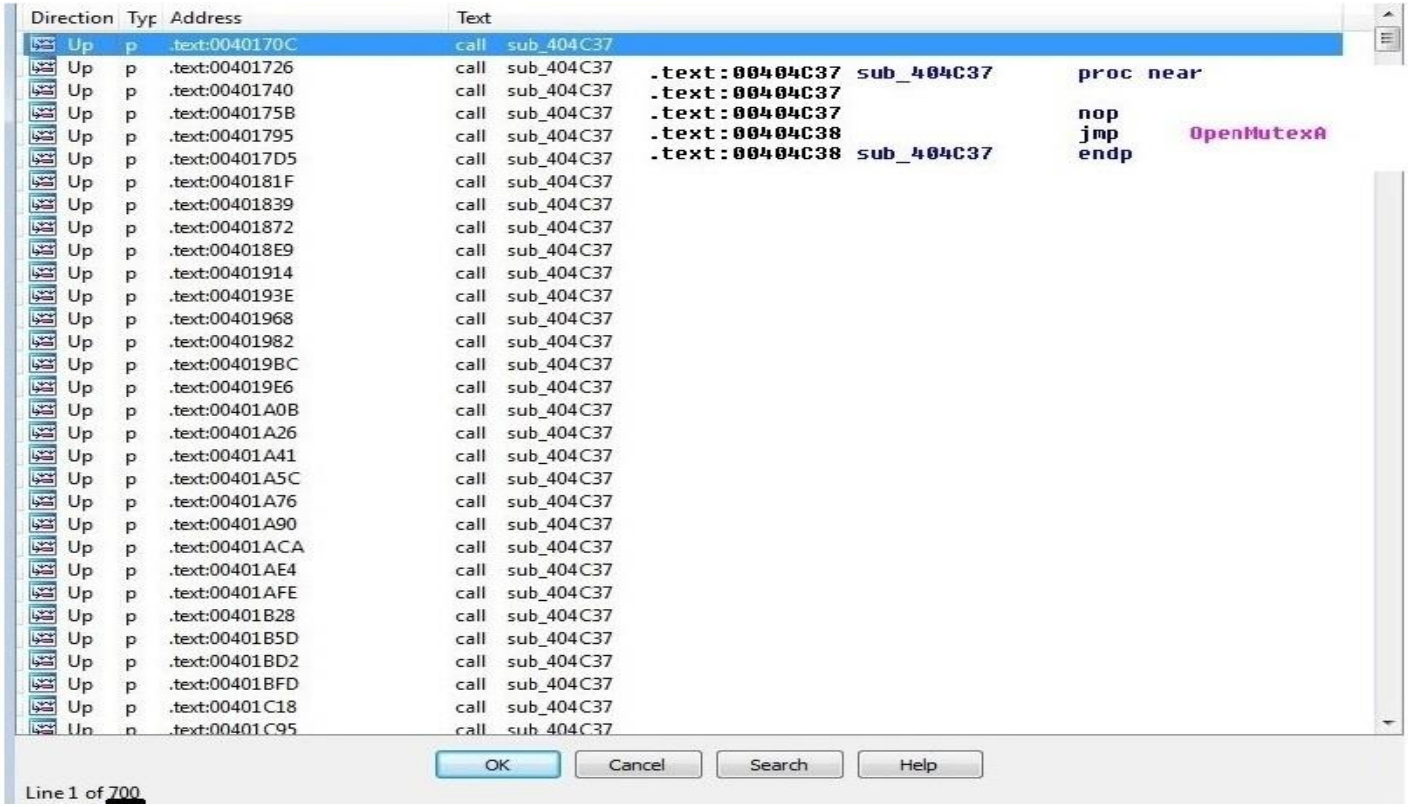
The network infection vector (EternalBlue) of WannaCry which exploits a vulnerability in Microsoft's implementation of SMB protocol **wasn't** a 0-day exploit

