

Serial phishing a Mac OS X application for newbies

(c) 2009 Fractal Guru (reverse AT put.as , http://reverse.put.as)

Target: MacDviX (<http://www.kiffe.com/texttools.html>)

Tools used: OTX, GDB, 0xED

Platform: Mac OS X Leopard 10.5.6 @ Intel x86

Document version: 1.0 (23/02/2008)

Index:

- 0 - Introduction
- 1 - Attacking our target
- 2 - Conclusion

- 0 - Introduction
-

Again by popular demand, let's learn how to phish a serial number (and keygen) from a simple application.

This target was suggested by an user and great target it is for our learning purposes ! It's serial algorithm is very easy and you can even patch it if you want (I will leave that as an exercise so you can improve your skills!).

And now, let's start the fun !
fG!

- 1 - Attacking our target
-

Since you should already master gdb and otx from previous tutorial, we are going directly to our target.

As usual, the first approach is to understand the protection behaviour and what hints we might get so we can start working.

Load the application, and the first thing you get is a nag message box with a timer, telling you should input a password.

After the timer runs out, try to insert some password like our beloved 1234567890. You will get a "Invalid entry." message. Fair enough, looks like a good hint.

Disassemble the main binary with OTX and search for that specific message, "Invalid entry". There is a single hit ! Hummm looks good!

Let me show you that piece of code (line numbers added for easy code reference):

```
(...)  
1: 0000e837 e8441a0400 calll 0x00050280  
_strcpy  
2: 0000e83c 891c24 movl %ebx, (%esp)  
3: 0000e83f e84ffaffff calll _CheckPassword  
4: 0000e844 84c0 testb %al, %al  
5: 0000e846 754a jne 0x0000e892  
6: 0000e848 c744240403000000 movl $0x00000003, 0x04(%esp)  
7: 0000e850 893424 movl %esi, (%esp)  
8: 0000e853 e864e4ffff calll _SelectEditData  
9: 0000e858 c744241038cd0200 movl $0x0002cd38, 0x10(%esp)  
Invalid entry.  
(...)
```

Even without starting to understand this piece of code, you should have already spotted an interesting call, the one to `_CheckPassword`.

So, we have a call to some function named `CheckPassword`, then we have a decision (`testb`,

jne combination). If the jump isn't executed, we find our bad serial message being moved into the stack. We can try to assume that if that JNE is executed we might get a good serial message. Assuming this, we might want to place our serial phishing bet into the CheckPassword function, because it should be the one responsible for serial number verification.

Let's find the disassembly for this function. Search the otx output for _CheckPassword. There are four hits and you can easily find the code for it.

Here it is:

```

_CheckPassword:
1: 0000e293 55          pushl      %ebp
2: 0000e294 89e5        movl      %esp,%ebp
3: 0000e296 57          pushl      %edi
4: 0000e297 8b5508      movl      0x08(%ebp),%edx
5: 0000e29a 85d2        testl     %edx,%edx
6: 0000e29c 7427        je        0x0000e2c5
7: 0000e29e 89d7        movl      %edx,%edi
8: 0000e2a0 fc          cld
9: 0000e2a1 b9fffffff  movl      $0xffffffff,%ecx
10: 0000e2a6 b800000000  movl      $0x00000000,%eax
11: 0000e2ab f2ae        repnz/scasb %al,(%edi)
12: 0000e2ad 83f9f7      cmpl     $0xf7,%ecx
13: 0000e2b0 7513        jne      0x0000e2c5
14: 0000e2b2 807a022a    cmpb     $0x2a,0x02(%edx)
   '*'
15: 0000e2b6 750d        jne      0x0000e2c5
16: 0000e2b8 807a0540    cmpb     $0x40,0x05(%edx)
   '@'
17: 0000e2bc 7507        jne      0x0000e2c5
18: 0000e2be b801000000  movl     $0x00000001,%eax
19: 0000e2c3 eb05        jmp      0x0000e2ca
20: 0000e2c5 b800000000  movl     $0x00000000,%eax
21: 0000e2ca 5f          popl     %edi
22: 0000e2cb 5d          popl     %ebp
23: 0000e2cc c3          ret

```

Load the application into gdb and set a breakpoint at 0xe293 (where it begins). Start the application, wait for the timer and insert 1234567890 as password. Our breakpoint should be enforced and gdb stops at 0xe293.

