Lazarus APT's Operation Interception Uses Signed Binary

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Malware authors have regularly used signed binaries to bypass the Apple security mechanism and infect macOS users. We came across one such sample and this time they are baiting users with job vacancies at Coinbase while silently pushing a signed binary in the background and doing their malicious activity. This is an instance of <u>Operation In(ter)ception by Lazarus</u>.

This malware under consideration is a fat binary containing x86_64 and ARM64 architecture compiled executable that can be executed in both Intel & Apple silicon machines.

```
MrXs-Mac:Desktop mr.x$ file coinbase coinbase coinbase: Mach-0 universal binary with 2 architectures: [x86_64:Mach-0 64-bit executable x86_64] [arm64:Mach-0 64-bit executable arm64] coinbase (for architecture x86_64): Mach-0 64-bit executable x86_64 coinbase (for architecture arm64): Mach-0 64-bit executable arm64
```

Figure 1 : Fat binary

The malware is a signed executable. The developer id belonged to Shankey Nohria but it has been revoked as of now.

```
MrXs-Mac:Desktop mr.x$ codesign -dvv coinbase
Executable=/Users/mr.x/Desktop/coinbase
Identifier=SelfExtractor
Format=Mach-0 universal (x86_64 arm64)
CodeDirectory v=20500 size=3673 flags=0x10000(???) hashes=109+2 location=embedded
Signature size=8978
Authority=Developer ID Application: Shankey Nohria (264HFWQH63)
Authority=Developer ID Certification Authority
Authority=Apple Root CA
Timestamp=21-Jul-2022 at 7:50:38 AM
Info.plist=not bound
TeamIdentifier=264HFWQH63
Sealed Resources=none
Internal requirements count=1 size=176
MrXs-Mac:Desktop mr.x$ spctl -a -vvv coinbase
coinbase: CSSMERR_TP_CERT_REVOKED
MrXs-Mac:Desktop mr.x$
```

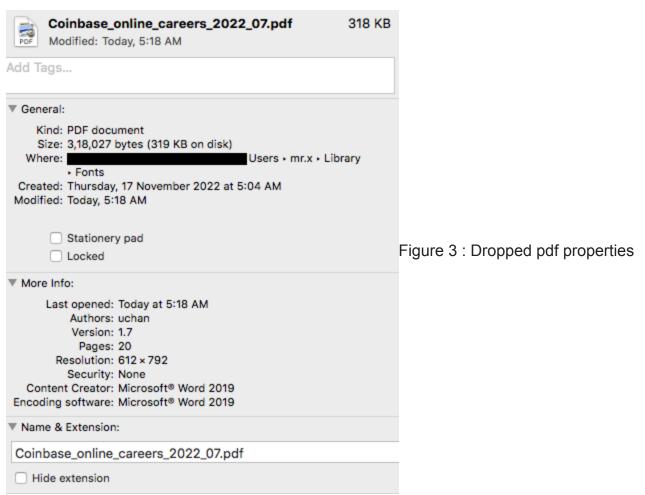
Figure 2 : Revoked certificate

When executed, it drops 4 files in the folder ~/Library/Fonts (The ~ character stands for the user's home directory).

- 1. A PDF document named Coinbase_online_careers_2022_07.pdf
- 2. A package bundle named FinderFontsUpdater.app which contains a fat binary

- 3. A downloader agent which connects to the C2 named safarifontsagent. This is also a fat binary
- 4. A zero byte file named Finder.

The PDF contains job details at Coinbase company. The PDF is created with Microsoft Word 2019, version 1.7. The author of the document is mentioned as "UChan".



As the malware executes, the pdf pops up on the screen but in the background the malware begins its malicious operation, starting with wiping the current saved state of the terminal.

```
0x7ffee625f5a0
                6f70 656e 2027 2f55 7365 7273 2f6d 722e
                                                          open '/Users/mr.
0x7ffee625f5b0
                782f 4c69 6272 6172 792f 466f
                                                          x/Library/Fonts/
                                    5f6f 6e6c 696e
                                                          Coinbase_online
0x7ffee625f5c0
                                                    655f
0x7ffee625f5d0
                                    726d 202d
0x7ffee625f5e0
                                                    6272
0x7ffee625f5f0
                          7273 2f6d 722e 782f 4c69
                                                          /Users/mr.x/Libr
0x7ffee625f600
                                                          ary/Saved Applic
                                    6420 4170
0x7ffee625f610
                6174 696f
                               5374 6174 652f
                                                          ation State/com.
                                                                                Figure 4:
0x7ffee625f620 6170 706c 652e 5465
                                                          apple.Terminal.s
0x7ffee625f630
                6176 6564
                          5374
                               6174 6527
                                         0000
                                                    0000
                                    0000
0x7ffee625f640
                0000 0000
                          0000
                               0000
                                         0000
                                              0000
                                                    0000
0x7ffee625f650
                          0000
                0000 0000
                               0000
                                    0000
                                         0000
                                              0000
0x7ffee625f660
                0000 0000
                          0000
                                    0000
                                              0000
0x7ffee625f670
                0000 0000
                          0000 0000
                                    0000
                                         0000
                                              0000
                                                    0000
0x7ffee625f680 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000
                                         0000
                                              0000
                                                    0000
0x7ffee625f690 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000
                                         0000
                                              0000
                                                    0000
```

Removing the saved state of terminal

Then it drops 2 files and then extracts those files using tar command into FinderFontsUpdater.app and safarifontsagent.