Spora ransomware

- It encrypts files offline like DMA Locker or Cerber (it doesn't communicate with a C&C)
- RSA + AES encryption using Windows APIs (**CryptImportKey**, **CryptGenKey**, **CryptEncrypt**)
- The sample comes with an encrypted hardcoded RSA public key, for each victim is generated a new RSA 1024 pair of keys as well as a new AES key; the AES key is used to encrypt RSA private key and then itself is encrypted with RSA hardcoded key (these are stored in each ransom note); an individual AES key is generated for each file (in order to encrypt the file) and it is encrypted with RSA public key which was generated, and stored at the end of each encrypted file
- It uses VSSadmin to delete shadow copies (in order to make backup very difficult)

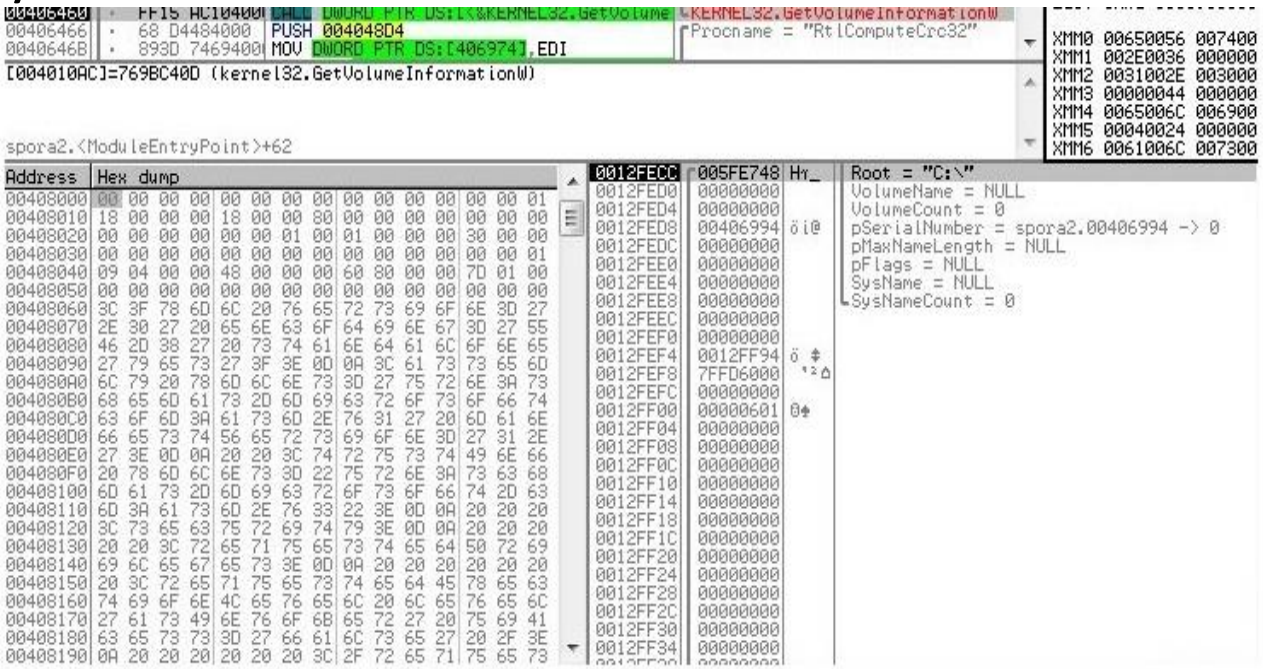
Spora ransomware

- The sample is obfuscated in order to make the analysis more difficult
- It tries to open a mutex (wddmnotbx) which doesn't exists (700 times)