This is what we get:

Breakpoint 1, 0x0000e293 in CheckPassword ()

```

-----[regs]
EAX: 00000000 EBX: 0001685C ECX: 00000004 EDX: 65747267 o d I t S z a P c
ESI: 00045790 EDI: 000458D0 EBP: BFFFF598 ESP: BFFFF57C EIP: 0000E293
CS: 0017 DS: 001F ES: 001F FS: 0000 GS: 0037 SS: 001F
[001F:BFFFF57C]-----[stack]
BFFFF5CC : 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 - 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
BFFFF5BC : 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 - 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
BFFFF5AC : 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 - 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
BFFFF59C : 97 23 01 00 05 00 00 00 - C0 16 03 00 00 00 00 00 .#.....
BFFFF58C : 5C 68 01 00 90 57 04 00 - D0 58 04 00 D8 F7 FF BF \h...W...X.....
BFFFF57C : 76 E2 00 00 00 00 00 00 - 5C 68 01 00 2D 6C 6F 96 v.....\h...lo.
[0017:0000E293]-----[code]
0xe293 <CheckPassword>: push  ebp
0xe294 <CheckPassword+1>: mov   ebp,esp
0xe296 <CheckPassword+3>: push  edi
0xe297 <CheckPassword+4>: mov   edx,DWORD PTR [ebp+0x8]  <- interesting
0xe29a <CheckPassword+7>: test  edx,edx                  <- interesting
0xe29c <CheckPassword+9>: je    0xe2c5 <CheckPassword+50> <- interesting
0xe29e <CheckPassword+11>: mov   edi,edx

```

0xe2a0 <CheckPassword+13>: cld

This first interesting lines are 4, 5 and 6. Step until you reach address 0xe29a (line 5).

0x0000e29a in CheckPassword ()

```
-----[regs]
EAX: BFFFDAF0 EBX: BFFFDCF0 ECX: BFFFDD00 EDX: BFFFDCF0 o d I t s Z a P c
ESI: 0019A400 EDI: 00000000 EBP: BFFFDAB8 ESP: BFFFDAB4 EIP: 0000E29A
CS: 0017 DS: 001F ES: 001F FS: 0000 GS: 0037 SS: 001F
-----[stack]
[001F:BFFFDAB4]-----[stack]
BFFFDDB04 : 00 00 00 00 74 72 70 63 - 74 00 00 00 F0 B1 18 00 ....trpct.....
BFFFDADF4 : 35 36 37 38 39 30 00 00 - 8E BE 87 00 30 AC 19 00 567890.....0...
BFFFDADAE4 : 00 00 00 00 18 DB FF BF - 0A 00 00 00 31 32 33 34 .....1234
BFFFDADAD4 : EC DA FF BF 48 DB FF BF - F0 B1 18 00 80 BE 87 00 ....H.....
BFFFDADAC4 : F0 DC FF BF 74 78 65 74 - F4 01 00 00 F0 DC FF BF ....txet.....
BFFFDADAB4 : 00 00 00 00 08 DF FF BF - 44 E8 00 00 F0 DC FF BF .....D.....
-----[code]
[0017:0000E29A]-----[code]
0xe29a <CheckPassword+7>: test edx,edx
0xe29c <CheckPassword+9>: je 0xe2c5 <CheckPassword+50>
0xe29e <CheckPassword+11>: mov edi,edx
0xe2a0 <CheckPassword+13>: cld
0xe2a1 <CheckPassword+14>: mov ecx,0xffffffff
0xe2a6 <CheckPassword+19>: mov eax,0x0
0xe2ab <CheckPassword+24>: repnz scas al,BYTE PTR es:[edi]
0xe2ad <CheckPassword+26>: cmp ecx,0xffffffff
-----
```

Let's spy what's on EDX register. Try dumping that register as a string...

`gdb$ x/s $edx`

0xbfffdcf0: "1234567890"

Voila, it's our serial number. Lines 4,5 and 6 are checking if input was empty or not.

