# Investigating Web Attacks

Module 08

Designed by Cyber Crime Investigators. Presented by Professionals.











## Module Objectives



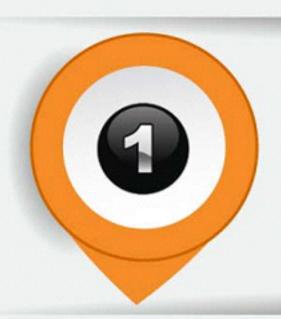


## After successfully completing this module, you will be able to:

- Understand the importance of web application forensics
- 2 Illustrate the web application architecture and list the challenges in web application forensics
- 3 Indicate web attacks and define all the web application threats
- 4 Interpret the steps to investigate web attacks
- 5 Perform web attacks investigation on Windows-based servers
- 6 Describe IIS web server architecture and perform IIS logs investigation
- 7 Describe Apache web server architecture and perform Apache logs investigation
- 8 Investigate various attacks on web applications

# Introduction to Web Application Forensics





Web applications provide an interface between the end users and web servers via a set of web pages that are generated at the server's end or contain script code, which is dynamically by the user's web browser.



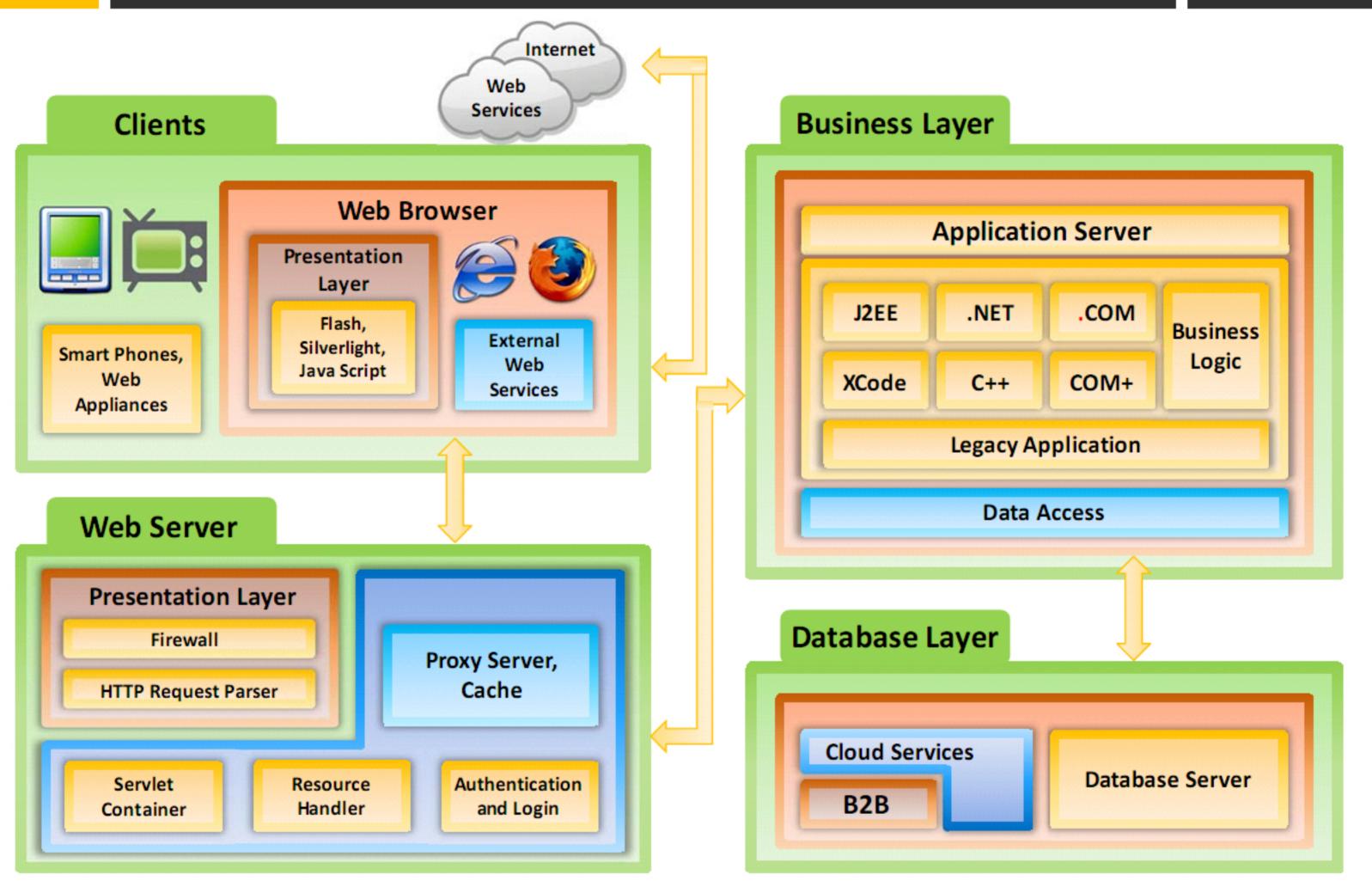


Web application forensics involves collection and analysis of logs and other artifacts along the complete path taken by a web request. It includes web server, application server, database server, system events, etc., to determine the cause, nature and perpetrator of a web exploit.



## Web Application Architecture





# Challenges in Web Application Forensics



01 Web applications are generally distributed in nature



Traces of activities are recorded across a number of hardware and software infrastructures



Very limited or no downtime is allowed for investigation



Huge volume of logs from different sources are analyzed and correlated



Large databases are analyzed

06



Requires complete knowledge of different web servers, application servers, databases and underlying applications



Tracing back is difficult in case of reverse proxies and anonymizers



## Indications of a Web Attack



	Customers being unable to access services
S S	Suspicious activities in user accounts
	Leakage of sensitive data
	Correct URLs redirecting to incorrect sites
	Web page defacements
	Unusually slow network performance
F	Frequent rebooting of the server
	Anomalies in log files
	Error messages such as 500 errors, "internal server error," and "problem processing your request"

