

Take a “NetWalk” on the Wild Side

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Executive Summary

The NetWalker ransomware, initially known as Mailto, was first detected in August 2019. Since then, new variants were discovered throughout 2019 and the beginning of 2020, with a strong uptick noticed in March of this year.

NetWalker has noticeably evolved to a more stable and robust ransomware-as-a-service (RaaS) model, and our research suggests that the malware operators are targeting and attracting a broader range of technically advanced and enterprising criminal affiliates.

McAfee Advanced Threat Research (ATR) discovered a large sum of bitcoins linked to NetWalker which suggest its extortion efforts are effective and that many victims have had no option other than to succumb to its criminal demands.

We approached our investigation of NetWalker with some possible ideas about the threat actor behind it, only to later disprove our own hypothesis. We believe the inclusion of our thinking, and the means with which we debunked our own theory, highlight the importance of thorough research and we welcome further discussion on this topic. We believe it starts valuable discussions and helps avoid duplicate research efforts by others. We also encourage our peers in the industry to share information with us in case you have more evidence.

McAfee protects its customers against the malware covered in this blog in all its products, including personal antivirus, endpoint and gateway. To learn more about how McAfee products can defend against these types of attacks, visit our blog on [Building Adaptable Security Architecture Against NetWalker](#).

[Check out McAfee Insights](#) to stay on top of NetWalker's latest developments and intelligence on other cyber threats, all curated by the McAfee ATR team. Not only that, Insights will also help you prioritize threats, predict if your countermeasures will work and prescribe corrective actions.

Introduction

Since 2019, NetWalker ransomware has reached a vast number of different targets, mostly based in western European countries and the US. Since the end of 2019, the NetWalker gang has indicated a preference for larger organisations rather than individuals. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the adversaries behind NetWalker [clearly stated](#) that hospitals will not be targeted; whether they keep to their word remains to be seen.

The ransomware appends a random extension to infected files and uses Salsa20 encryption. It uses some tricks to avoid detection, such as a new defence evasion technique, known as reflective DLL loading, to inject a DLL from memory.

The NetWalker collective, much like those behind [Maze](#), [REvil](#) and other ransomware, threatens to publish victims' data if ransoms are not paid.

As mentioned earlier, NetWalker RaaS prioritizes quality over quantity and is looking for people who are Russian-speaking and have experience with large networks. People who already have a foothold in a potential victim's network and can exfiltrate data with ease are especially sought after. This is not surprising, considering that publishing a victims' data is part of NetWalker's model.

The following sections are dedicated to introducing the NetWalker malware and displaying the telemetry status before moving on to the technical malware analysis of the ransomware's behaviour. We will explain how the decryptor works and show some interactions between NetWalker's operators and their victims. After this, we discuss the changes in modus operandi since September 2019, especially regarding payment behaviour. Then we show our

attempts, unfruitful as they were, at discovering a link between NetWalker and previous, seemingly unrelated ransomware variants. Finally, we deliver an overview of IOCs related to NetWalker and its MITRE ATT&CK techniques.

Telemetry

Using McAfee's billion Insights sensors, we can show the global prevalence of the NetWalker ransomware.



Figure 1. McAfee MVISION Insights shows global prevalence of the NetWalker ransomware

Technical Analysis

Ransom note (pre-March 2020)

Before March 2020, the NetWalker ransom note indicated how to contact the adversary directly using anonymous email account services with random names (such as `kkeessnnkkaa@cock.li` and `hhaaxhhaaxx@tuta.io`):

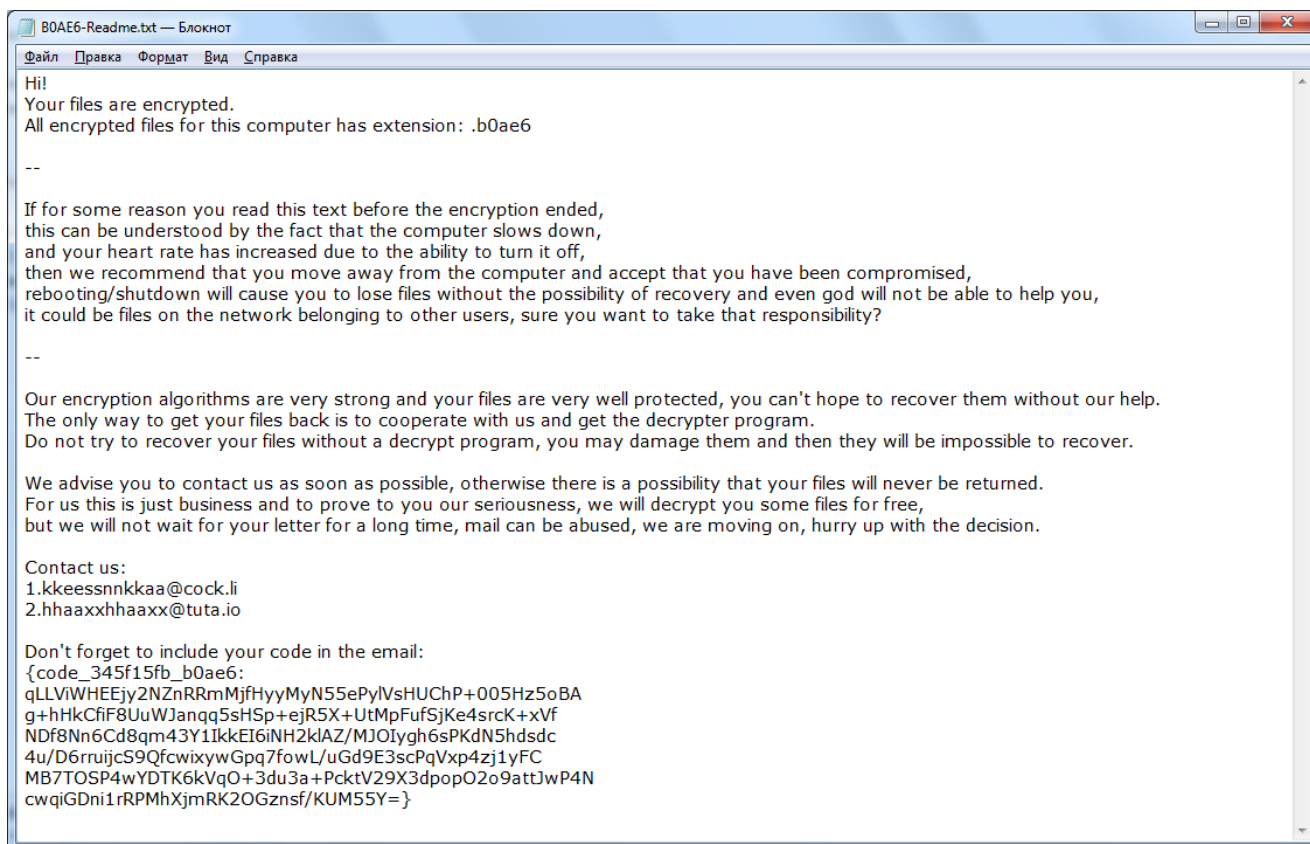


Figure 2. Example of ransom note prior to March 2020

Ransom Note (Post-March 2020)

On 12 March 2020, a researcher shared a screenshot of a new NetWalker ransom note in a [tweet](#) and we can see that the attackers have changed the contact method significantly. Email communication has been dropped completely with victims now required to make contact through the NetWalker Tor interface where, after submitting their user key, they will then be redirected to a chat with NetWalker technical support. This change in contact method coincides with underground forum postings where NetWalker revealed it was opening its RaaS up for new affiliates. The Tor page was not the only noticeable change we will highlight in this blog.

```
Hi!
Your files are encrypted.
All encrypted files for this computer has extension: .531c5d

--
If for some reason you read this text before the encryption ended,
this can be understood by the fact that the computer slows down,
and your heart rate has increased due to the ability to turn it off,
then we recommend that you move away from the computer and accept that you have been
compromised.
Rebooting/shutdown will cause you to lose files without the possibility of recovery.

--
Our encryption algorithms are very strong and your files are very well protected,
the only way to get your files back is to cooperate with us and get the decrypter program.

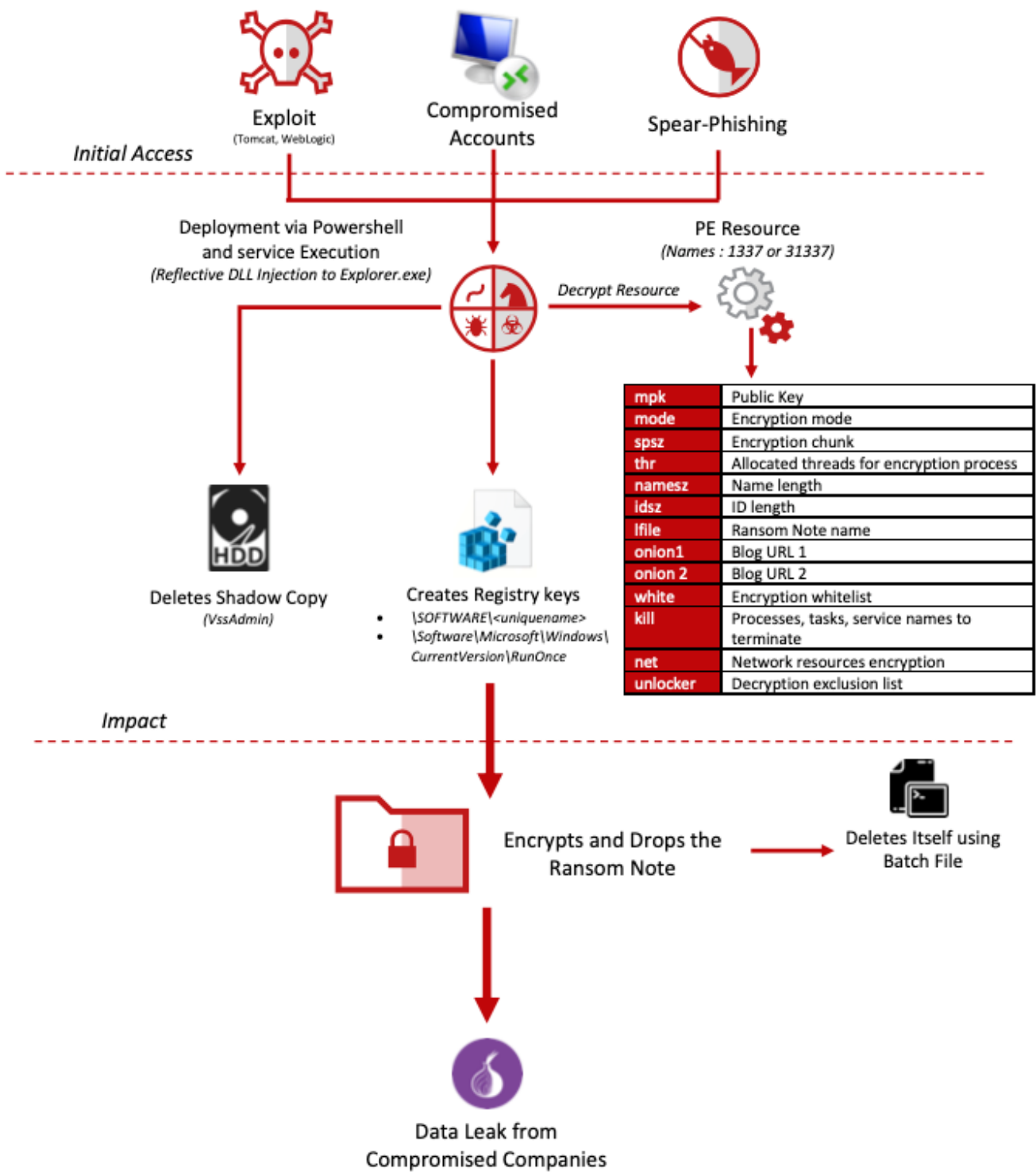
Do not try to recover your files without a decrypter program, you may damage them and then they
will be impossible to recover.

For us this is just business and to prove to you our seriousness, we will decrypt you one file
for free.
Just open our website, upload the encrypted file and get the decrypted file for free.

--
Steps to get access on our website:
1.Download and install tor-browser: https://torproject.org/
2.Open our website: rnfdsqm6wb6j6su5txkek4u4y47kp2eatvu7d6xhyn5cs4lt4pdrqqd.onion
3.Put your personal code in the input form:
{code_531c5d:
Q9r6nFG0+9ECwBRNhrCU777p40ymsAG7ISHhMXC8oZJAFoicQ
5aOgr00c2zr1dy8XU4ewt059rDZupugr1xnbqemuxeJj0J0o4I
+CDuTV7KrM6wS3xwFyAwBVljL0B77tLiWP+lnq1T/rx7hprAG
/ihJur28KGocbkZ/IQ3q05uT9IEnigaOPaBL3Pd/0IXtexR/2k
```

Figure 3. Example of ransom note after March 2020

NetWalker Analysis



<http://rnfdsgm6wb6j6su5txkek4u4y47kp2eatvu7d6xhyn5cs41t4pdrqqd.onion>

Figure 4. NetWalker behavior

NetWalker Resource Analysis (Pre-March 2020)

The NetWalker malware uses a custom resource type (1337 or 31337) containing its entire configuration. This file is extracted to memory and decrypted using the RC4 algorithm with a hard-coded key in the resource.