Recalling our disassembly:

```
_CheckPassword:
1: 0000e293 55 pushl %ebp
2: 0000e294 89e5 movl %esp,%ebp
3: 0000e296 57 pushl %edi
4: 0000e297 8b5508 movl 0x08(%ebp),%edx <-
move our serial into EDX
5: 0000e29a 85d2 testl %edx,%edx <-
check if EDX is empty
6: 0000e29c 7427 je 0x0000e2c5 <-
jump if empty, else continue
7: 0000e29e 89d7 movl %edx,%edi
8: 0000e2a0 fc cld
9: 0000e2a1 b9ffffffff movl $0xffffffff,%ecx
10: 0000e2a6 b800000000 movl $0x00000000,%eax
11: 0000e2ab f2ae repnz/scasb %al,(%edi)
12: 0000e2ad 83f9f7 cmpl $0xf7,%ecx
13: 0000e2b0 7513 jne 0x0000e2c5
14: 0000e2b2 807a022a cmpb $0x2a,0x02(%edx)
' * '
15: 0000e2b6 750d jne 0x0000e2c5
16: 0000e2b8 807a0540 cmpb $0x40,0x05(%edx)
' @ '
17: 0000e2bc 7507 jne 0x0000e2c5
18: 0000e2be b801000000 movl $0x00000001,%eax
19: 0000e2c3 eb05 jmp 0x0000e2ca
20: 0000e2c5 b800000000 movl $0x00000000,%eax
21: 0000e2ca 5f popl %edi
```

```

22: 0000e2cb 5d                                popl                                %ebp
23: 0000e2cc c3                                ret

```

Since our input isn't empty, you should continue to step until you have reached line 7, address 0xe29e.

At line 7, our serial is copied from register EDX to register EDI. No big deal here. Line 8 clears the direction flag, causing string instructions to increment the SI and DI index registers.

Line 9 is filling ECX register with value 0xFFFFFFFF.

Line 10 is zeroing EAX register.

Line 11 is more interesting. Definition for repnz instruction is:

Repeats execution of string instructions while CX != 0 and the Zero Flag is clear.

CX is decremented and the Zero Flag tested after each string operation.

The combination of a repeat prefix and a segment override on processors other than the 386

may result in errors if an interrupt occurs before CX=0.

The scasb instruction definition is:

The x86 family of microprocessors come with with the scasb instruction which searches for the first occurrence

of a byte whose value is equal to that of the AL register. The address of the start of the string itself has to

be in the EDI register. Technically, it is supposed to be in the extra segment, but we do not need to worry about

that in the flat 32-bit memory mode anymore. When used along with the repne prefix, the scasb instruction goes up

(or down, depending on the direction flag) the memory, looking for the match.

From these two definitions, you can understand that Line 11 is scanning for the NULL value. Why is that ?

EAX is a 32 bits register that can be divided into two 8 bits registers AH and AL.

The NULL value is equal to 0x00. Since EAX was zeroed on line 10, AH should give you 0x00 (an 8 bit value).

You can verify that in gdb:

```
gdb$ x/x (char) $al
```

```
0x0:      Cannot access memory at address 0x0
```

You need to typecast using (char) because \$al is 8 bits or 1 byte. If you simply try x/x \$al, you will get an error.

If you try to step the code, you will see that line 11 will keep being executed until it reaches the end of our serial

(strings end with the NULL value).

At line 12, ECX register is compared against 0xF7. You can recall that at line 7, ECX was filled with 0xFFFFFFFF.

Why is this ? Well from REPNZ definition you have:

"CX is decremented and the Zero Flag tested after each string operation."

So each time the repnz/scasb instruction was executed, the value in ECX was being decremented.

Now we finally can understand what these lines were doing, they were checking for the size of our serial number !!!

If you have used "1234567890" as serial number, check the value of ECX when you have reached line 12.

```
0x0000e2ad in CheckPassword ()
```

```

-----[regs]
EAX: 00000000  EBX: BFFFDCf0  ECX: FFFFFFF4  EDX: BFFFDCf0  o d I t s Z a P c
ESI: 0019A400  EDI: BFFFDCFB  EBP: BFFFDAB8  ESP: BFFFDAB4  EIP: 0000E2AD
CS: 0017  DS: 001F  ES: 001F  FS: 0000  GS: 0037  SS: 001F
-----[stack]
BFFFDAB4 : 00 00 00 00  74 72 70 63 - 74 00 00 00  F0 B1 18 00 ....trpct.....

