Computer Security DD2395

http://www.csc.kth.se/utbildning/kth/kurser/DD2395/dasak10/

Spring 2010
Sonja Buchegger
buc@kth.se

Lecture 7, Feb. 8, 2010
Malicious Software

Malicious Software

- programs exploiting system vulnerabilities
- known as malicious software or malware
  - program fragments that need a host program
    - e.g. viruses, logic bombs, and backdoors
  - independent self-contained programs
    - e.g. worms, bots
  - replicating or not
- sophisticated threat to computer systems

Malware Terminology

- Virus
- Worm
- Logic bomb
- Trojan horse
- Backdoor (trapdoor)
- Mobile code
- Auto-rooter Kit (virus generator)
- Spammer and Flooder programs
- Keyloggers
- Rootkit
- Zombie, bot

Viruses

- piece of software that infects programs
  - modifying them to include a copy of the virus
  - so it executes secretly when host program is run
- specific to operating system and hardware
  - taking advantage of their details and weaknesses
- a typical virus goes through phases of:
  - dormant
  - propagation
  - triggering
  - execution

Virus Structure

- components:
  - infection mechanism - enables replication
  - trigger - event that makes payload activate
  - payload - what it does, malicious or benign
- prepended / appended / embedded
- when infected program invoked, executes virus code then original program code
- can block initial infection (difficult)
- or propagation (with access controls)

Virus Structure

```
    program V :=

{goto main;
    1234567;

    subroutine infect-executable :=
        {loop:
        file := get-random-executable-file;
        if (first-line-of-file = 1234567)
          then goto loop
          else prepend V to file; }

    subroutine do-damage :=
        {whatever damage is to be done}

    subroutine trigger-pulled :=
        {return true if some condition holds}

main:   main-program :=
        {infect-executable;
        if trigger-pulled then do-damage;
        goto next;}

next:

}
```

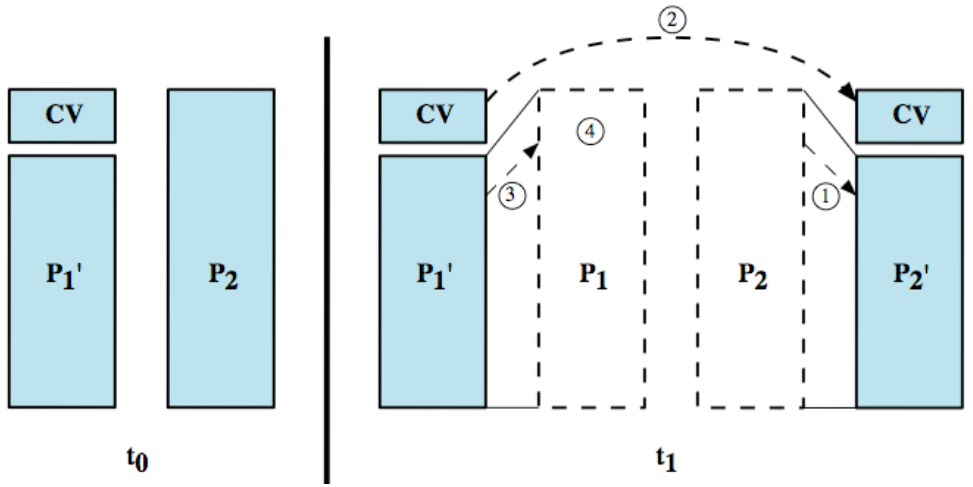
Compression Virus

```
    program CV :=

{goto main;
    01234567;

    subroutine infect-executable :=
          {loop:
               file := get-random-executable-file;
          if (first-line-of-file = 01234567) then goto loop;
        (1)    compress file;
        (2)    prepend CV to file;
        }

main:   main-program :=
          {if ask-permission then infect-executable;
        (3)    uncompress rest-of-file;
        (4)    run uncompressed file;}
        }
```



Virus Classification

- boot sector
- file infector
- macro virus
- encrypted virus
- stealth virus
- polymorphic virus
- metamorphic virus

Macro Virus

- became very common in mid-1990s since
  - platform independent
  - infects documents
  - is easily spread
- exploit macro capability of office apps
  - executable program embedded in office doc
  - often a form of Basic
- more recent releases include protection
- recognized by many anti-virus programs

E-Mail Viruses

- more recent development
- e.g. Melissa
  - exploits MS Word macro in attached doc
  - if attachment opened, macro activates
  - sends email to all on users address list
  - and does local damage
- then saw versions triggered reading email
- hence much faster propagation