Before 12 March 2020, NetWalker used the email contact process between its support operation and the victims to proceed with payment and send the decryption program. To do this, NetWalker used its configuration file in the resource to set its encryption mode, the name of the ransom note, etc., and email contacts.

Name	wwllww.exe
Size	96256 bytes
File-Type	EXE
SHA 256	58e923ff158fb5aecd293b7a0e0d305296110b83c6e270786edcc4fea1c8404c
Compile time	6 December 2019

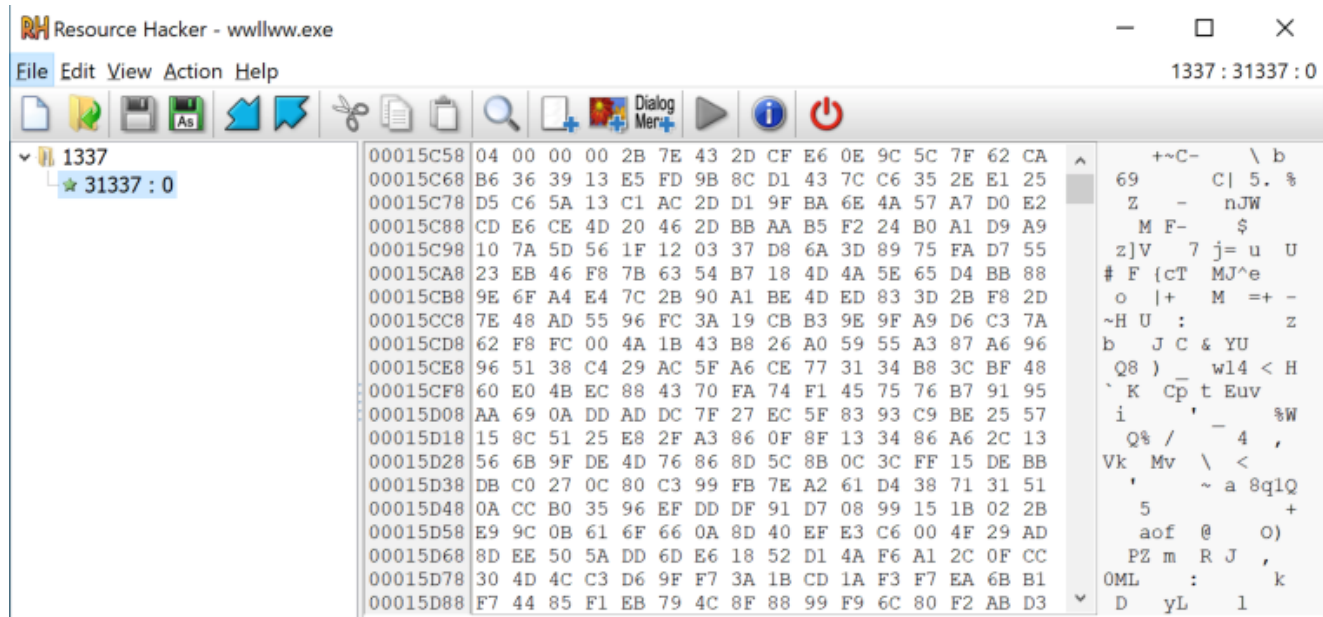


Figure 5. NetWalker resource from wwllww.exe

Once decrypted, the configuration file reveals several parameters, allowing us to understand how it works (how it constitutes the ransom note, the number of threads allocated for encryption, etc.):

mpk	Public key
mode	Encryption mode

thr	Allocated threads for encryption process
spsz	Encryption chunk
namesz	Name length
idsz	ID length
crmask	.mailto[email].{ID}
mail	Contact mail
lfile	Ransom Note name
lend	B64 encoded ransom note
white	Encryption whitelist
kill	Processes, tasks, service names to terminate
unlocker	Decryption exclusion list

NetWalker Resource Analysis (Post-March 2020)

When NetWalker changed its contact mode and switched from email to the submission of the user key directly on the web portal of the group’s blog, the configuration file in the resource also changed. We found changes in the configuration file, such as the disappearance of the contact “mail” and “crmask” fields (previously set as XXX@cock.li,XXX@tuta.io, etc., and .mailto[email].{ID}). This field was replaced by “onion1” and “onion2”, and these fields are set with the NetWalker blog URL/payment page (hxxp://rnfdsgm<snip>drqqd.onion/). We also noticed that the NetWalker developers complemented their “unlocker” field with some specific values (e.g. “psexec.exe, system, forti*.exe, fmon.exe*, etc”).

Name	cnt.ex
Size	70656 bytes
File-Type	EXE
SHA 256	26dfa8512e892dc8397c4ccbbe10efbcf85029bc2ad7b6b6fe17d26f946a01bb
Compile time	2 May 2020

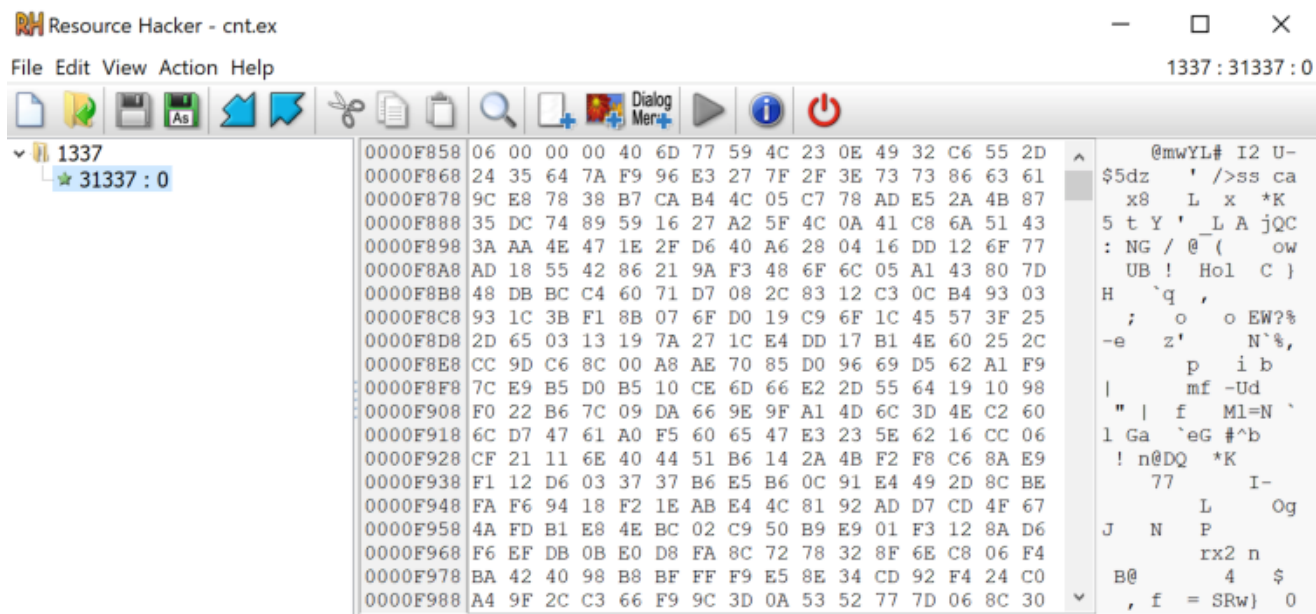


Figure 6. NetWalker resource from cnt.ex

Usually, attackers use RC_DATA or a malicious BITMAP. The latter can, for example, be a regular Bitmap (open matrix image format used by Windows) that can be used by malware to execute code or as a payload dropper. The image's pixels are an actual binary representation of the payload. This process can be summarized as Exe -> Resources -> BMP with embedded data in pixels fetched and decrypted by, e.g. a DLL -> Payload), etc. However, in this case, they use this special custom type to increase obfuscation. The NetWalker developers chose custom types by using 1337 or 31337 structs, so the resource format does not change. However, as we said, several values have changed or been replaced:

mpk	Public Key
mode	Encryption mode
spsz	Encryption chunk
thr	Allocated threads for encryption process
namesz	Name length
idsz	ID length
lfile	Ransom Note name
onion1	Blog URL 1
onion2	Blog URL 2
white	Encryption whitelist

kill	Processes, tasks, service names to terminate
net	Network resources encryption
unlocker	Decryption exclusion list
lend	B64 encoded ransom note

NetWalker Executable Analysis (Post-March 2020)

The malware sample used for this blog post has the same information:

Name	c21ecd18f0bbb28112240013ad42dad5c01d20927791239ada5b61e1c6f5f010
Size	70656 bytes
File-Type	EXE
SHA 256	c21ecd18f0bbb28112240013ad42dad5c01d20927791239ada5b61e1c6f5f010
Compile time	2 May 2020

The unpacked malware is a binary file of 32 bits that can be found as an EXE file.

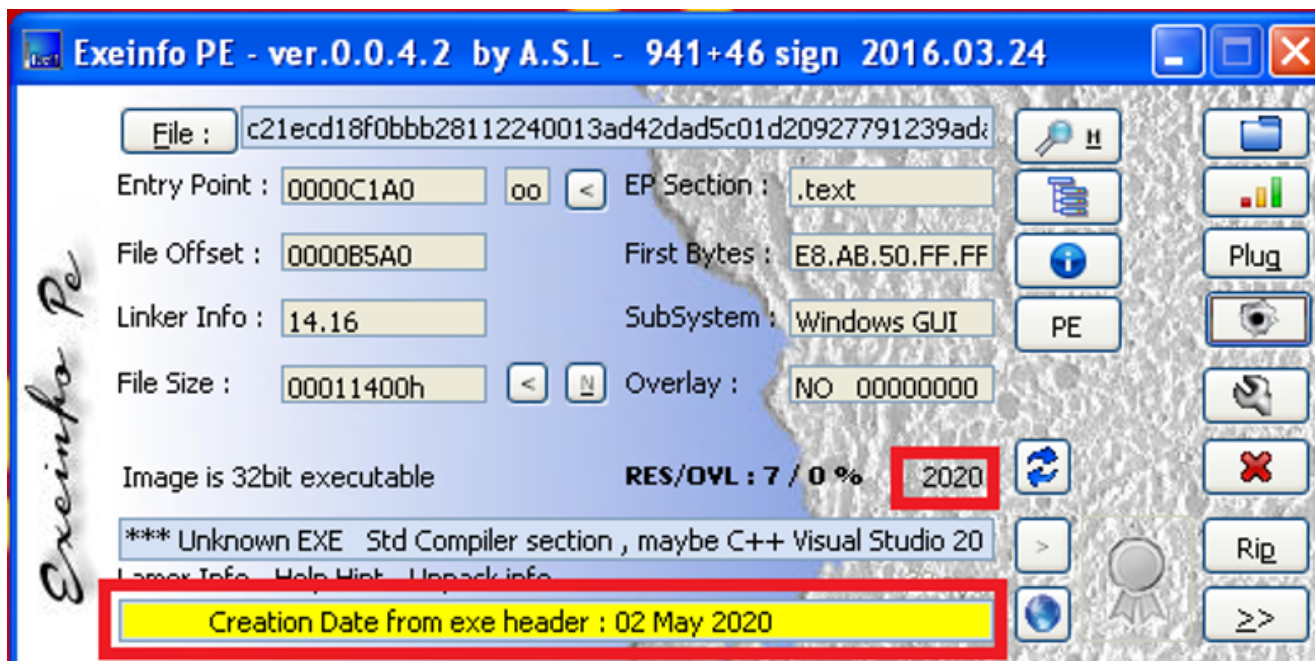


Figure 7. Information sample of the malware

The malware's first action is to combine all the required functions it needs into one large function, combining the modules already loaded in Windows with additional DLLs as described below.