```

```

BFFFDAF4 : 35 36 37 38 39 30 00 00 - 8E BE 87 00 30 AC 19 00 567890.....0...
BFFFDAE4 : 00 00 00 00 18 DB FF BF - 0A 00 00 00 31 32 33 34 .....1234
BFFFDAD4 : EC DA FF BF 48 DB FF BF - F0 B1 18 00 80 BE 87 00 ....H.....
BFFFDAC4 : F0 DC FF BF 74 78 65 74 - F4 01 00 00 F0 DC FF BF ....txet.....
BFFFDAB4 : 00 00 00 00 08 DF FF BF - 44 E8 00 00 F0 DC FF BF .....D.....
[0017:0000E2AD]-----[code]

```

```

0xe2ad <CheckPassword+26>: cmp     ecx,0xffffffff
0xe2b0 <CheckPassword+29>: jne    0xe2c5 <CheckPassword+50>
0xe2b2 <CheckPassword+31>: cmp    BYTE PTR [edx+0x2],0x2a
0xe2b6 <CheckPassword+35>: jne    0xe2c5 <CheckPassword+50>
0xe2b8 <CheckPassword+37>: cmp    BYTE PTR [edx+0x5],0x40
0xe2bc <CheckPassword+41>: jne    0xe2c5 <CheckPassword+50>
0xe2be <CheckPassword+43>: mov    eax,0x1
0xe2c3 <CheckPassword+48>: jmp    0xe2ca <CheckPassword+55>
-----

```

```

gdb$ x/x $ecx
0xffffffff4:      Cannot access memory at address 0xffffffff4

```

It's 0xFFFFFFFF4, which of course will fail when compared against 0xFFFFFFFF7. I think you can spot that our serial number is 3 characters longer than what is expected.

Our test serial must be something like "123457". Try with this new one and check again the value of ECX.

```

This time you get:
gdb$ x/x $ecx
0xffffffff7:      Cannot access memory at address 0xffffffff7

```

The JNE at line 13 will be avoided and the first check is beaten. Let's recall our disassembly:

```

_CheckPassword:
1: 0000e293 55                                pushl   %ebp
2: 0000e294 89e5                                movl   %esp,%ebp
3: 0000e296 57                                    pushl   %edi
4: 0000e297 8b5508                               movl   0x08(%ebp),%edx <-
move our serial into EDX
5: 0000e29a 85d2                                testl  %edx,%edx <-
check if EDX is empty
6: 0000e29c 7427                                je     0x0000e2c5 <-
jump if empty, else continue
7: 0000e29e 89d7                                movl   %edx,%edi <-
save our serial to EDI
8: 0000e2a0 fc                                cld    <-
clear direction flag
9: 0000e2a1 b9ffffff                               movl   $0xffffffff,%ecx <-
ECX = 0xFFFFFFFF
10: 0000e2a6 b800000000                            movl   $0x00000000,%eax <-
EAX = 0x00000000
11: 0000e2ab f2ae                                repnz/scasb %al,(%edi) <-
Scan for NULL value and at the same time calculating serial length
12: 0000e2ad 83f9f7                               cmpl   $0xf7,%ecx <-
Is input serial length equal to 7 chars ?
13: 0000e2b0 7513                                jne    0x0000e2c5 <-
Jump if not (invalid serial)
14: 0000e2b2 807a022a                             cmpb   $0x2a,0x02(%edx)
' * '
15: 0000e2b6 750d                                jne    0x0000e2c5
16: 0000e2b8 807a0540                             cmpb   $0x40,0x05(%edx)
' @ '
17: 0000e2bc 7507                                jne    0x0000e2c5
18: 0000e2be b801000000                            movl   $0x00000001,%eax
19: 0000e2c3 eb05                                jmp    0x0000e2ca

```

```

20: 0000e2c5 b800000000          movl          $0x00000000,%eax
21: 0000e2ca 5f                          popl          %edi
22: 0000e2cb 5d                          popl          %ebp
23: 0000e2cc c3                          ret

```

Let's look at line 14. The value 0x2a is being compared against some value at EDX. Remember that EDX still holds our serial. OTX shows us that 0x2a corresponds to ascii character *. It's easy to understand that some place in our serial is being compared against value 0x2a, or by other words, that place in our serial must hold the character *. The place in our serial should be character at position 3 (remember counting starts at 0 and not 1).