Spora ransomware

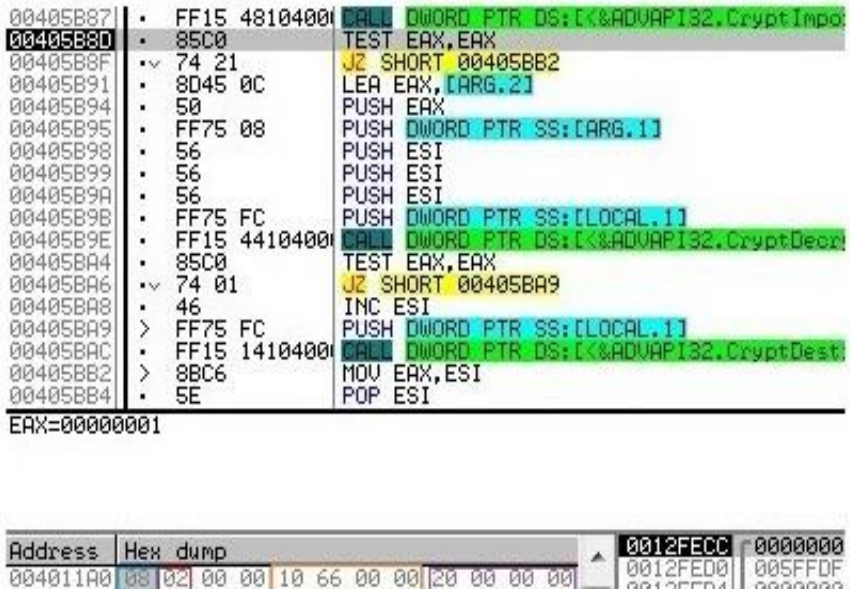
- It calls GetVolumeInformationW to get information about file system and volume associated with root dir



- The result is used to create a mutex which has the form: m<GetVolumeInformationWResult> to ensure that he malware runs only once

Spora ransomware

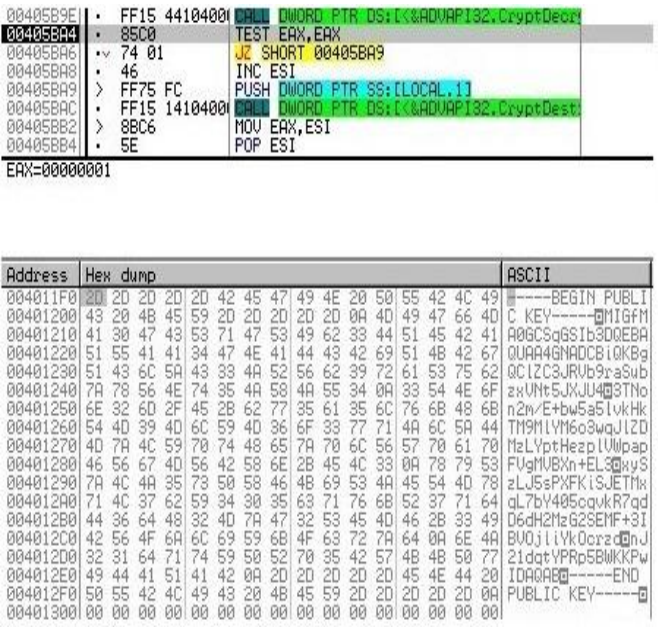
- The malware has a hardcoded key which is being imported using the function CryptImportKey