## Web Application Threats - 1







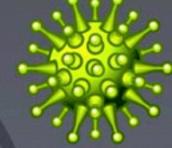
Information Leakage

**Broken Account** Management

Cookie **Poisoning** 

Insecure **Storage** 

**Improper Error Handling** 



Parameter/Form **Tampering** 



Log **Tampering** 

**Directory Traversal** 

SQL Injection

**Denial of** Service (DoS)



Unvalidated Input

Injection **Flaws** 

**Broken Access Control** 

**Broken Session** Management

**Cross Site** Scripting (XSS)

**Cross Site Request Forgery** 

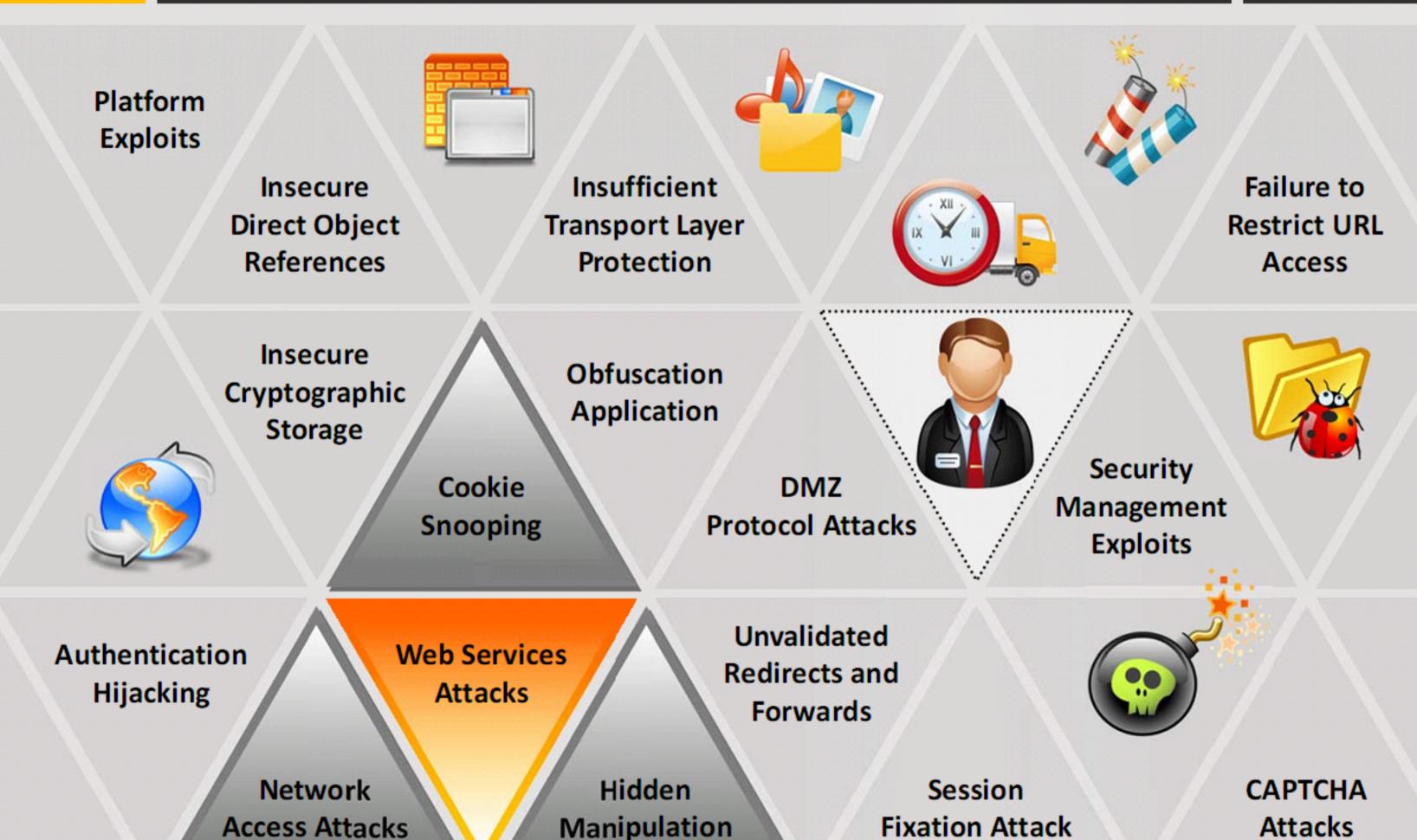
Security Misconfiguration



## Web Application Threats - 2



**Attacks** 



## Investigating a Web Attack



### Confirmation of the Attack and Identification of its Nature

- Is it a distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attack or an attack targeted just at you? Is someone trying to shut down your network altogether or attempting to infiltrate individual machines? Check the Security Information and Event Management (SIEM), Syslog or centralized/remote logs to confirm the attack.
- Capturing Volatile Data

  Capture volatile data, such as processes, services, ports and network connections, memory dumps, logged in users, etc.
- Taking Snapshot or Shutting down the System
- In virtualized environment, take a snapshot of the system. In the case of a physical system, shut down the server. You can move the services to alternate sites based on the availability of disaster recovery (DR) sites, backups, mirrors and business continuity requirements.
- Making Forensic Image/Mounting Snapshot

Make a bit-by-bit image of the system hard disk or mount the system snapshot on another virtual infrastructure to start the investigation.

# Investigating a Web Attack (Cont'd)



- Understanding the Flow of an Application