Instead of searching for the function in the usual way, the malware makes a CRC32 hash of the name of each function and compares with hardcoded values. Additionally, instead of using the function "GetProcAddress", the malware uses the Process Environment Block (PEB) to make analysis harder.

```

NetwalkerGetModuleAddressByCRC32HashFromModuleNameFunction proc near
; CODE XREF: NetwalkerGetModulesByCRC32AndFunctionsFunction+10↓p
; NetwalkerGetModulesByCRC32AndFunctionsFunction+4FD↓p ...
arg_0      = dword ptr  4
    push    ebx
    push    esi
    push    edi
    call    NetwalkerGetPEBAddressFunction
    test    eax, eax
    jz      short _exit
    mov     edi, [eax+0Ch]
    add     edi, 14h
    mov     esi, [edi]
    cmp     esi, edi
    jz      short _exit
    mov     ebx, [esp+0Ch+arg_0]
    nop     dword ptr [eax+00h]

_loop_found_module:
; CODE XREF: NetwalkerGetModuleAddressByCRC32HashFromModuleNameFunction+3C↓j
    movzx   eax, word ptr [esi+24h]
    push    1
    shr     eax, 1
    push    eax
    push    dword ptr [esi+28h]
    call    NetwalkerCRC32PolynomialFunction
    add     esp, 0Ch
    cmp     eax, ebx
    jz      short _exit_return_module_address
    mov     esi, [esi]
    cmp     esi, edi
    jnz     short _loop_found_module

_exit:
; CODE XREF: NetwalkerGetModuleAddressByCRC32HashFromModuleNameFunction+A↑j
; NetwalkerGetModuleAddressByCRC32HashFromModuleNameFunction+16↑j
    pop     edi
    pop     esi
    xor     eax, eax    ; return FALSE
    pop     ebx
    retn

;
_exit_return_module_address:
; CODE XREF: NetwalkerGetModuleAddressByCRC32HashFromModuleNameFunction+36↑j
    mov     eax, [esi+10h]
    pop     edi
    pop     esi
    pop     ebx
    retn
NetwalkerGetModuleAddressByCRC32HashFromModuleNameFunction endp

```

Figure 8. Get the module accessing the PEB and using a CRC32

If the module cannot be discovered, it will load with "LdrLoadDll", a native function of Windows, to try avoiding hooks in the usual functions, e.g. "LoadLibraryW":

00401D56	85F6	test	esi, esi	
00401D58	75 42	jnz	short <_get_advapi_functions>	
00401D5A	68 1C104100	push	offset <aAdvapi32_dll>	UNICODE "advapi32.dll"
00401D5F	8D4424 14	lea	eax, [esp+14]	
00401D63	50	push	eax	
00401D64	A1 64124100	mov	eax, [<NetwalkerGlobalVarMemoryAddressOfBufferReserved>]	
00401D69	8B40 50	mov	eax, [eax+50]	
00401D6C	FFD0	call	eax	
00401D6E	8D4424 0C	lea	eax, [esp+C]	
00401D72	897424 0C	mov	[esp+C], esi	
00401D76	50	push	eax	
00401D77	8D4424 14	lea	eax, [esp+14]	
00401D7B	50	push	eax	
00401D7C	A1 64124100	mov	eax, [<NetwalkerGlobalVarMemoryAddressOfBufferReserved>]	
00401D81	56	push	esi	
00401D82	56	push	esi	
00401D83	8B40 64	mov	eax, [eax+64]	
00401D86	FFD0	call	eax	ntdll.LdrLoadDll
00401D88	85C0	test	eax, eax	
00401D8A	0F88 6E020000	js	00401FFE	
00401D90	8B7424 0C	mov	esi, [esp+C]	
00401D94	85F6	test	esi, esi	
00401D96	0F84 62020000	je	00401FFE	

Figure 9. Load library using LdrLoadDll

```

.text:004017A2      push     esi
.text:004017A3      call    NetwalkerGetFunctionFromModuleByCRC32HashFromFunctionNameFunction
.text:004017A8      mov     ecx, NetwalkerGlobalVarMemoryAddressOfBufferReserved
.text:004017AE      push   0CCE95612h
.text:004017B3      push   esi
.text:004017B4      mov     [ecx+0DCh], eax
.text:004017BA      call    NetwalkerGetFunctionFromModuleByCRC32HashFromFunctionNameFunction
.text:004017BF      mov     ecx, NetwalkerGlobalVarMemoryAddressOfBufferReserved
.text:004017C5      push   95C03D0h
.text:004017CA      push   esi
.text:004017CB      mov     [ecx+0E0h], eax
.text:004017D1      call    NetwalkerGetFunctionFromModuleByCRC32HashFromFunctionNameFunction
.text:004017D6      mov     ecx, NetwalkerGlobalVarMemoryAddressOfBufferReserved
.text:004017DC      push   0A7FB4165h
.text:004017E1      push   esi
.text:004017E2      mov     [ecx+0E4h], eax
.text:004017E8      call    NetwalkerGetFunctionFromModuleByCRC32HashFromFunctionNameFunction
.text:004017ED      mov     ecx, NetwalkerGlobalVarMemoryAddressOfBufferReserved
.text:004017F3      push   8B5819AEh
.text:004017F8      push   esi
.text:004017F9      mov     [ecx+0E8h], eax
.text:004017FF      call    NetwalkerGetFunctionFromModuleByCRC32HashFromFunctionNameFunction
.text:00401804      mov     ecx, NetwalkerGlobalVarMemoryAddressOfBufferReserved
.text:0040180A      push   998508E2h
.text:0040180F      push   esi
.text:00401810      mov     [ecx+0ECh], eax
.text:00401816      call    NetwalkerGetFunctionFromModuleByCRC32HashFromFunctionNameFunction
.text:0040181B      mov     ecx, NetwalkerGlobalVarMemoryAddressOfBufferReserved
.text:00401821      push   2519B15Ah
.text:00401826      push   esi
.text:00401827      mov     [ecx+0F0h], eax
.text:0040182D      call    NetwalkerGetFunctionFromModuleByCRC32HashFromFunctionNameFunction
.text:00401832      mov     ecx, NetwalkerGlobalVarMemoryAddressOfBufferReserved
.text:00401838      push   0D2E536B7h
.text:0040183D      push   esi
.text:0040183E      mov     [ecx+0F4h], eax
.text:00401844      call    NetwalkerGetFunctionFromModuleByCRC32HashFromFunctionNameFunction
.text:00401849      mov     ecx, NetwalkerGlobalVarMemoryAddressOfBufferReserved
.text:0040184F      add    esp, 40h
.text:00401852      push   0F54D69C8h

```

Figure 10. Get functions from module, e.g. using a CRC32 hash

If the malware fails to get a function, it will go to a “sleep” call and terminate itself.

Later, the malware extracts the configuration file from a resource with a custom type and a custom name using the functions “FindResourceA”, “LockResource”, “LoadResource” and “SizeOfResource”. The file extracted in memory is decrypted using the RC4 algorithm with a hardcoded key in the resource.

The struct of the resource is:

- 4 bytes -> The size of the hardcoded key to decrypt the configuration file.
- Variable size -> the hardcoded key to decrypt the configuration file.
- Variable size -> the configuration file encrypted.

The malware reads the first 4 bytes and reserves memory with the size of the password and reserves memory of the resource minus 4 bytes and the size of the password. Finally, it decrypts the configuration file:

```
.text:00403AA2      test     eax, eax
.text:00403AA4      jz      _exit___
.text:00403AA6      push    ebp
.text:00403AAB      call    NetwalkerGetMemoryAddressToPointerStructWithFunctionsAddressesFunction
.text:00403AB0      push    ebx
.text:00403AB1      push    edi
.text:00403AB2      mov     ecx, [eax+14Ch] ; SizeOfResource
.text:00403AB8      call    ecx ; SizeOfResource
.text:00403ABA      mov     esi, eax
.text:00403ABC      push    esi
.text:00403ABD      call    NetwalkerReserveMemoryHeapFunction
.text:00403AC2      mov     ebp, eax
.text:00403AC4      add     esp, 4
.text:00403AC7      test    ebp, ebp
.text:00403AC9      jz      short _return_flag_and_exit
.text:00403ACB      push    esi
.text:00403ACC      push    [esp+18h+var_4]
.text:00403AD0      push    ebp
.text:00403AD1      call    NetwalkerMencpyWrapperFunction
.text:00403AD6      mov     ebx, [ebp+0]
.text:00403AD9      lea    edi, [ebp+4]
.text:00403ADC      push    ebx
.text:00403ADD      call    NetwalkerRtlAllocateHeapWrapperFunction
.text:00403AE2      add     esp, 10h
.text:00403AE5      mov     [esp+14h+var_4], eax
.text:00403AE9      test    eax, eax
.text:00403AEB      jz      short _check_critical_flag
.text:00403AED      push    ebx
.text:00403AEE      push    edi
.text:00403AEF      push    eax
.text:00403AF0      call    NetwalkerMencpyWrapperFunction
.text:00403AF5      sub     esi, ebx
.text:00403AF7      add     edi, ebx
.text:00403AF9      sub     esi, 4
.text:00403AFC      push    esi
.text:00403AFD      mov     esi, [esp+24h+var_4]
.text:00403B01      push    edi
.text:00403B02      push    ebx
.text:00403B03      push    esi
.text:00403B04      call    NetwalkerRC4DecryptFunction
```

Figure 11. Get configuration file and decrypt it

If the malware fails to get the configuration file, it will terminate itself.