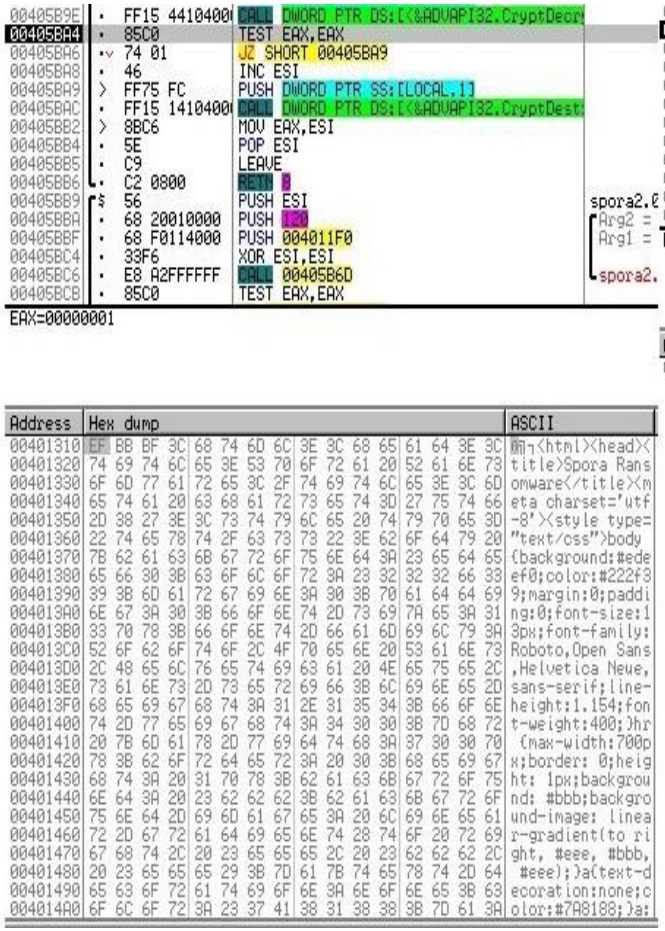


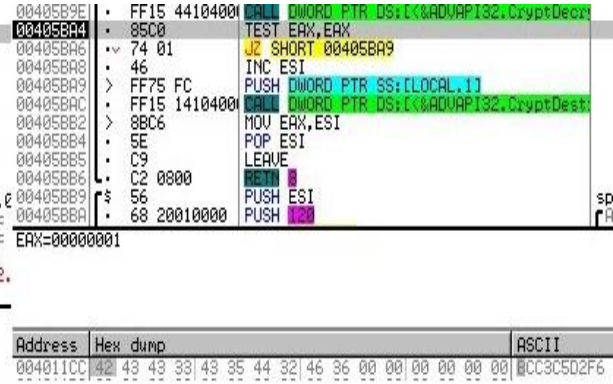
- It represents an AES256 key, stored in a form of blob. 0x08 represents PLAINTEXTKEY-BLOB, the key is a session key; 0x02 represents CUR_BLOB_VERSION; 0x6610 represents Alg_ID: CALG_AES_256; 0x20 represents key's length

Spora ransomware

- The AES key is used to decrypt another elements, a RSA key, the ransom note and something which looks like a campaign id