We can easily verify this:

```

gdb$
0x0000e2b2 in CheckPassword ()
-----[regs]
EAX: 00000000 EBX: BFFFD7A0 ECX: FFFFFFF7 EDX: BFFFD7A0 o d I t s Z a P c
ESI: 0019A400 EDI: BFFFD7A8 EBP: BFFFD568 ESP: BFFFD564 EIP: 0000E2B2
CS: 0017 DS: 001F ES: 001F FS: 0000 GS: 0037 SS: 001F
[001F:BFFFD564]-----[stack]
BFFFD5B4 : 30 A1 19 00 08 D7 FF BF - DA DB FF 91 D9 7A DB 93 0.....z..
BFFFD5A4 : 35 36 37 00 C8 D5 FF BF - 71 D3 FF 91 47 F3 1F 00 567.....q...G...
BFFFD594 : 00 D0 05 00 A8 D1 02 00 - 07 00 00 00 31 32 33 34 .....1234
BFFFD584 : 9C D5 FF BF 00 04 00 00 - 02 00 00 00 10 A1 19 00 .....
BFFFD574 : A0 D7 FF BF 74 78 65 74 - F4 01 00 00 A0 D7 FF BF ....txet.....
BFFFD564 : 00 00 00 00 B8 D9 FF BF - 44 E8 00 00 A0 D7 FF BF .....D.....
[0017:0000E2B2]-----[code]
0xe2b2 <CheckPassword+31>: cmp BYTE PTR [edx+0x2],0x2a
0xe2b6 <CheckPassword+35>: jne 0xe2c5 <CheckPassword+50>
0xe2b8 <CheckPassword+37>: cmp BYTE PTR [edx+0x5],0x40
0xe2bc <CheckPassword+41>: jne 0xe2c5 <CheckPassword+50>
0xe2be <CheckPassword+43>: mov eax,0x1
0xe2c3 <CheckPassword+48>: jmp 0xe2ca <CheckPassword+55>
0xe2c5 <CheckPassword+50>: mov eax,0x0
0xe2ca <CheckPassword+55>: pop edi

```

```

gdb$ x/s $edx+0x2
0xbfffd7a2: "34567"
gdb$ x/c $edx+0x2
0xbfffd7a2: 0x33

```

Conclusion: Our serial character number 3 should be equal to *.

At line 16, you have similar code. This time character is @ and our serial position is number 6.

This time input your serial like "12*4567" and check.

```

0x0000e2b8 in CheckPassword ()
-----[regs]
EAX: 00000000 EBX: BFFFD7A0 ECX: FFFFFFF7 EDX: BFFFD7A0 o d I t s Z a P c
ESI: 0019A400 EDI: BFFFD7A8 EBP: BFFFD568 ESP: BFFFD564 EIP: 0000E2B8
CS: 0017 DS: 001F ES: 001F FS: 0000 GS: 0037 SS: 001F
[001F:BFFFD564]-----[stack]
BFFFD5B4 : 50 6F 17 00 08 D7 FF BF - DA DB FF 91 E2 8E DB 93 Po.....
BFFFD5A4 : 35 36 37 00 C8 D5 FF BF - 71 D3 FF 91 E3 EE 1F 00 567.....q.....
BFFFD594 : 00 D0 05 00 A8 D1 02 00 - 07 00 00 00 31 32 2A 34 .....12*4
BFFFD584 : 9C D5 FF BF 00 04 00 00 - 02 00 00 00 30 6F 17 00 .....0o..
BFFFD574 : A0 D7 FF BF 74 78 65 74 - F4 01 00 00 A0 D7 FF BF ....txet.....
BFFFD564 : 00 00 00 00 B8 D9 FF BF - 44 E8 00 00 A0 D7 FF BF .....D.....
[0017:0000E2B8]-----[code]
0xe2b8 <CheckPassword+37>: cmp BYTE PTR [edx+0x5],0x40
0xe2bc <CheckPassword+41>: jne 0xe2c5 <CheckPassword+50>
0xe2be <CheckPassword+43>: mov eax,0x1

