black hat ASIA 2018

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MARINA BAY SANDS / SINGAPORE

Hourglass Model 2.0

Asia-based underground services abusing global 2FA

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Hourglass Model 1.0

Hourglass Model 2.0 (let's hope it is more useful)

- Generate cyber threat intelligence reports
- Actions

Case Study:

- Discovery
- Findings
- Analysis
- Conclusion: Rethink 2FA

Special Thanks

Q&A





Cybercrime Researcher +7 years

International Relation background

LEGO Fan





Introduction: Hourglass Model 1.0





- Online activities only
- Any geolocation
- Cyber threat intelligence focus, not legal analysis
- Collection still need to abide by law and user policies!!



Hourglass Model 1.0: Definition of Terms

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Marketplace: where communication or money flow are exchanged in the virtual world. It can be IRCs, forums, Deep and Dark Webs.

Mastermind: Threat actors with business plan and targets in mind, but still need technical assistance and others to execute the attacks.

PII: Personally identifiable information. Any information that can be used to distinguish one person from another and can be used for de-anonymizing anonymous data can be considered PII.



Hourglass Model 2.0

- Mastermind Profile
 - Credibility
 - Connections
- Targets
- Strategy
 - Timing
 - Process / Status
- Victim
- Potential buyers
- Scale and type of compromised data
- Damage / Impact evaluation

- Proactive
 - Hacking tools
 - Hacking services
 - Fraud tactics

Reactive

- Manuals / Tutorials
- Reoccurring damage
- Mitigation effectiveness
- Alternative monetization approaches

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Hourglass Model 2.0

Proactive

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Assess Current Status:

- Verify if the tools or tactics can actually cause damage
- Evaluate if current detection system will be triggered.

Mitigation Planning

- Identify loss and impact scope
- -Implement mitigation plan

Mitigation Evaluation

- Use marketplace discussion and reaction to evaluate the effectiveness.

Reactive



00.44.55



Random Discovery: Southeast Asian SIM card somehow used for abusing global eCommerce and social media

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Research Plan

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• Known Information:

- Targets/Victims
- Underground Services

• Research Focus:

- Identify keywords and other marketplaces to explore
- More threat actors discuss similar topics
- Other related underground services and goods
- Price and availability
- Pricing strategy
- Tutorials
- Potential buyers
- Monetization workflow



Findings

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black hat ASIA 2018 Analysis I: Fraud & Monetization Flow



blackhat ASIA 2018 Analysis II: Overall Workflow





2FA "Spamming"

- Via Email
- Via SMS



Commonly Used 2FA



Authentication via two independent components

- 1. Something you know
 - a. E.g username/password combination, PIN
- 2. Something you have
 - a. Non-online banking: Mostly token-based (device you already own, e.g cellphone)
 - *Online banking:* Mostly smartcard-based (device which is usually provided for by bank)

Deep-dive: Cellphone-based 2FA

Exemplary authentication usage: Gmail, Instagram, iTunes purchases (optional)

- Token-based \rightarrow Usually via cellphone
 - a. SMS: (SMS-based authentication, e.g. TAN codes)

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b. In-App (e.g. Google Authenticator, DUO)

Risks of 2FA via SMS:

- Can be gamed by "SIM swap" (phone number redirect)
- Cell phone providers/systems can be intercepted

Re-evaluating Existing 2FA Methods

Suggested criteria for evaluating existing 2FA methods

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- Accuracy/Security: How accurate and secure is the 2FA system? (e.g. false/positive rates because of e.g. 2FA text message code reuse?)
- Online services' expertise + costs: How technologically advanced is the deployed 2FA method and what are its costs (Cost can be a main driver to mitigate accuracy/security issues)
- 1. **Usability:** How easy is it for consumers to interact with the chosen 2FA method?

Deep-dive: Existing cellphone-based 2FA methods

- 1. Usability
 - a. Consumer perspective: Usually 2-3 min authentication process is regarded as "acceptable" by average user.

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b. Need for balancing usability with security of chosen 2FA method

1. Accuracy/Security

- a. Preferred: In-app verification (e.g. DUO/Google Authenticator) → not affected by SIM swap attacks + increased attacker hurdle (costs for buying device + need for hacking "authentication account", e.g. Gmail for Google Authenticator)
- b. If SMS-based: No reuse of SMS 2FA codes + limited number of attempts to enter correct 2FA SMS code

2. Online services' expertise + costs

- a. Online services should invest in "2FA alliance models" to explore securer 2FA verification methods
- b. Methods should not bear additional costs on online services nor consumers

black hat Hourglass 2.0 vs 2FA Methods

Recommendation:

Online services should adapt Hourglass 2.0 "Mastermind" knowledge transfer approach by educating their industry & consumers on 2FA authenticator apps

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1. Consumers need to be educated by online services on how to use in-app 2FA

- Video tutorial
- Browser notification during account setup

2. Larger online services need to invite smaller/medium-sized online services to2FA alliances

- Facilitate 2FA technical knowledge transfer
- Shared educational resources for consumers

black hat TLDR – Today's Key Takeaways

- Effective cyber defense decision relies on external threat intelligence and internal data analysis.
- Hourglass model aims to help researchers maximize the information collected from marketplace information
- Use the findings to build hypothesis and evaluate existing system and policy
- Adversary will not disappear, so...use them!



Special Thanks



www.linkedin.com/in/nliguda

...to Nina Liguda - 2FA Section