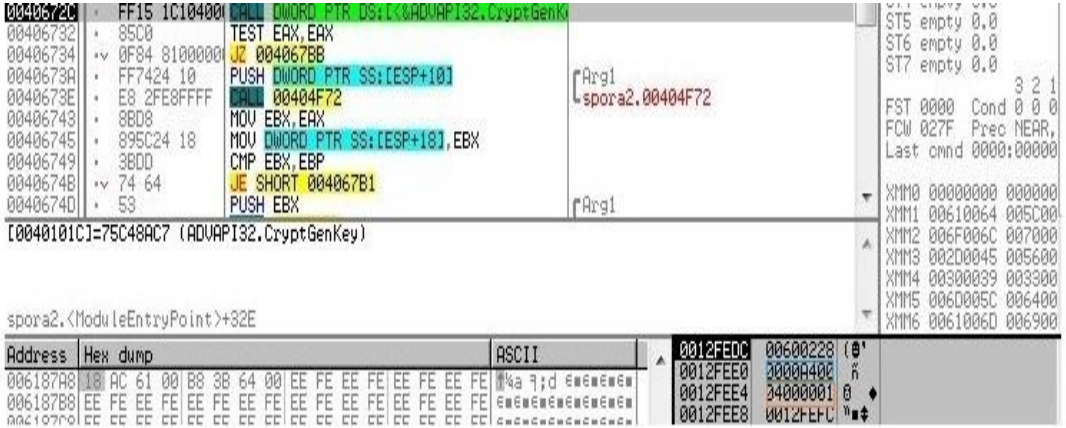






Spora ransomware

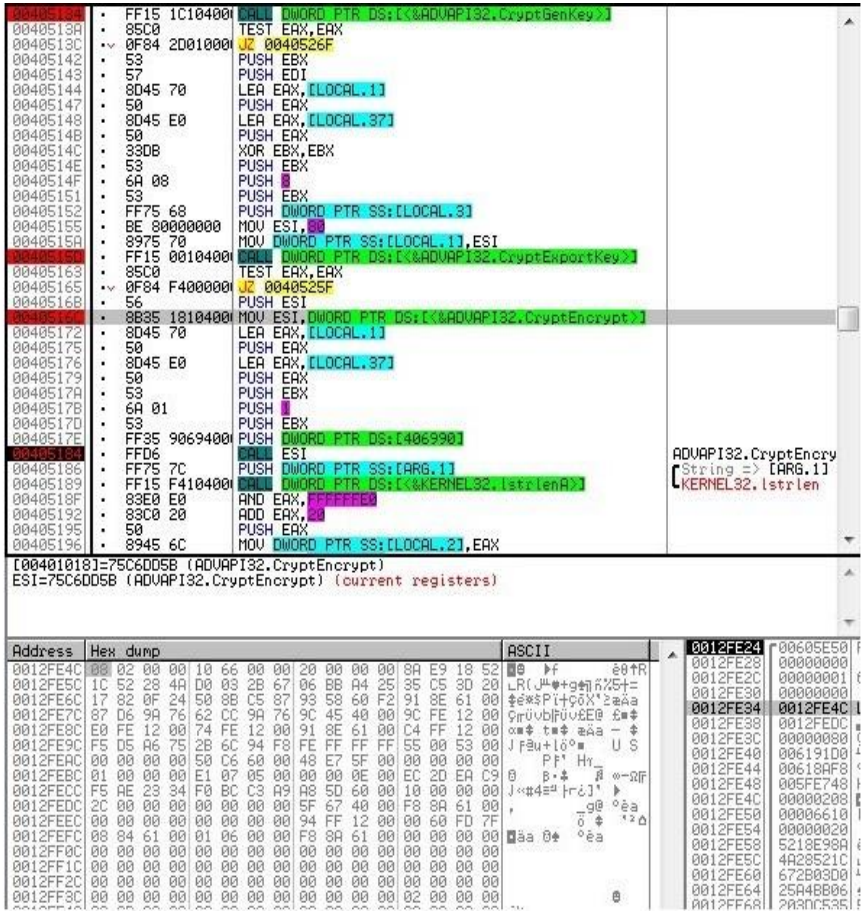
- The sample uses GetLogicalDrives to obtain available disk drives, WNetOpenEnum and WNetEnumResource to enumerate the network resources
- A new pair of RSA1024 keys for every victim is generated, as is shown below:



- 0x600228 is a handle to CSP, 0xa400 represents AlgID: CALG_RSA_KEYX and 0x40000001 represents RSA1024BIT_KEY – CRYPT_EXPORTABLE.