After getting the configuration file, the malware will parse it and save the fields in memory and write in the registry information to encrypt the files in the machine. The malware will try first to write in the registry-hive “HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE” but if it cannot create it, it will use the registry-hive “HKEY_CURRENT_USER”:

```

.text:00402E58      push    1
.text:00402E5A      mov     eax, [eax+1C8h]
.text:00402E60      push    0
.text:00402E62      call   eax
.text:00402E64      mov     [esi+10h], eax
.text:00402E67      _manage_registry:                                ; CODE XREF: NetwalkerWriteDataInRegistryFunction+1A3↑j
.text:00402E67                                          ; NetwalkerWriteDataInRegistryFunction+1B1↑j ...
.text:00402E67      push    0
.text:00402E69      push    80000002h                                ; HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE
.text:00402E6E      call   NetwalkerManageRegistryFunction
.text:00402E73      add     esp, 8
.text:00402E76      test   eax, eax
.text:00402E78      jnz    _get_memory_pointer_address
.text:00402E7E      push    eax
.text:00402E7F      push    80000001h                                ; HKEY_CURRENT_USER
.text:00402E84      call   NetwalkerManageRegistryFunction
.text:00402E89      add     esp, 8
.text:00402E8C      test   eax, eax
.text:00402E8E      jnz    _get_memory_pointer_address
.text:00402E94      mov     ecx, NetwalkerGlobalVarReserveMemory
.text:00402E9A      lea    eax, [ecx+4Ch]
.text:00402E9D      push    eax
.text:00402E9E      lea    eax, [ecx+50h]
.text:00402EA1      push    eax
.text:00402EA2      lea    eax, [ecx+44h]
.text:00402EA5      push    eax
.text:00402EA6      lea    eax, [ecx+48h]
.text:00402EA9      push    eax
.text:00402EAA      push    dword ptr [ecx+40h]
.text:00402EAD      call   sub_406130
.text:00402EB2      add     esp, 14h

```

Figure 12. Write in the registry

After the writing in the registry has been completed, it will get some privileges using a token as SE_DEBUG_PRIVILEGE and SE_IMPERSONATE_PRIVILEGE:

```

.text:0040DA53      nov     [esp+74h+var_3C], 65006Ch
.text:0040DA5B      nov     [esp+74h+var_38], 650067h ; SeDebugPrivilege
.text:0040DA63      nov     [esp+74h+var_34], ax
.text:0040DA68      jmp     short _memset
.text:0040DA6A      ; -----
.text:0040DA6A      _check_eax:                                       ; CODE XREF: NtwalkerGetSpecialPrivilegesInTokenFunction+D↑j
.text:0040DA6A      cmp     eax, 1
.text:0040DA6D      jnz    _exit
.text:0040DA73      xor     eax, eax                                  ; set at NULL to end string
.text:0040DA75      nov     [esp+74h+var_30], 650053h
.text:0040DA7D      nov     [esp+74h+var_2C], 6D00649h
.text:0040DA85      lea    edi, [esp+74h+var_30]
.text:0040DA89      nov     [esp+74h+var_28], 650070h
.text:0040DA91      nov     [esp+74h+var_24], 730072h
.text:0040DA99      nov     [esp+74h+var_20], 6E006Fh
.text:0040DAA1      nov     [esp+74h+var_1C], 740061h
.text:0040DAA9      nov     [esp+74h+var_18], 500065h
.text:0040DAB1      nov     [esp+74h+var_14], 690072h
.text:0040DAB9      nov     [esp+74h+var_10], 690076h
.text:0040DAC1      nov     [esp+74h+var_C], 65006Ch
.text:0040DAC9      nov     [esp+74h+var_8], 650067h ; SeImpersonatePrivilege
.text:0040DAD1      nov     word ptr [esp+74h+var_4], ax
.text:0040DAD6      _memset:                                          ; CODE XREF: NtwalkerGetSpecialPrivilegesInTokenFunction+58↑j
.text:0040DAD6      push    10h
.text:0040DAD8      lea    eax, [esp+78h+var_64]
.text:0040DADC      push    0
.text:0040DADE      push    eax
.text:0040DAE4      call   NetwalkerWrapperMmemsetFunction
.text:0040DAE7      add     esp, 0Ch
.text:0040DAE7      call   NetwalkerGetMemoryAddressToPointerStructWithFunctionsAddressesFunction
.text:0040DAEC      lea    ecx, [esp+74h+var_6C]
.text:0040DAF0      push    ecx
.text:0040DAF1      push    edi
.text:0040DAF2      mov     eax, [eax+218h]
.text:0040DAF8      push    0
.text:0040DAFA      call   eax                                       ; LookupPrivilegeValueW
.text:0040DAFC      test   eax, eax
.text:0040DAFE      jnz    short _prepare_open_process_token

```

Figure 13. Get some special privileges in the token

Later, the malware creates three threads, one to get information about the machine, such as the operating system version, one to get processes and the last one to get services in the system.

After this step, it will get the system directory and use “VSSadmin” to delete the Volume Shadow copies of the system. Volume Shadow copies can contain copies of the encrypted files and would be an option to restore from if no backup exists.

```
.text:00400E3
.text:00400E3 _get_system_directory:          ; CODE XREF: NetwalkerGeySystemDirectoryWAndDeleteShadowVolumessWithUssadminFunction+2Ffj
.text:00400E3      call     NetwalkerGetMemoryAddressToPointerStructWithFunctionsAddressesFunction
.text:00400E8      push    104h
.text:00400ED      push    esi
.text:00400EE      mov     eax, [eax+130h]
.text:00400F4      call   eax          ; GetSystemDirectoryW
.text:00400F6      test   eax, eax
.text:00400F8      jz     _get_peb
.text:00400FE      push   ebx
.text:00400FF      push   ebp
.text:0040100      push   edi
.text:0040101      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_A8], 76005Ch
.text:0040109      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_A4], 730073h
.text:0040111      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_A0], 640061h
.text:0040119      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_9C], 69006Dh
.text:0040121      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_98], 2E006Eh
.text:0040129      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_94], 780065h
.text:0040131      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_90], 65h
.text:0040139      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_8C], 640020h
.text:0040141      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_88], 6C0065h
.text:0040149      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_84], 740065h
.text:0040151      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_80], 200065h
.text:0040159      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_7C], 680073h
.text:0040161      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_78], 640061h
.text:0040169      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_74], 77006Fh
.text:0040171      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_70], 200073h
.text:0040179      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_6C], 61002Fh
.text:0040181      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_68], 6C006Ch
.text:0040189      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_64], 2F0020h
.text:0040191      mov    duword ptr [esp+0BCh+uar_60], 750071h
.text:0040199      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_5C], 650069h
.text:00401A1      mov    [esp+0BCh+var_58], 74h ; ussadmin.exe delete shadows /all /quiet
.text:00401A9      call   NetwalkerGetMemoryAddressToPointerStructWithFunctionsAddressesFunction
```

Figure 14. Delete the shadow volumes

Later, the malware will enumerate the logical units, prepare the new extension for the future encrypted files, based on the size that is defined in the ransomware config with a random extension, and encrypt all files in the fixed type units and remote units with the new extension.

```
.text:0040D560
.text:0040D560 _wcslen:          ; CODE XREF: NetwalkerStartMainCriticalPart+13Ffj
.text:0040D567      lea    ebx, ds:0[esi*2]
.text:0040D569      add    ebx, ebp
.text:0040D56A      push   ebx
.text:0040D56A      call   NetwalkerWCSLENFunction
.text:0040D56F      add    esp, 4
.text:0040D572      test   eax, eax
.text:0040D574      jz     short _more_wcslen
.text:0040D576      push   ebx
.text:0040D577      call   NetwalkerReserveMemoryAndCopyInsideDataFunction
.text:0040D57C      mov    edi, eax
.text:0040D57E      add    esp, 4
.text:0040D581      test   edi, edi
.text:0040D583      jz     short _more_wcslen
.text:0040D585      call   NetwalkerGetMemoryAddressToPointerStructWithFunctionsAddressesFunction
.text:0040D58A      push   ebx
.text:0040D58B      mov    ecx, [eax+0FCh]
.text:0040D591      call   ecx          ; GetDriveTypeW
.text:0040D593      cmp    eax, 4          ; DRIVE_REMOTE
.text:0040D596      jnz    short _crypt_remote
.text:0040D598      push   0Ch
.text:0040D59A      call   NetwalkerReserveMemoryHeapFunction
.text:0040D59F      add    esp, 4
.text:0040D5A2      test   eax, eax
.text:0040D5A4      jz     short _more_wcslen
.text:0040D5A6      push   eax
.text:0040D5A7      mov    [eax+4], edi
.text:0040D5AA      push   offset NetwalkerStartCryptProcedureFunction
.text:0040D5AF      jmp    short _call_to_the_function_to_will_use_the_crypto_function_needed
.text:0040D5B1 ; -----
```

Figure 15. Crypt the files

After all these steps have been completed, it will create the ransom note on the desktop using the functions “SHGetFolderPathW” and “CreateFileW”. Subsequently, it will write the ransom note from the memory into a new file with the function “WriteFile”. The malware will create the ransom note in the root folder (for example “c:\”) of each logical unit. Next, it will launch “notepad.exe” with an argument to the ransom note file to show the user what happened on the system:

```
.text:00403442      push      0
.text:00403444      push      edi
.text:00403445      mov       eax, [eax+258h]
.text:00403448      push     10h
.text:0040344D      push     0
.text:0040344F      call     eax          ; SHGetFolderPathW (Desktop)
.text:00403451      test     eax, eax
.text:00403453      jnz     _release_memory
.text:00403459      mov     dword ptr [esp+8Ch+var_7C], eax
.text:0040345D      lea     eax, [esp+8Ch+var_7C]
.text:00403461      push     eax
.text:00403462      mov     eax, NetwalkerGlobalVarReserveMemory
.text:00403467      push     dword ptr [eax+68h]
.text:0040346A      push     ebp
.text:0040346B      call    NetwalkerJoinDesktopPathWithRansomNoteNameFunction
.text:00403470      add     esp, 0Ch
.text:00403473      test     eax, eax
.text:00403475      jz      _release_memory
.text:0040347B      mov     eax, NetwalkerGlobalVarReserveMemory
.text:00403480      push     dword ptr [eax+70h]
.text:00403483      push     dword ptr [eax+74h]
.text:00403486      push     dword ptr [esp+94h+var_7C]
.text:0040348A      call    NetwalkerCreateFileRansomNoteAndWriteItAndCloseHandleFunction
.text:0040348F      add     esp, 0Ch
.text:00403492      test     eax, eax
.text:00403494      jz      _release_memory_
.text:0040349A      cmp     [esp+8Ch+arg_4], 0
.text:004034A2      jz      _release_memory_
.text:004034A8      xor     eax, eax
.text:004034AA      mov     [esp+8Ch+var_60], 6E005Ch
.text:004034B2      push     104h
.text:004034B7      mov     dword ptr [esp+90h+var_5C], 74006Fh
.text:004034BF      mov     [esp+90h+var_58], 700065h
.text:004034C7      mov     [esp+90h+var_54], 640061h
.text:004034CF      mov     [esp+90h+var_50], 65002Eh
.text:004034D7      mov     [esp+90h+var_4C], 650078h
.text:004034DF      mov     [esp+90h+var_48], ax ; notepad.exe
.text:004034E4      call    NetwalkerReserveMemoryFunctionForUnicodeFunction
```

Figure 16. Creation of the ransom note in the desktop and root units

Finally, after the encryption of the files and creation of the ransom note, the malware creates a bat file in the %temp% folder of the machine with a temporary name and writes the content to destroy itself using the program “taskkill”. The batch script will delete the malware sample with its path using the command “del” and finally delete the bat file with the command “del %0%”. Of course, as the malware uses the “del” command without destroying itself before the deletion, it can be recovered with some forensic tools with luck (the same can also be said for the bat file).