Figure 5: Extracting the dropped files into executable binaries

Once the 2 files have been extracted, LaunchAgent is created in the name of iTunes_trush with the target binary set as safarifontsagent, using the function startDaemon().

Figure 6: LaunchAgent created

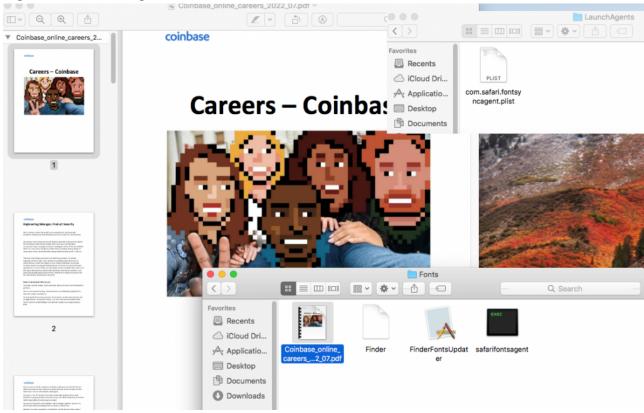


Figure 7: Dropped files

After dropping the above files, the malware executes FinderFontsUpdater.app (2nd stage).

Property	Value	
Time	1670577337.704488754	
Event	Process Execution	
PID	901	
User	mr.x	
Message	bash -c (open -a '/Users/mr.x/Library/Fonts/FinderFontsUpdater.app') 2>&1 executed by Coinbase	
UID	501	
Euid	501	
Parent Process	Coinbase	Figure 8
Process	bash	
Argc	3	
Ppid	887	
Egid	20	
Gid	20	
ls64	1	
Command Line	bash -c (open -a '/Users/mr.x/Library/Fonts/FinderFontsUpdater.app') 2>&1	
Path	/bin/bash	

: The second stage file gets executed by the malware

The main function of FinderFontsUpdater.app is to execute safarifontsagent (3rd stage) binary which communicates with the C2.

```
55
4889e5
0x100003c46
0x100003c47
0x100003c4a
0x100003c4c
                            4156
                                                     push r14
                            53
4881ec000400.
                                                     push rbx
                                                    push rbx
sub rsp, 0x400
call sym.imp.ge
mov edi, eax
call sym.imp.ge
mov r14, rax
lea rbx, [s]
mov esi, 0x400
mov rdi, rbx
0x100003c4d
0x100003c54
                            e879210000
                                                                                                   ; uid_t getuid(void)
                            89c7
e86c210000
4989c6
0x100003c59
                                                   mov rdi, rbx ; 1024 ; size_t n

call sym.imp._bzero ; void *s

movabs rax, 0x2f73726573552f ; '/Users/'
mov qword [rbx], rax
mov rsi, qword [r14]
mov edx, 0x400
mov rdi, rbx

mov rdi, rbx
0x100003c5b
0x100003c60
0x100003c63
                            488d9df0fbff.
0x100003c6a
                            be00040000
0x100003c6f
                            4889df
                            e8bf200000
48b82f557365.
488903
498b36
0x100003c72
0x100003c77
0x100003c81
0x100003c84
0x100003c87
                            ba00040000
                            4889df
e8ae200000
488d35b12400.
ba00040000
0x100003c8c
0x100003c8f
                                                     call sym.imp.__strcat_chk
lea rsi, str._Library_Fonts_safarifontsagent ; 0x10000614c ; "/Library/Fonts/safarifontsagent"
mov edx, 0x400 ; 1024
0x100003c94
0x100003c9b
0x100003ca0
0x100003ca3
                            4889df
e89a200000
                                                     mov rdi, rbx
                                                     mov rdi, rbx
0x100003ca8
                             4889df
                                                                                                   ; int64_t arg1
```

Figure 9: Function to execute the 3rd stage malware

Upon execution, the safarifontsagent calls a user defined function named DownloadFile() with couple of arguments, one of the arguments is an URL "https://example.com" appended with the user name of the victim machine which can be seen in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Argument of the DownloadFile() function

Then the malware queries the system with commands like getuid, getpwuid, getuname etc., to get information. After that, it uses the commands "sw_vers -productVersion" & "sysctlbyname hw.cpufrequency" to get information about the victim's machine.