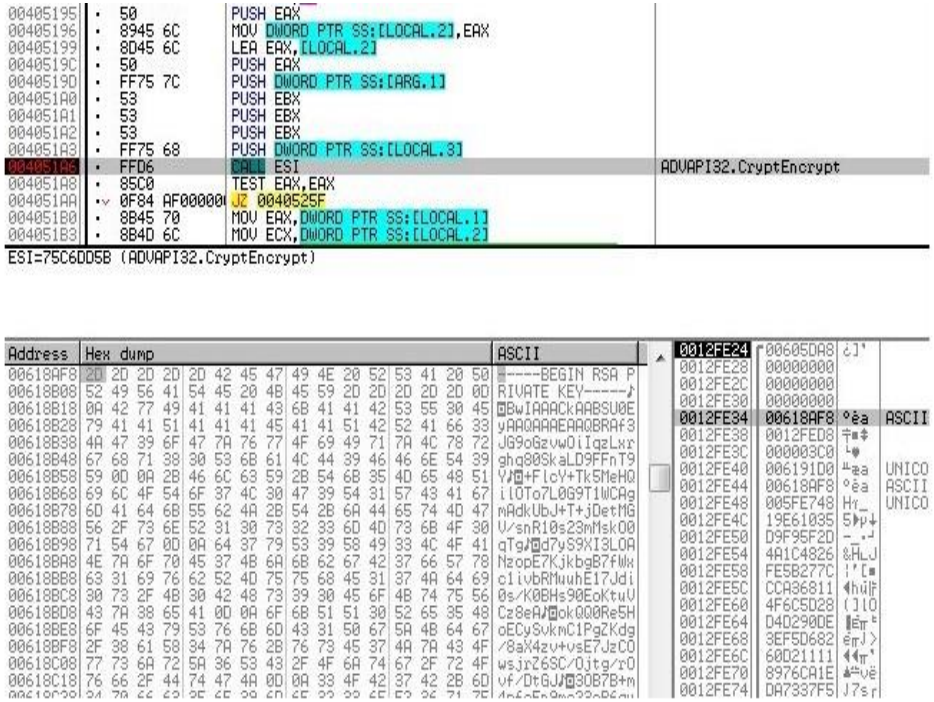
Spora ransomware

- A unique AES key is generated, exported and encrypted with hardcoded RSA key, as is shown below:



Spora ransomware

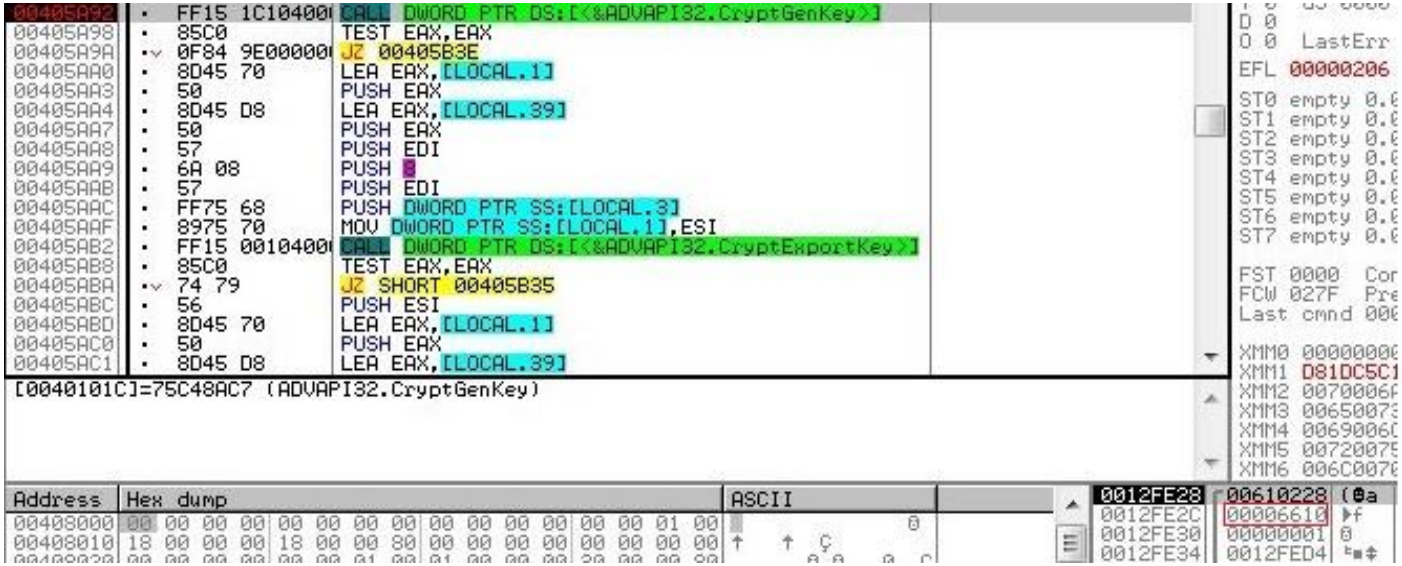
- The AES key which was generated is used to encrypt RSA private key, as well as data about infection and the victim's machine, like date, username, country code, malware id and statistics about the encrypted files:



- The encrypted content is stored in the ransom note, which will be uploaded to the attacker's website in order to make the payment

Spora ransomware

- For every file a new AES key is generated, it is encrypted using the generated RSA public key and stored at the end of every encrypted file:



- Like before, 0x610228 is a handle to a CSP, 0x6610 represents Alg_ID: CALG_AES_256
- A ransom note is created in every directory and needs to be uploaded to the website which is given; it is in russian language (it is important to mention, the malware checks if the language identifier is 0x419 (ru), if it is, the samples exits)