This way the malware tries to remove itself from the machine to avoid being detected and analyzed by security researchers:


```

.text:00403896      call     ecx             ; GetTempFileNameW
.text:00403898      test    eax, eax
.text:0040389A      jz      _release_memory_
.text:004038A0      xor     eax, eax
.text:004038A2      mov     dword ptr [esp+0A0h+var_78], 62002Eh
.text:004038A4      mov     [esp+0A0h+var_74], 740061h
.text:004038A6      mov     [esp+0A0h+var_70], ax ; .bat
.text:004038A8      call   NetWalkerGetMemoryAddressToPointerStructWithFunctionsAddressesFunction
.text:004038AC      lea    ecx, [esp+0A0h+var_78]
.text:004038B0      push   ecx
.text:004038B2      push   esi
.text:004038B4      mov     eax, [eax+30h]
.text:004038B6      call   eax             ; wscat
.text:004038B8      push   ebx
.text:004038BA      call   NetWalkerStrlenFunction
.text:004038BC      push   eax
.text:004038BE      push   ebx
.text:004038C0      push   esi
.text:004038C2      call   NetWalkerCreateFileRansomNoteAndWriteItAndCloseHandleFunction
.text:004038C4      add    esp, 18h
.text:004038C6      test   eax, eax
.text:004038C8      jz     short _release_memory_
.text:004038CA      push   44h
.text:004038CC      lea    eax, [esp+0A4h+var_44]
.text:004038CE      push   0
.text:004038D0      push   eax
.text:004038D2      call   NetWalkerWrapperMensetFunction
.text:004038D4      push   10h
.text:004038D6      lea    eax, [esp+0B0h+var_54]
.text:004038D8      push   0
.text:004038DA      push   eax
.text:004038DC      call   NetWalkerWrapperMensetFunction
.text:004038DE      add    esp, 18h
.text:004038E0      mov     [esp+0A0h+var_18], 1
.text:004038E2      xor     eax, eax
.text:004038E4      mov     [esp+0A0h+var_14], ax
.text:004038E6      call   NetWalkerGetMemoryAddressToPointerStructWithFunctionsAddressesFunction
.text:004038E8      lea    ecx, [esp+0A0h+var_54]
.text:004038EA      push   ecx
.text:004038EC      lea    ecx, [esp+0A4h+var_44]

```

Figure 17. Get Temp path and make a temporary file as a bat and launch it

Finally, the malware will finish with “ExitProcess”.

Decryptor

When a NetWalker victim goes through technical support (see an example of this below) and pays the ransom demanded by the group they will be able to download the decryptor to clean up their environment.

Operator: I can see from log you decrypted 2 files, the txt will be decrypted too
07.05.20 [13:22]

I don't know. \$14,500 is really our limit. It's probably a little more than what the rebuilding costs are but I think decryption will be faster. We're open to going with either option, but if you can accept \$14,500 then we have a deal.

You
07.05.20 [16:16]

Operator: ok, 14.500
07.05.20 [17:14]

Operator: we can make you a a 10% discount if you pay in 7 days time
07.05.20 [10:50]

Figure 18. Conversation with NetWalker operators

The download is done directly from the NetWalker Tor site, where the payment page switches to a download page certifying that the payment was made and received:

Invoice for payment You have left 5 days 19 hours 39 minutes 31 seconds Status: Waiting for payment

You can buy the decrypter program for your computer(s).

The amount before the increase is

If there is no payment before **15.06.20 [03:33]**, the price will increase by **x2** times and will be

Decrypter for: **COMPUTER(S):**

```
1P3/zSq8ezm64Fx3SZDiizxE+kGjXuGmOK5M66fyZ9GptG41Zj
AoeHPjSiZd5TrKfrV1WrcJLL0d9AivAhLL3BtTr3kKjouPs8UZ
4XG9N9F1UG6M9M6L7B-1m4G-PP-hst789-1st /-8891X
```

Bitcoin address: Amount for payment:

You paid: **0.00000000 BTC**

Invoice for payment Status: **Payed**

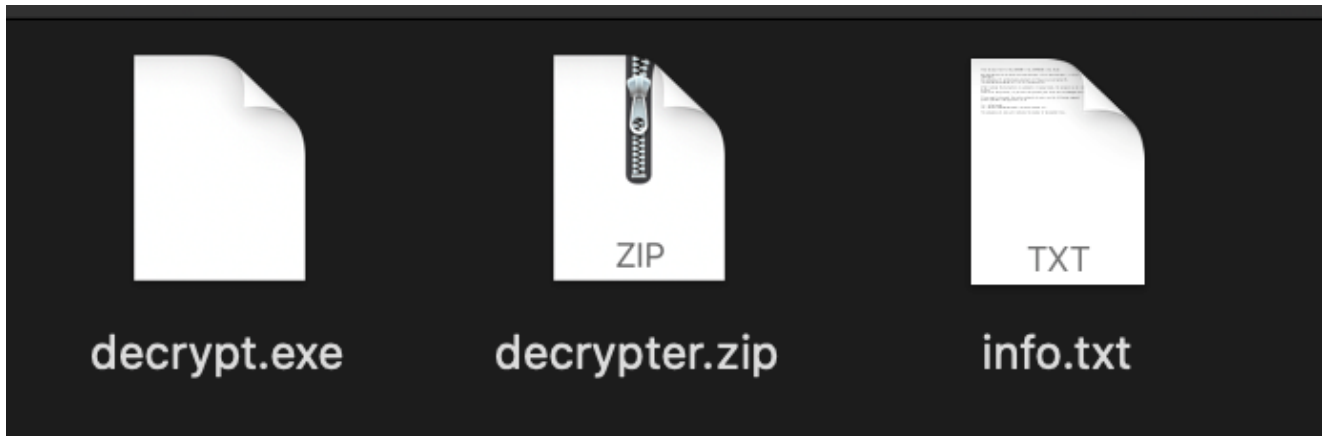
Payment received. You can download the decrypter program

Decrypter for: **ALL NETWORK / ALL COMPUTERS / ALL FILES**

[Download decrypter](#)

Figure 19. Decryptor download

The decryptor is delivered in a zip archive containing the decryptor executable and a note explaining how to run the program correctly:



```
info.txt
This decrypt file for ALL NETWORK / ALL COMPUTERS / ALL FILES

Run decrypt.exe on PC which you want decrypt. Click "Auto decrypt" -> click "delete
crypter note file" -> click "decrypt".
The program will automatically decrypt all files on an encrypted PC.
The decryption program will fit all encrypted PCs.

After running the decryption in automatic or manual mode, the program can be closed only
when the close button becomes active,
never kill the process, if you kill the process your files will be damaged and they will
not be able to recover.

If you want to decrypt the entire network at once, use the following command:
psexec <params> "decrypt.exe" /S /D
/s - silent mode.
/d - delete lending(optional, not work without /s).

The program exit code will indicate the number of decrypted files. |
```

Figure 20. Decryptor delivery

The program launches a graphical interface allowing the user to decipher their workstation automatically or manually:

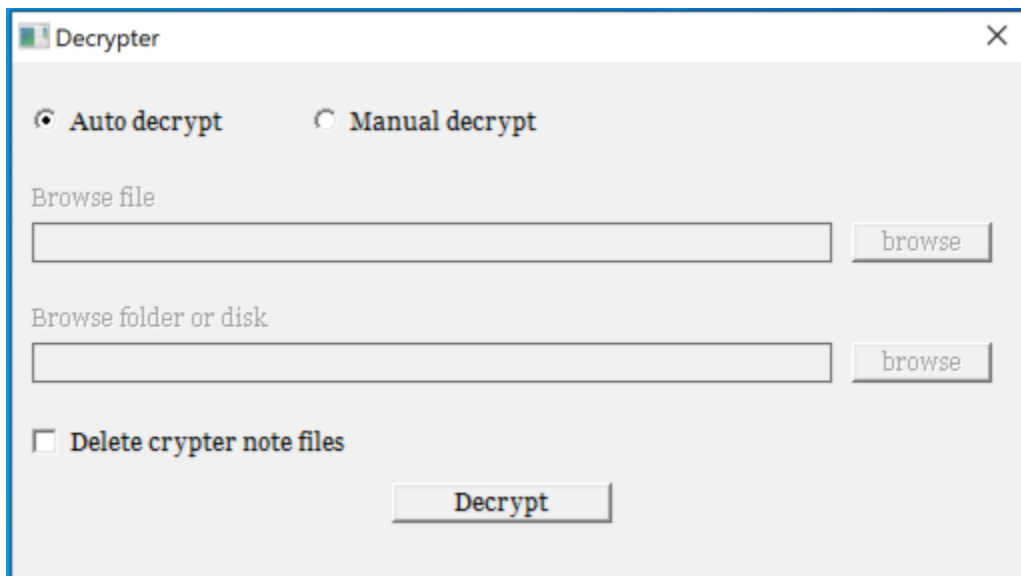


Figure 21. Decryptor execution

At the end of the decryption process, the program indicates the number of decrypted files, deletes the ransom note if the user has checked that option, and terminates, leaving the user to resume their work peacefully:

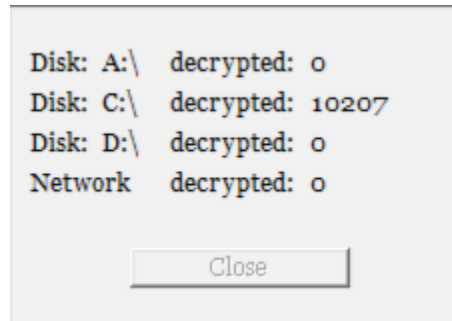


Figure 22. Decryptor has finished the decryption process

The decryptor program appears unique and is linked to one victim specifically. In our example, it only decrypts the files belonging to the victim who made the payment from the user key specified in the ransom note.

Underground Advertising

In March 2020, the moniker Bugatti began actively advertising the NetWalker Ransomware-as-a-Service on two popular underground fora. Bugatti seems to have joined the underground scene in February 2020 but claims to have been active with NetWalker ransomware since September 2019. We have seen NetWalker activity before March but there has been a noticeable uptick in larger victims since their advertisement. For a relatively new ransomware it has been well received and respected among other cybercriminals as compared to, for instance, [Nemty ransomware](#). The strength of NetWalker's reputation is such that our current hypothesis is that the individual behind Bugatti is most likely a well-respected and experienced cybercriminal, even though it is a new moniker.

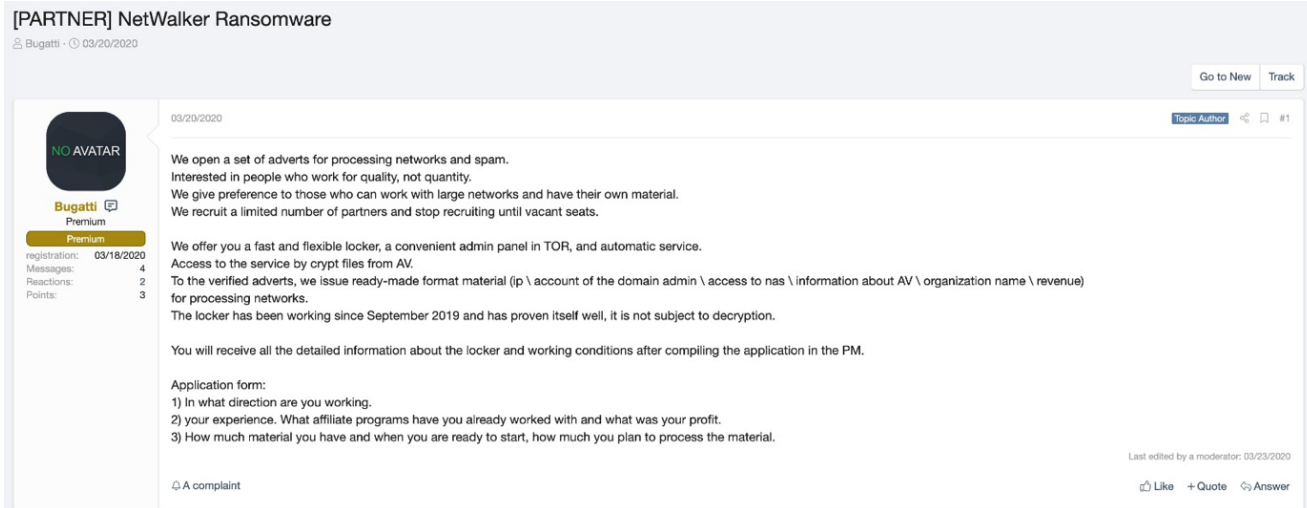


Figure 23. Bugatti advertising NetWalker on an underground forum

Bugatti provides regular updates on the improvements in the ransomware, such as the popular Invoke-ReflectivePEInjection method, also commonly used by Sodinokibi. In addition to the improvements in the ransomware, open slots for new affiliates are advertised. Bugatti strongly emphasized that they are primarily looking for experienced affiliates that focus on compromising the complete networks of organizations as opposed to end users. NetWalker is clearly following in the footsteps of its illustrious targeted ransomware peers like Sodinokibi, Maze and Ryuk.