```

```

0xe2c3 <CheckPassword+48>:    jmp     0xe2ca <CheckPassword+55>
0xe2c5 <CheckPassword+50>:    mov     eax,0x0
0xe2ca <CheckPassword+55>:    pop     edi
0xe2cb <CheckPassword+56>:    pop     ebp
0xe2cc <CheckPassword+57>:    ret

```

```

-----
gdb$ x/s $edx+5
0xbffffd7a5:    "67"
gdb$ x/c $edx+5
0xbffffd7a5:    0x36
gdb$

```

After this check, 0x1 is moved into EAX and we return from CheckPassword function. Moving 0x1 into EAX is usually a sign of a good serial. Since no other checks are done, we can conclude that serial must be 7 chars long, 3rd char must be equal to * and 6th char must be equal to @. All the other chars can be whatever we want. Try to input the following serial, 12*45@7 or ab*de@g or any other combination. It should work :)

Final recall to disassembly listing:

```

_CheckPassword:
1: 0000e293 55                pushl   %ebp
2: 0000e294 89e5                movl   %esp,%ebp
3: 0000e296 57                pushl   %edi
4: 0000e297 8b5508            movl   0x08(%ebp),%edx <-
move our serial into EDX
5: 0000e29a 85d2                testl  %edx,%edx <-
check if EDX is empty
6: 0000e29c 7427                je     0x0000e2c5 <-
jump if empty, else continue
7: 0000e29e 89d7                movl   %edx,%edi <-
save our serial to EDI
8: 0000e2a0 fc                cld    <-
clear direction flag
9: 0000e2a1 b9ffffff            movl   $0xffffffff,%ecx <-
ECX = 0xFFFFFFFF
10: 0000e2a6 b800000000        movl   $0x00000000,%eax <-
EAX = 0x00000000
11: 0000e2ab f2ae                repnz/scasb %al,(%edi) <-
Scan for NULL value and at the same time calculating serial length
12: 0000e2ad 83f9f7            cmpl   $0xf7,%ecx <-
Is input serial length equal to 7 chars ?
13: 0000e2b0 7513                jne   0x0000e2c5 <-
Jump if not (invalid serial)
14: 0000e2b2 807a022a          cmpb  $0x2a,0x02(%edx)
<- compare our serial character number 3 against character *
15: 0000e2b6 750d                jne   0x0000e2c5 <-
if not equal then jump (invalid serial)
16: 0000e2b8 807a0540          cmpb  $0x40,0x05(%edx)
<- compare our serial character number 6 against character @
17: 0000e2bc 7507                jne   0x0000e2c5 <-
if not equal then jump (invalid serial)
18: 0000e2be b801000000        movl   $0x00000001,%eax <-
return our serial as a good one
19: 0000e2c3 eb05                jmp   0x0000e2ca <-
return to the end of the function
20: 0000e2c5 b800000000        movl   $0x00000000,%eax <-
return our serial as a bad one
21: 0000e2ca 5f                popl   %edi
22: 0000e2cb 5d                popl   %ebp

```

23: 0000e2cc c3

ret

A keygen can be created easily. You just need some random digits for all the other positions. I leave that as an exercise for you.

2 - Conclusion

Here we are at the end. This tutorial taught you (hopefully!) how to fish a valid serial number. The biggest difficulty while phishing serials is to understand what the code is doing. You will need to have assembler knowledge and be able to understand what the code is doing, that is, reversing, transforming low level code (assembler) into high level (C or any other language, or at least an algorithm).

As an exercise, you could patch the program to accept any serial or to remove that initial nag. Try to do it :)

If you have any suggestions, doubts or found any error, please feel free to leave a comment at my blog <http://reverse.put.as> or drop an email at reverse AT put.as

Have fun!
fG!