Spora ransomware

- Let's summarize the encryption process:

1. The malware has a hardcoded AES256 key, let's call it key1, it is used to decrypt another key.
2. A RSA2048 key is decrypted, let's call it key2.
3. A new pair of RSA1024 keys is generated, let's call them key3P(public) and key3p(private).
4. An unique AES256 key is generated, let's call it key4. It is used to encrypt key3p, it is encrypted with key2 and stored in the ransom note.
5. For every file a new AES256 key is generated, let's call it key5 (the file is encrypted using key5). key5 is finally encrypted with key3P and stored at the end of every file.

- Decryption process:

1. The victim uploads the ransom note to the website, so the attacker is able to decrypt key4 using his private RSA key.
2. The key4 is used to decrypt key3p (RSA private key)
3. The key3p is used to decrypt every key5 which was generated for every file.
4. The key5 is used to decrypt each file individually.

Spora ransomware

- There are some extensions which are attacked by the malware and some folders which are excluded because the system must remain functional to make the payment

.xls	.doc	.xlsx	.docx	.rtf	.odt	.pdf	.ppt	.pptx
.psd	.dwg	.cdr	.cd	.mdb	.1cd	.dbf	.sqlite	.accdb
.jpg	.jpeg	.tiff	.zip	.rar	.7z	.backup	.sql	.bak

windows	program files	program files (x86)	games

- No decryptor available so far, the encryption process seems to be consistent. It is probably the most complex encryption process for a ransomware so far

DMA Locker 3.0 ransomware

- It encrypts files offline like Spora or Cerber (it doesn't communicate with a C&C)
- RSA 1024 + AES 256 encryption using Windows APIs (**CryptImportKey**, **CryptGenRandom**, **CryptEncrypt**)
- Like Spora, the sample has a hardcoded RSA key which is used to encrypt AES 256 keys that are generated for each individual file
- It uses VSSadmin to delete shadow copies, logical disks and network shares are attacked

DMA Locker 3.0 ransomware

- DMA Locker doesn't attack files that have the following extensions, as well as some folders are excluded from the encryption process

```
003C2887 mov     [ebp+var_2C], offset aWindows ; "\\Windows\\"
003C288E mov     [ebp+var_28], offset aWindows_0 ; "\\WINDOWS\\"
003C2895 mov     [ebp+var_24], offset aProgramFiles ; "\\Program Files\\"
003C289C mov     [ebp+var_20], offset aProgramFilesX8 ; "\\Program Files (x86)\\"
003C28A3 mov     [ebp+var_1C], offset aGames ; "Games"
003C28AA mov     [ebp+var_18], offset aTemp ; "\\Temp"
003C28B1 mov     [ebp+var_14], offset aSamplePictures ; "\\Sample Pictures"
003C28B8 mov     [ebp+var_10], offset aSampleMusic ; "\\Sample Music"
003C28BF mov     [ebp+var_C], offset aCache ; "\\cache"
003C28C6 mov     [ebp+var_8], offset aCache_0 ; "\\Cache"
003C28CD xor     esi, esi
003C28CF nop

003C2907 mov     [ebp+var_30], offset a_exe ; ".exe"
003C290E mov     [ebp+var_2C], offset a_msi ; ".msi"
003C2915 mov     [ebp+var_28], offset a_dll ; ".dll"
003C291C mov     [ebp+var_24], offset a_pif ; ".pif"
003C2923 mov     [ebp+var_20], offset a_scr ; ".scr"
003C292A mov     [ebp+var_1C], offset a_sys ; ".sys"
003C2931 mov     [ebp+var_18], offset a_msp ; ".msp"
003C2938 mov     [ebp+var_14], offset a_com ; ".com"
003C293F mov     [ebp+var_10], offset a_lnk ; ".lnk"
003C2946 mov     [ebp+var_C], offset a_hta ; ".hta"
003C294D mov     [ebp+var_8], offset a_cpl ; ".cpl"
003C2954 mov     [ebp+var_4], offset a_msc ; ".msc"
```