One forum message in particular caught our attention as it included screenshots of several partial bitcoin addresses and USD amounts. This was most likely done to showcase the financial success of the ransomware. We have seen a similar posting in the past with the influential Sodinokibi affiliate Lalartu, so we decided to follow the money once more.

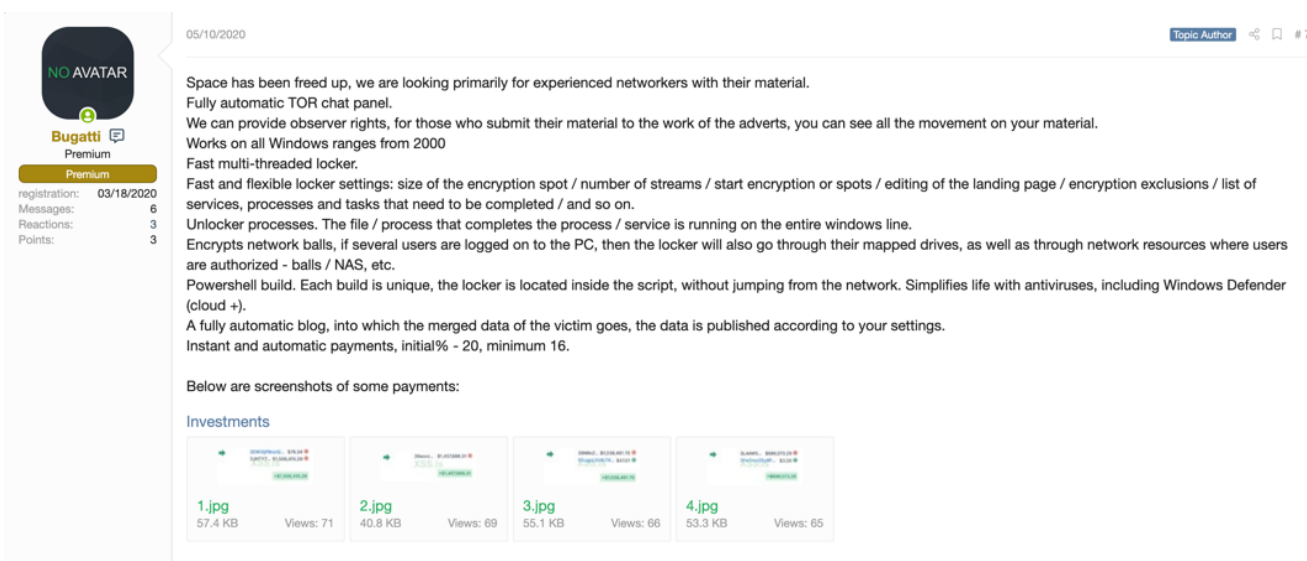


Figure 24. Bugatti is looking for advanced affiliates and shows samples of BTC payments

With the help of CipherTrace software we were able to find the complete BTC addresses from the screenshot and investigate the ledger further:

Screenshot 1



A screenshot of a ledger entry. On the left, a green arrow points to the right. The main content shows two lines of text: "3DW3ijP8nziQ... \$76.34" and "3JHTYZ... \$1,506,415.29". Each line is followed by a red globe icon. A large, semi-transparent "XSS.is" watermark is centered over the text. Below the second line, a green rounded rectangle contains the text "+\$1,506,415.29".

3JHTYZhRmMcq7WCKRzFN98vWvAZk792w9J

Screenshot 2



A screenshot of a ledger entry. On the left, a green arrow points to the right. The main content shows one line of text: "39aovz... \$1,457,666.31" followed by a red globe icon. A large, semi-transparent "XSS.is" watermark is centered over the text. Below the line, a green rounded rectangle contains the text "+\$1,457,666.31".

39aovzbz5rGoQdKjDm6JiybkSu1uGdVJ2V

Screenshot 3



A screenshot of a ledger entry. On the left, a green arrow points to the right. The main content shows two lines of text: "39NRnZ... \$1,038,491.70" and "3DJqpb3V4LTK... \$47.01". Each line is followed by a red globe icon. A large, semi-transparent "XSS.is" watermark is centered over the text. Below the second line, a green rounded rectangle contains the text "+\$1,038,491.70".

39NRnZtgACDVhhmc7RwmvH9ZDUKTNwwaeB

Screenshot 4



3L4AW5... \$696,073.29 

3Fw5meZ6y4P... \$3.20 

XSS.IS

+\$696,073.29

3L4AW5kHnUCZBBjg2j1LBFCUN1RsHPLxCs

Following the Money

In the transactions mentioned in the underground forum post, the ransom amount paid by the victims is presumably shown. Since the bitcoin blockchain is a publicly accessible ledger, we can follow the money and see where the ransomware actors are transferring it to. In the case of the four posted transactions above, the full amount paid by the victim was transferred to two addresses (these addresses begin with bc1q98 and 1DgLhG respectively). It is safe to say that these two bitcoin addresses are under control of the NetWalker actors. We then proceeded on to analyze all incoming transactions to these two addresses and we were able to make the following observations:

- The first incoming transaction occurs on 1 March 2020.
- On 30 March 2020 the first incoming transaction appears where the amount is split between 4 different bitcoin addresses. A split like this is typically seen in Ransomware-as-a-Service, where the ransom payment is split between the RaaS operators and the affiliate who caused the infection. In this first transaction, the split is 80%, 10% and two 5% portions. This split matches the advertisement on the underground forum (80% – 20%).
- The two 5% portions of the ransom payments that are split, seem to be consistently transferred to the two bitcoin addresses we revealed earlier (bc1q98 and 1DgLhG).
- While the beneficiaries of the 5% cuts remain the same, the beneficiary of the 10% cut seems to change over time. Based on the forum post we assume these addresses also belong to the NetWalker actors.
- Payments to the bc1q98 and 1DgLhG addresses that are not being split continue up until the end of May. Possibly the initial NetWalker operators added a RaaS operation, while continuing to cause NetWalker infections themselves.

- While analyzing the bitcoin addresses that received 80% or more of the transaction amount, we noticed that there are some addresses that receive payments multiple times. A possible explanation could be that the address is configured as payout addresses for a certain campaign or affiliate. We identified 30 unique bitcoin addresses that seem to be the beneficiary of this larger portion of the ransom transaction. Some of these only received one payment but there are several that received multiple payments.
- In the two addresses uncovered by tracing the transactions a total of 641 bitcoin is held on 27 July 2020. Which at the current market value of bitcoin is worth well over 7 million USD.

Amounts Extorted

Working under the hypothesis that all the incoming transactions are ransomware payments; we can make the following observations:

- We found 23 transactions where the ransom payments were not split up and the beneficiaries are the two bitcoin addresses found by following the transactions mentioned in the underground forum post. The total amount of bitcoin extorted this way between 1 March 2020 and 27 July 2020 is 677 BTC. Additionally, the amount received from remaining transactions following the Ransomware-as-a-Service scheme by these addresses between 1 March 2020 and 27 July 2020 is 188 BTC.
- In the transactions that are split, the largest amount (usually 80% to 90% of the total transaction value) is presumably transferred to the affiliate that caused the infection. When we summed up these largest portions, we saw a total of 1723 BTC being transferred to affiliates.
- The total amount of extorted bitcoin that has been uncovered by tracing transactions to these NetWalker related addresses is 2795 BTC between 1 March 2020 and 27 July 2020. By using historic bitcoin to USD exchange rates, we estimate a total of 25 million USD was extorted with these NetWalker related transactions.

Even though we do not have complete visibility into the BTC flow before NetWalker started ramping up, one thing is certain, this quarter alone it has been highly successful at extorting organisations for large amounts of money. All this at a time when many sectors are struggling because people are sheltering in place and governments are trying to keep businesses from going bankrupt. NetWalker is making millions off the backs of legitimate companies.

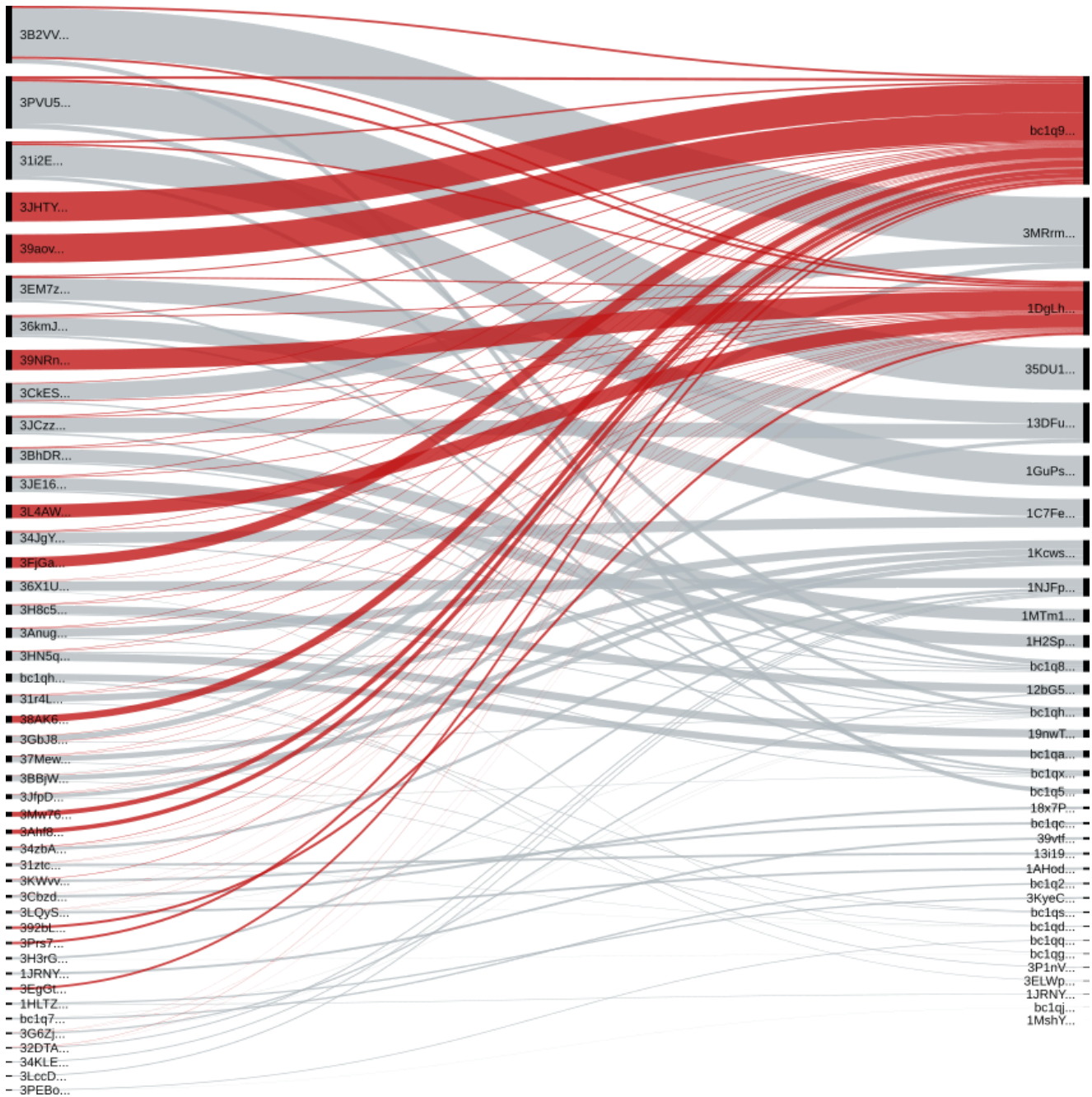


Figure 25. Overview of uncovered bitcoin transactions, highlighting the two identified actor addresses.