After that the malware calls the curl_easy_init() function to get a curl handle for communication with C2.

```
e833060000
                                                  test rax, rax
je 0x1086ccf5d
             0x1086cd4b7
             0x1086cd4ba
                                 0f849dfaffff
                                 4889c3
                                 4889c3 mov rbx, rax
4c8dbdc0ebff. lea r15, [var_1440h]
             0x1086cd4c0
                                 4c89ff
                                                  mov rdi, r15
mov rsi, qword [var_1b28h]
             0x1086cd4ca
                                488bb5d8e4ff.
e8cb060000
             0x1086cd4cd
                                                 call sym.imp.strcpy
                                                                                ;[2] ; char *strcpy(char *dest, const char *src)
             0x1086cd4d4
             0x1086cd4d9
                                485936726573. movabs rcx, 0x736e6f707365723f ; '?respons'
48898c95c9eb. mov qword [rbp + rax - 0x1440], rcx
                                                                                 ;[3] ; size_t strlen(const char *s)
             0x1086cd4dc
             0x1086cd4e1
             0x1086cd4eb
                                c78405c7ebff. mov dword [rbp + rax - 0x1439], 0x2b6573
488db5c0f3ff. lea rsi, [var_c40h]
             0x1086cd4f3
             0x1086cd4fe
             0x1086cd505
                                4c89ff
                                                 call sym.imp.strcat ;[4]; char *strcat(char *s1, const char *s2)
lea rsi, [0x1086cdf10]; "wb"
                                 e891060000
             0x1086cd508
             0x1086cd50d
                                488d35fc0900.
             0x1086cd514
                                4c89e7
             0x1086cd517
                                 e894969999
                                                  call sym.imp.fopen
                                                                                ;[5] ; file*fopen(const char *filename, const char *mode)
             0x1086cd51c
                                                   mov r12, rax
                                4531f6
             0x1086cd51f
                                                  xor r14d, r14d
             0x1086cd522
             0x1086cd525
                                be12270000
                                                mov esi, 0x2712
                                                                               ; '\x12''
             0x1086cd52a
                                                  mov rdx, r15
                                               xor cax, eax
call sym.imp.curl_easy_setopt ;[6]
mov rdi, rbx
mov esi, 0x40 ; rdi
             0x1086cd52d
                                31c0
e8c2050000
             0x1086cd52f
             0x1086cd534
                                be40000000
             0x1086cd537
             0x1086cd53c
                                 8b95e4e4ffff mov edx, dword [var_1b1ch]
             0x1086cd542
                                e8ad050000 call sym.imp.curl_easy_setopt;[6]
488d9510e7ff. lea rdx, [var_18f0h]
             0x1086cd544
             0x1086cd549
             0v1086cd550
                                4889df
                                                mov rdi, rbx
mov esi, 0x2722
             0x1086cd553
                                 be22270000
                                31c0 xor eax, eax
e897050000 call sym.imp.curl_easy_setopt;[6]
             0x1086cd558
             0x1086cd55a
             0x1086cd55f
                                4889df mov rdi, rbx
be2b4e9000 mov esi, 0x4e2b
             0x1086cd562
> drr
role reg
             36332e3733352f rax ascii ('/')
             7ffee753002f 22_copy_userrwx rbx R W 0x0
    rcx
             7ffee7534cb0 22_copy_userrwx r13,rdx R W 0x63614d2d7358724d MrXs-Mac.local/mr.x/10.13/2.769000Gh/x86_64/62591041536/83965845504/
A2
             40
AØ
```

Figure 11: Curl commands to receive the payload

Then the malware opens the Finder file in 'wb' (Open for writing in binary) mode.

The malware uses the information that was gathered earlier, i.e. product version, cpu speed etc. and appends it to the url hxxps(:)//concrecapital(.)com. Then the url with the appended data is passed as an argument to curl easy setopt() function.

Figure 12: URL to get the payload from the C2

It then uses functions like curl_easy_setopt & curl_easy_perform to connect to the C2 and get the payload that will be written in the Finder file.

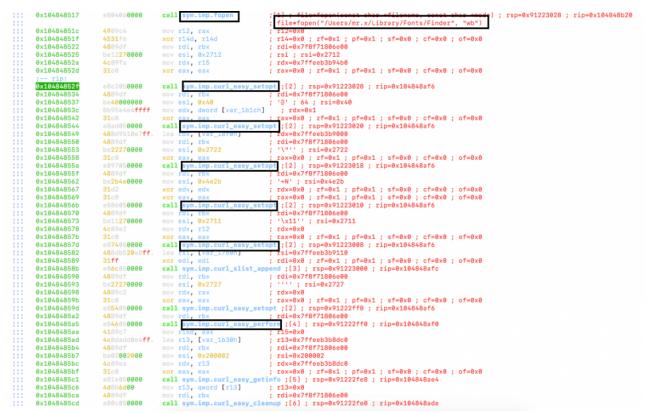


Figure 13: Finder file is opened in write mode and Curl operations in motion The C2 server was not alive to respond so we were unable to find out what the payload was.

Threat actors targeting macOS users are increasing everyday. So, as a user, one needs to be cautious when executing unknown executables. Users are requested to use a reputable security product such as "K7 Antivirus for Mac" and to keep it updated so as to stay safe from such threats.

IOCs

Hash: 4a7a1626b6baf8c917945b8fc414c8b9 (parent malware)

Detection Name: Trojan (0040f2c11)