- The encrypted file has the following structure: "!Encrypt!##" + (Encrypted AES key with RSA hardcoded key) + (Encrypted original content using AES key)
- A method of prevention: the presence of **start.txt** and **cryptinfo.txt** in ProgramData directory, the malware checks for them and doesn't encrypt the files (the malware drops the files when the encryption finishes, so it doesn't encrypt the files again)
- No decryptor available for this version, there are some decryptors for some older versions of DMA Locker (the encryption process is different there)

WannaCry ransomware

- Over 230.000 computers in over 150 countries were infected
- Two components: Worm + Ransomware
- The worm is looking for vulnerable SMB (Server Message Block) ports, it uses EternalBlue exploit to get on the network and DoublePulsar exploit to establish persistence and install WannaCry
- It can propagate to other vulnerable machines in the same network
- The Windows vulnerability wasn't a 0-day exploit, because Microsoft released a security patch in March 2017
- It is possible that North Korean group Lazarus to be behind the attack, because of some similarities between the WannaCry's code and a backdoor's code by Lazarus

WannaCry ransomware

- Initially, the malware is trying to connect to www.iuqerfsodp9ifjaposdfjhgosurijfaewrwergwea.com, if it succeeds, the malware exits.
- RSA 2048 + AES 128 with null initialization vector is used
- The ransomware appends .wncry extension to every encrypted file and attacks the following extensions

```
.der, .pfx, .key, .crt, .csr, .p12, .pem, .odt, .ott, .sxw, .stw, .uot, .3ds, .max, .3dm,
.ods, .ots, .sxc, .stc, .dif, .slk, .wb2, .odp, .otp, .sxd, .std, .uop, .odg, .otg, .sxm,
.mml, .lay, .lay6, .asc, .sqlite3, .sqlitedb, .sql, .accdb, .mdb, .db, .dbf, .odb, .frm, .myd,
.myi, .ibd, .mdf, .ldf, .sln, .suo, .cs, .c, .cpp, .pas, .h, .asm, .js, .cmd, .bat, .ps1,
.vbs, .vb, .pl, .dip, .dch, .sch, .brd, .jsp, .php, .asp, .rb, .java, .jar, .class, .sh, .mp3,
.wav, .swf, .fla, .wmv, .mpg, .vob, .mpeg, .asf, .avi, .mov, .mp4, .3gp, .mkv, .3g2, .flv,
.wma, .mid, .m3u, .m4u, .djvu, .svg, .ai, .psd, .nef, .tiff, .tif, .cgm, .raw, .gif, .png,
.bmp, .vcd, .iso, .backup, .zip, .rar, .7z, .gz, .tgz, .tar, .bak, .tbk, .bz2, .PAQ, .ARC,
.aes, .gpg, .vmx, .vmdk, .vdi, .sldm, .sldx, .sti, .sxi, .602, .hwp, .edb, .potm, .potx,
.ppam, .ppsx, .ppsm, .pps, .pot, .pptm, .xltm, .xltx, .xlc, .xlm, .xlt, .xlw, .xlsb, .xlsm,
.dotx, .dotm, .dot, .docm, .docb, .jpg, .jpeg, .snt, .onetoc2, .dwg, .pdf, .wk1, .wks, .123,
.rtf, .csv, .txt, .vsdx, .vsd, .eml, .msg, .ost, .pst, .pptx, .ppt, .xlsx, .xls, .docx, .doc
```

- There are some decryptors for WannaCry, but work only for Windows XP and Windows 7. The RSA key is somehow recovered from the memory, because **CryptReleaseContext** doesn't clean memory

Conclusions

Strategies to avoid loss of data:

- Backup and validate those backups regularly
- Update and patch the software
- The macros in Microsoft Word, Excel, etc. must be disabled
- Rename vssadmin.exe (the ransomware can’t use it to delete shadow copies)
- Best antivirus protection or use www.virustotal.com to scan with multiple antiviruses a suspected file
- Be informed about security events, especially malware ones

Questions?