Observed Changes

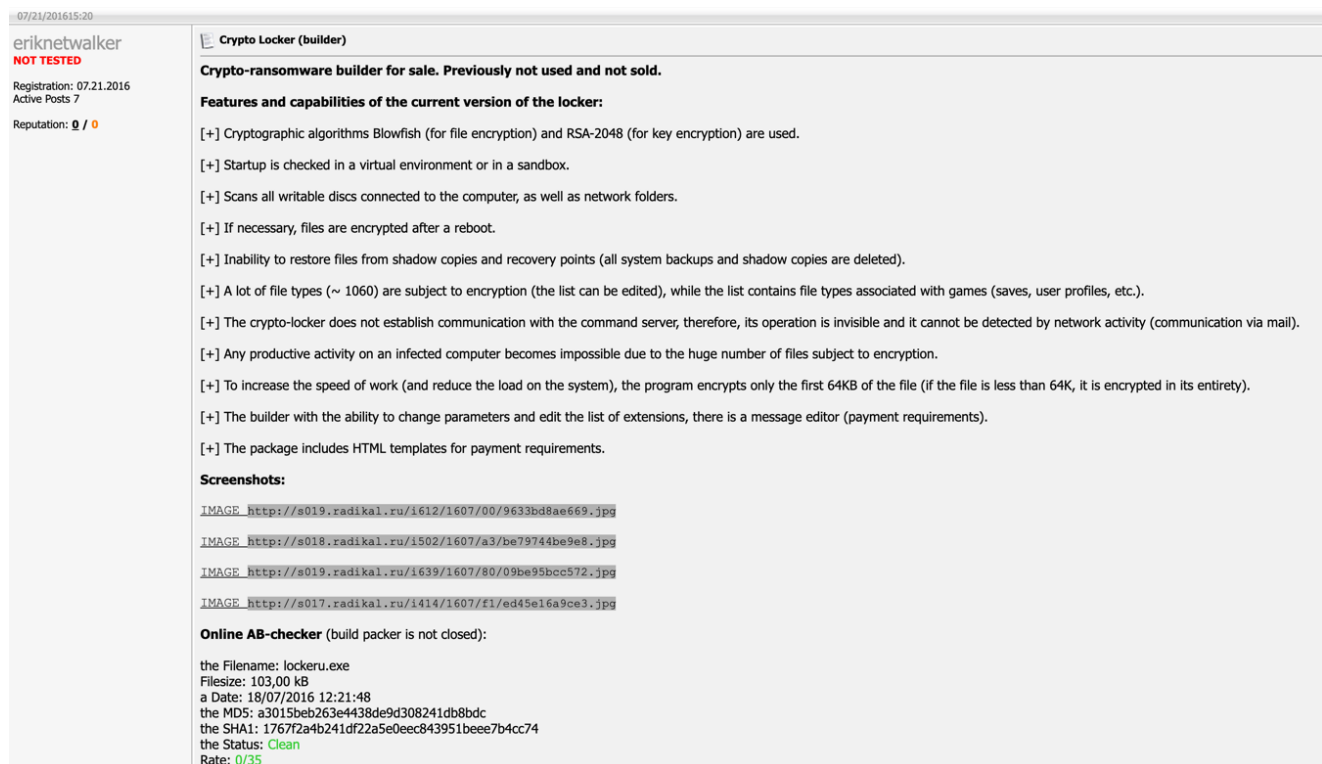
While talking about the impact of NetWalker with our partners, we learned that the change in modus operandi not only affected the way the actors communicate with their victims. When there was a change from email communication to a dedicated Tor hidden service, the actors also moved away from using legacy bitcoin addresses to SegWit addresses. The benefits of using the newer SegWit addresses include faster transaction time and lower transaction cost. The NetWalker advertisement on the underground forum mentions instant and fully

automatic payments around the time of this observed change. This makes us believe the ransomware actors were professionalizing their operation just before expanding to the Ransomware-as-a-Service model.

Comparison with Previous Ransomware

Given the sudden appearance of NetWalker ransomware and the associated threat actor, it suggests that some prior knowledge on ransomware development or underground presence had to be in place. Armed with this hypothesis, we searched for possible links to underground actors and other ransomware strains that might fit the bill. We came across one threat actor offering ransomware that caught our attention. It was the use of the name NetWalker, in combination with a strong ransomware connection, that sparked our interest.

Some years ago, a threat actor using the moniker Eriknetwalker was advertising ransomware on several underground forums. We found posts from 2016 and the latest public activity was around June 2019, several months before NetWalker ransomware made its appearance.



07/21/2016 15:20

eriknetwalker
NOT TESTED
Registration: 07.21.2016
Active Posts 7
Reputation: 0 / 0

Crypto Locker (builder)

Crypto-ransomware builder for sale. Previously not used and not sold.

Features and capabilities of the current version of the locker:

- [+] Cryptographic algorithms Blowfish (for file encryption) and RSA-2048 (for key encryption) are used.
- [+] Startup is checked in a virtual environment or in a sandbox.
- [+] Scans all writable discs connected to the computer, as well as network folders.
- [+] If necessary, files are encrypted after a reboot.
- [+] Inability to restore files from shadow copies and recovery points (all system backups and shadow copies are deleted).
- [+] A lot of file types (~ 1060) are subject to encryption (the list can be edited), while the list contains file types associated with games (saves, user profiles, etc.).
- [+] The crypto-locker does not establish communication with the command server, therefore, its operation is invisible and it cannot be detected by network activity (communication via mail).
- [+] Any productive activity on an infected computer becomes impossible due to the huge number of files subject to encryption.
- [+] To increase the speed of work (and reduce the load on the system), the program encrypts only the first 64KB of the file (if the file is less than 64K, it is encrypted in its entirety).
- [+] The builder with the ability to change parameters and edit the list of extensions, there is a message editor (payment requirements).
- [+] The package includes HTML templates for payment requirements.

Screenshots:

IMAGE <http://s019.radikal.ru/i612/1607/00/9633bd8ae669.jpg>

IMAGE <http://s018.radikal.ru/i502/1607/a3/be79744be9e8.jpg>

IMAGE <http://s019.radikal.ru/i639/1607/80/09be95bcc572.jpg>

IMAGE <http://s017.radikal.ru/i414/1607/f1/ed45e16a9ce3.jpg>

Online AB-checker (build packer is not closed):

the Filename: lockeru.exe
Filesize: 103,00 kB
a Date: 18/07/2016 12:21:48
the MD5: a3015beb263e4438de9d308241db8bdc
the SHA1: 1767f2a4b241df22a5e0eec843951beee7b4cc74
the Status: **Clean**
Rate: 0/35

Figure 26. Eriknetwalker began advertising their ransomware in 2016 (Google-translated from Russian)

Based on our underground research, we linked the moniker Eriknetwalker to the development and/or distribution of Amnesia, Bomber and Scarab ransomware. Eriknetwalker stopped advertising ransomware around June 2019. Therefore, we decided to perform a comparative analysis between the different ransomware strains linked to Eriknetwalker and some of the earliest versions of NetWalker we could find.

The goal of this comparative analysis was to identify whether there was an overlap between source codes. Such overlap could suggest a stronger link between the current NetWalker version and the other ransomware versions from Eriknetwalker, possibly even explaining the name overlap.

To execute the analysis, we used several tools one of which was the binary visualization tool Veles, which dynamically translates binary information into an abstract visualization that allows us to identify and compare patterns.

The different types of ransomware we began analyzing were the variants of Amnesia, Scarab, and NetWalker.

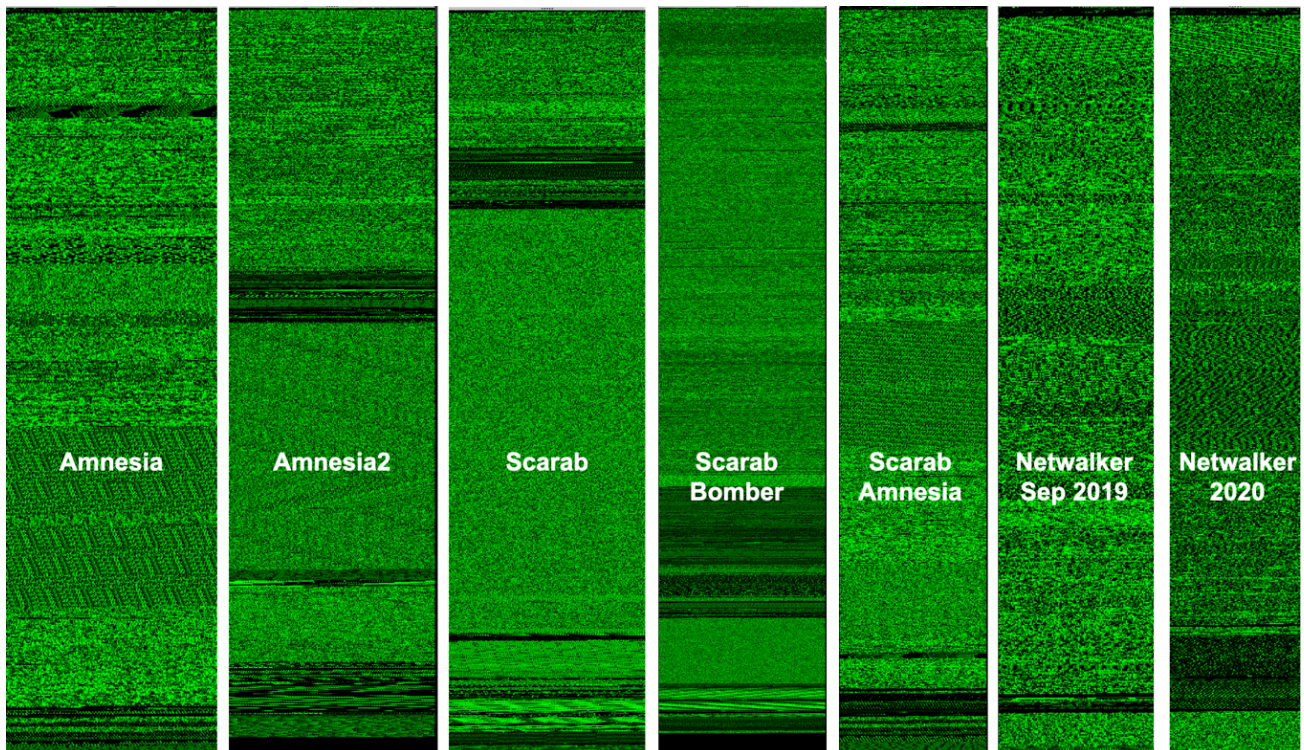


Figure 27. Flat visualization of binary data of the different ransomware variants

