

Sticky Keys to the Kingdom

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Sticky Keys to the Kingdom

PRE-AUTH SYSTEM EXEC ON WINDOWS IS MORE COMMON THAN YOU THINK
DENNIS MALDONADO & TIM MCGUFFIN
LARES



About Us

- Dennis Maldonado
 - Adversarial Engineer – LARES Consulting
 - Founder
 - Houston Lockport
 - Houston Area Hackers Anonymous (HAHA)
- Tim McGuffin
 - Red Team Manager – LARES Consulting
 - 10-year DEFCON Goon
 - DEFCON CTF Participant
 - Former CCDC Team Coach






History

- "How to Reset Windows Passwords" websites
 - Replace `sethc.exe` or `utilman.exe` with `cmd.exe`
 - Reboot, Press Shift +x or WIN+U
 - `net user (username) (password)`
 - Login!
- Nobody ever cleans up after themselves
- Can be used as a backdoor/persistence method
- No Windows Event Logs are generated when backdoor is executed



Implementation

- Binary Replacement
 - Replace any of the accessibility tool binaries
 - Requires elevated rights
- Registry (Debugger Method)
 - `HKLM\Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\Image File Execution Options\sethc.exe`
 - Debugger `REG_SZ C:\Windows\System32\cmd.exe`
 - Requires elevated rights





Windows Accessibility Tools

Binary	Description	How to access
C:\Windows\System32\utilhlp.exe	Accessibility shortcut keys	Shift + Home
C:\Windows\System32\UIAutomation.exe	Utility Manager	Windows Key + U
C:\Windows\System32\osk.exe	On screen keyboard	Locate the option on the screen using the mouse
C:\Windows\System32\Magnify.exe	Magnifier	Windows Key + (Equal Sign)
C:\Windows\System32\Narrator.exe	Narrator	Windows Key + Enter
C:\Windows\System32\DisplaySwitch.exe	Display Switcher	Windows Key + P
C:\Windows\System32\AtBroker.exe	Manages switching of apps between desktops	Press cmd.exe , Magnify.exe , or Narrator.exe again then lock the computer. AtBroker.exe will be executed upon locking and unlocking.



Limitations

- Elevated access or offline system required
- Replacing binary must be Digitally Signed
- Replacing binary must exist in %System32%
- Replacing binary must exist in Windows "Protected File" list
 - You can't use any old binary, but you can `cmd.exe /c file.bat`



Background

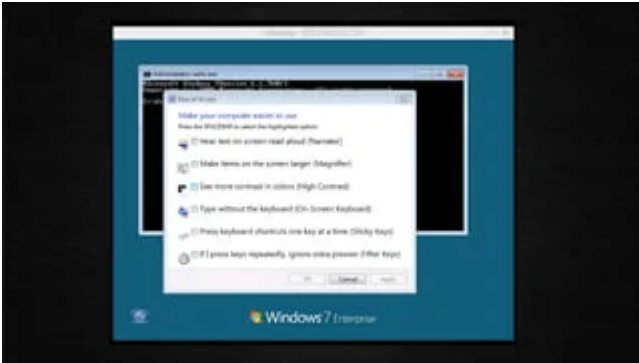
- While working with an Incident Response Team:
 - Uncovered dozens of vulnerable hosts via file checks
 - Identification was done from the filesystem side
- Missed the debugger method
- Missed any unmanaged boxes
- Needed a network-based scanner



Background

- We wanted to write our own network-based tool
 - Started down the JavaRDP/Python Path
- Ran across [@ztgrace's](#) PoC script, **Sticky Keys Hunter**
 - It worked, and was a great starting point
 - Similar to "Peeping Tom"
 - Opens a Remote Desktop connection
 - Sends keyboard presses
 - Saves screenshot to a file
- To do list including automatic command prompt detection and multi-threading





Tools Usage

- `./stickyKeysSlayer.sh -v -j 8 -t 10 targetlist.txt`
- `-v`
 - Verbose output
- `-j <num_of_jobs>`
 - Jobs to run (defaults to 1)
- `-t <time_in_seconds>`
 - Timeout in seconds (defaults to 30 seconds)
- `targetlist.txt`
 - Hosts list delimited by line

1	192.168.0.2
2	192.168.77.23
3	172.16.9.44
4	172.16.9.45
5	172.16.9.46
6	172.16.9.47
7	172.16.9.48
8	172.16.9.49
9	172.16.9.50

Limitations

- Ties up a Linux VM while scanning
 - Needed for window focus and screenshotting
- Will not alert on anything that is not `cmd.exe`
 - Ran across `taskmgr.exe`, `menc.exe`, other custom applications




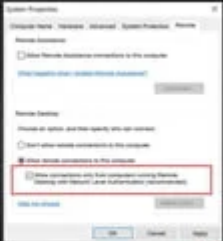
Statistics

- On a large Business ISP:
 - Over 100,000 boxes scanned
 - About 57% Command Prompts
 - 1 out of 175
- All types of Institutions
 - Educational Institutions
 - Law Offices
 - Manufacturing Facilities
 - Gaming companies
 - Etc...



Recommendations

- Remediation
 - Delete or replace the affected file (sethc.exe, utilman.exe, ...)
 - rfc.exe /scanview
 - Remove the affected registry entry
 - Treat this as an indicator of compromise
- Prevention and Detection
 - Restrict local administrative access
 - Enable full disk encryption
 - Network Level Authentication for Remote Desktop Connection
 - End point monitoring
 - Netflow analysis





Tool Release

- Code is on Github
 - <https://github.com/DennisMaldonado5/sticky-keys-slaser>
 - Contribute
 - Report issues
 - Send us feedback
- Slides
 - <http://www.slideshare.net/DennisMaldonado5/sticky-keys-to-the-kingdom>
- Demo Video
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhguu5E1>



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- 5.

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Accessibility shortcut keys Shift 5 times C:\Windows\System32\Utilman.exe Utility Manager Windows Key + U
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C:\Windows\System32\Narrator.exe Narrator Windows Key + Enter C:\Windows\System32\DisplaySwitch.exe
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- 9.

[Our Solution](#) – Sticky Key Slayer • Parallelized scanning of multiple hosts • Automated command prompt detection • Detailed logging • Error handling • Performance improvements • Bash

- 10.

- 15.

[Tools Usage](#) • [./stickyKeysSlayer.sh](#) -v -j 8 -t 10 targetlist.txt • -v • Verbose output • -j <num_of_jobs> • Jobs to run (defaults to 1) • -t <time_in_seconds> • Timeout in seconds (defaults to 30 seconds) • targetlist.txt • Hosts list delimited by line

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