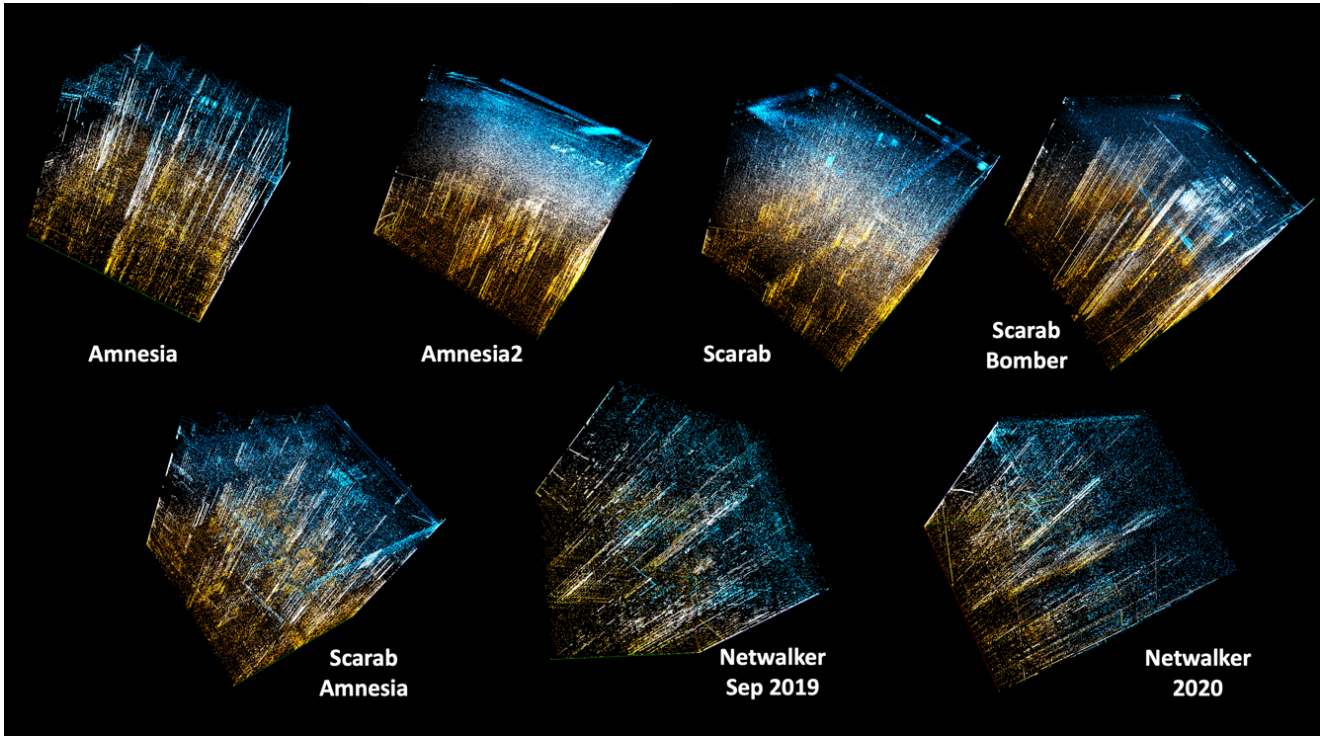


Figure 28. 3D visualization of binary data of the different ransomware variants

Visualizing data in such a manner is a way to use the human brain to quickly identify patterns and be able to draw comparisons between objects. In our case, we see that, based on the binary data visualized in Figures 27 and 28, the ransomware binaries do yield differences that we cannot ignore.

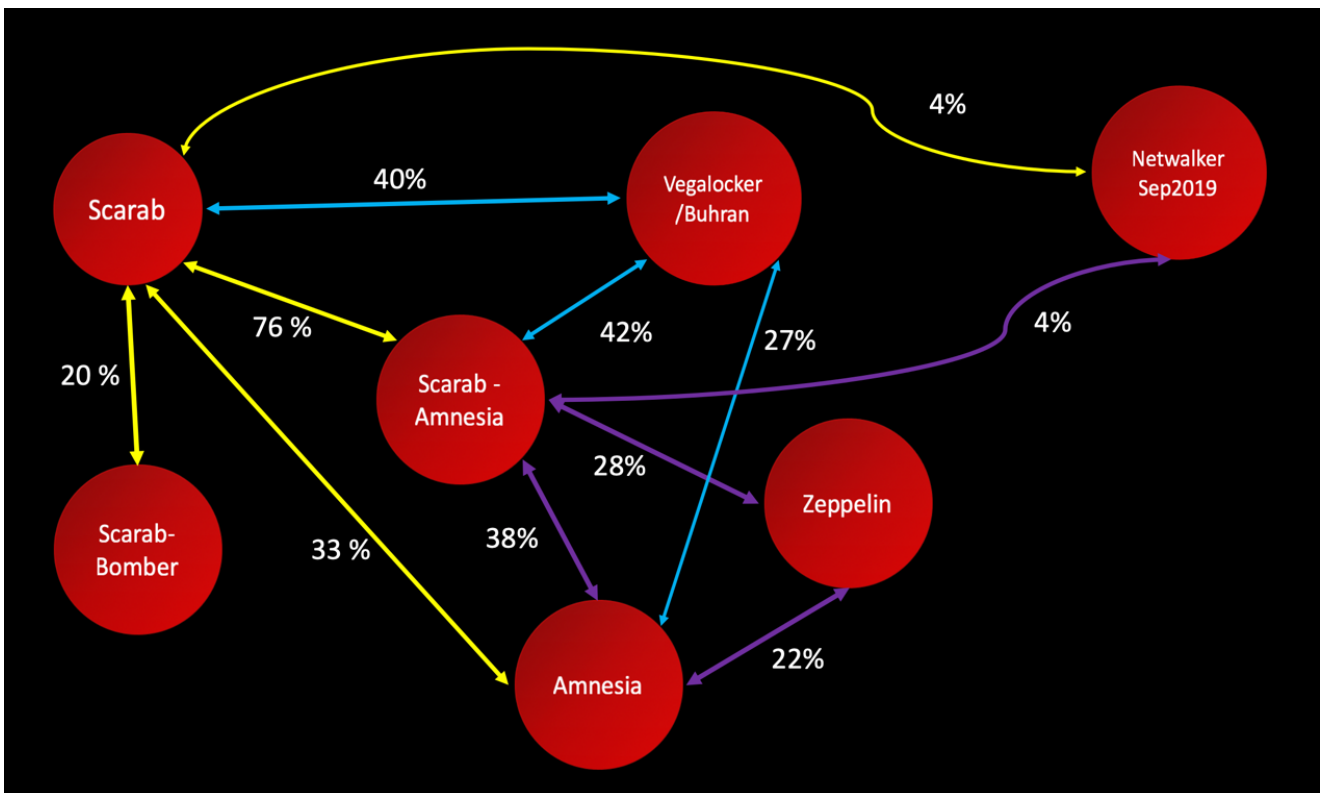


Figure 29. Comparison of source code results

Figure 29 shows the results of a source code similarity analysis led on the different variants of ransomware named in the figure itself. Interesting enough, Scarab and Amnesia show a higher overlap with Buran and Zeppelin than the early NetWalker samples. The percentages shown are the amount of code that is similar between two variants.

As illustrated in the overview, the September 2019 NetWalker version has a different codebase from the ErikNetWalker-linked ransomware variants. This finding disproves our earlier hypothesis that NetWalker is linked to the older Amnesia variants based on code overlap.

Often, research teams do not publish their results when it disproves their own hypothesis. However, for the sake of transparency, we decided to include our research efforts.

YARA Rules

We uploaded a [YARA rule](#) to detect almost all the samples observed in the wild to date.

Indicators of Compromise

During our investigation we have observed numerous IoCs linked to NetWalker ransomware. To obtain them please visit our McAfee [ATR GitHub site](#), or get the latest NetWalker IoCs and intelligence on many other threats with [McAfee Insights](#).

MITRE ATT&CK Techniques

The below techniques were based on our research and complemented with research from industry peers.

- **Initial Access**
 - Exploit Public-Facing Application (T1190) : Exploit Tomcat, Exploit WebLogic
 - Spear phishing Attachment (T1566.001): Phishing email
 - Valid Accounts (T1078): RDP compromised
- **Execution**
 - PowerShell (T1059.001): PowerShell Script
 - Command and Scripting Interpreter: Windows Command Shell (003)
 - Service Execution (T1569.002): PsExec
 - Native API (T1106): Use Windows API functions to inject DLL
 - Windows Management Instrumentation (T1047)
- **Persistence**
 - Registry Run Key (T1547.001): Place a value on RunOnce key
 - Modify Registry key (T1112): Create its own registry key in \SOFTWARE\
<unique name>

- **Privilege Escalation**
 - Exploitation for Privilege Escalation (T1068): CVE-2020-0796, CVE-2019-1458, CVE-2017-0213, CVE-2015-1701
 - Process Injection (T1055.001): Reflective DLL Injection
- **Defense Evasion**
 - Disabling Security Tools (T1562.001): ESET AV Remover, Trend Micro's Security Agent Uninstall Tool, Microsoft Security Client Uninstall
 - Process Injection (T1055.001): Reflective DLL Injection
 - Deobfuscate/Decode Files or Information (T1140)
 - Obfuscated Files or Information (T1027): PowerShell Script uses Base64 and hexadecimal encoding and XOR-encryption
- **Credential Access**
 - Credential Dumping (T1003): Mimikatz, Mimidogz, Mimikittenz, Windows Credentials Editor, Pwdump, LaZagne
 - Brute Force (T1110.001): NLBrute
- **Discovery**
 - Network Service Scanning (T1046): SoftPerfect Network Scanner
 - Security Software Discovery (T1518.001)
 - System Information Discovery (T1082)
- **Lateral Movement**
 - Third-Party Software (T1072): TeamViewer, Anydesk
 - Service Execution (T 1569.002): PsExec
 - Lateral Tool Transfer (T1570)
- **Collection**
 - Data from information repositories (T1213)
 - Data from local system (T1005)
 - Data from network shared drive (T1039)
- **Command and Control**
 - Ingress Tool Transfer (T1105)
- **Impact**
 - Data Encrypted (T1486): NetWalker Ransomware
 - Inhibit System Recovery (T1490): Shadow Copies Deleted
 - Service Stop (T1489)

Initial Access	Execution	Persistence	Privilege Escalation	Defense Evasion	Credential Access	Discovery	Lateral Movement	Collection	Command and Control	Impact
Exploit Public Facing Application	PowerShell	Registry Run Key	Exploitation For Privilege Escalation	Disabling Security Tools	Credential Dumping	Network Service Scanning	Third-Party Software	Data From Information Repositories	Ingress Tool Transfer	Data Encrypted
Spear Phishing Attachment	Windows Command Shell	Modify Registry Key	Process Injection	Process Injection	Brute Force	Security Software Discovery	Service Execution	Data From Local System		Inhibit System Recovery
Valid Accounts	Service Execution : PsExec			Deobfuscate/ Decode Files or Information		System Information Discovery	Lateral Tool Transfer	Data From Network Shared Drive		Service Stop
	Native API			Obfuscated Files or Information						
	WMI									

Conclusion

Ransomware has evolved into a lucrative business for threat actors, from underground forums selling ransomware, to offering services such as support portals to guide victims through acquiring crypto currency for payment, to the negotiation of the ransom. McAfee's Advanced Threat Research team has analysed the NetWalker ransomware and have been following its evolution from the initial sighting of the Mailto ransomware to its redevelopment into the NetWalker ransomware. The recent shift to a business-centric model of Ransomware-as-a-Service is a clear sign that it is stepping up, so it seems that the NetWalker group is following in the footsteps of REvil and other successful RaaS groups. The ransomware developers have proven the ability to refocus and capitalize on current world events and develop lures to help ensure the effectiveness of the ransomware, which has allowed them to become selective of their affiliates by limiting access to the ransomware to only those with vetted access to large organizations. As development of the ransomware continues, we have witnessed recent shifts in activity that closely follow in the footsteps of other ransomware developments, including threatening victims with the release of confidential information if the ransom is not met.

McAfee ATR is actively monitoring ransomware threats and will continue to update McAfee MVISION Insights and its social networking channels with new and current information. MVISION Insights is the only proactive endpoint security solution that simultaneously prioritizes and predicts threats that matter to our customers while offering prescriptive guidance on what to do in their local environment. Want to stay ahead of the adversaries?

Check out [McAfee MVISION Insights](#) for more information. If you want to experience some of the MVISION Insights capabilities, go the [Preview of MVISION Insights](#) where you can select the top threat information that is available.

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ATR Operational Intelligence Team

McAfee's Advanced Threat Research Operational Intelligence team operates globally around the clock, keeping watch of the latest cyber campaigns and actively tracking the most impactful cyber threats.