  - Look at the application documentation and testing reports to understand the normal application working.
- Analysis of the Log Files
- Examine the logs from web server, application server, database server, application, local system events, etc. for suspicious entries.
  - Collection of Application and Server Configuration Files
- Application and server configuration files provide important application information, such as database bindings, application server configurations, etc.
- Identification of Abnormal Activities

  Identify malicious data from the client, discrepa

Identify malicious data from the client, discrepancies in normal web access, uncommon referrers, mid-session changes to cookie values, etc.

# Investigating a Web Attack (Cont'd)





### **Corroboration with Firewall and IDS Logs**

IDS and the firewall can monitor the network traffic and store logs of each entry. These logs can help to identify if the source is a compromised host on the network or a third party.

# 10

### **Blocking the Attack**

Once you know how the attacker has entered the system, you can block that particular IP port or hole to prevent further intrusion. If any compromised systems are identified, disconnect them from the network until they can be disinfected.



## **Tracing Back Attack IPs**

Traceback attack IPs to identify the perpetrator of the attack. It is generally very difficult as attackers often use proxies and anonymizers to hide their identity.

# 1 2

## **Full-proof Documentation**

Document every step of the investigation as it is essential for any legal proceedings.

# Investigating Web Attacks in Windows-Based Servers





Run Event Viewer to look at the logs:

C:\> eventvwr.msc



Check if the following suspicious events have occurred:

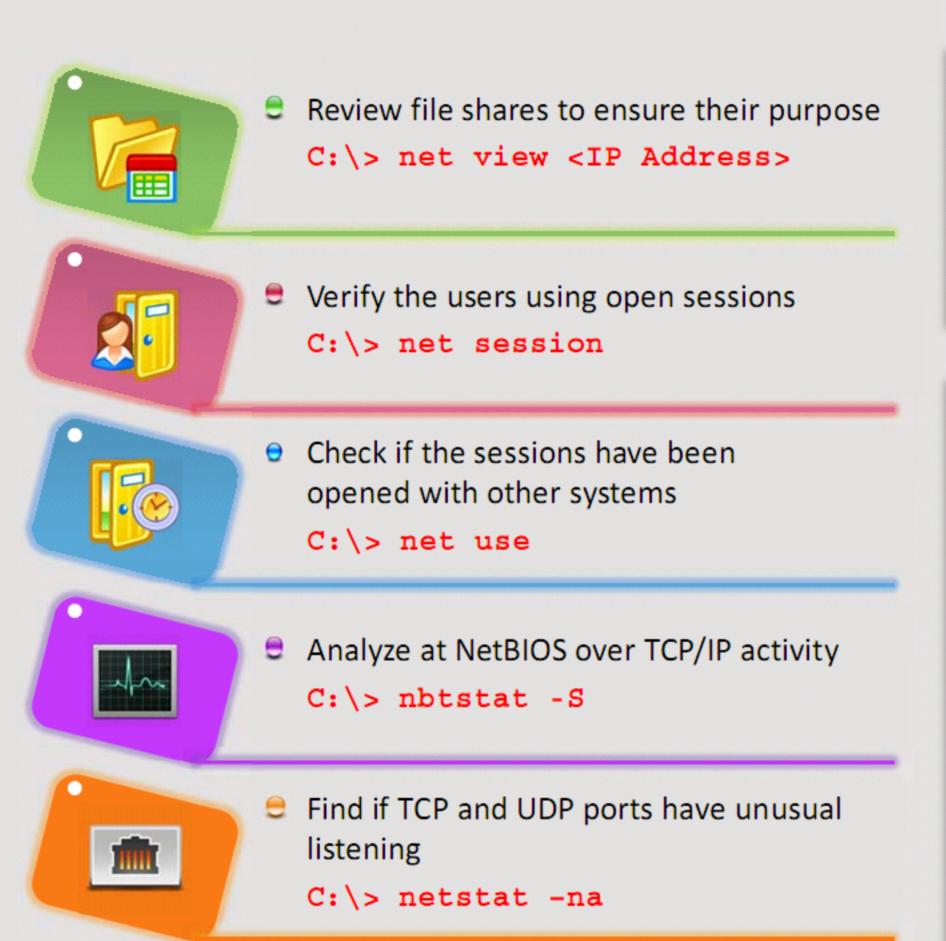
- Event log service ends
- Windows File Protection is inactive on the system
- The MS Telnet Service is running

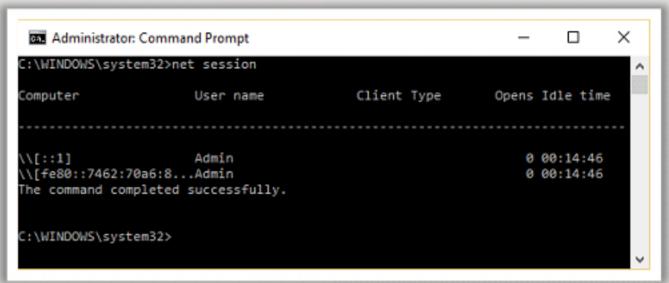


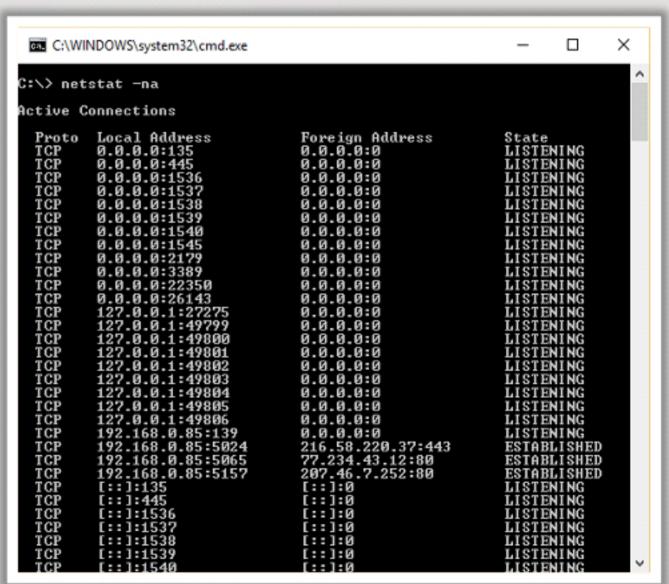
Find if the system has failed login attempts or locked-out accounts

# Investigating Web Attacks in Windows-Based Servers (Cont'd)



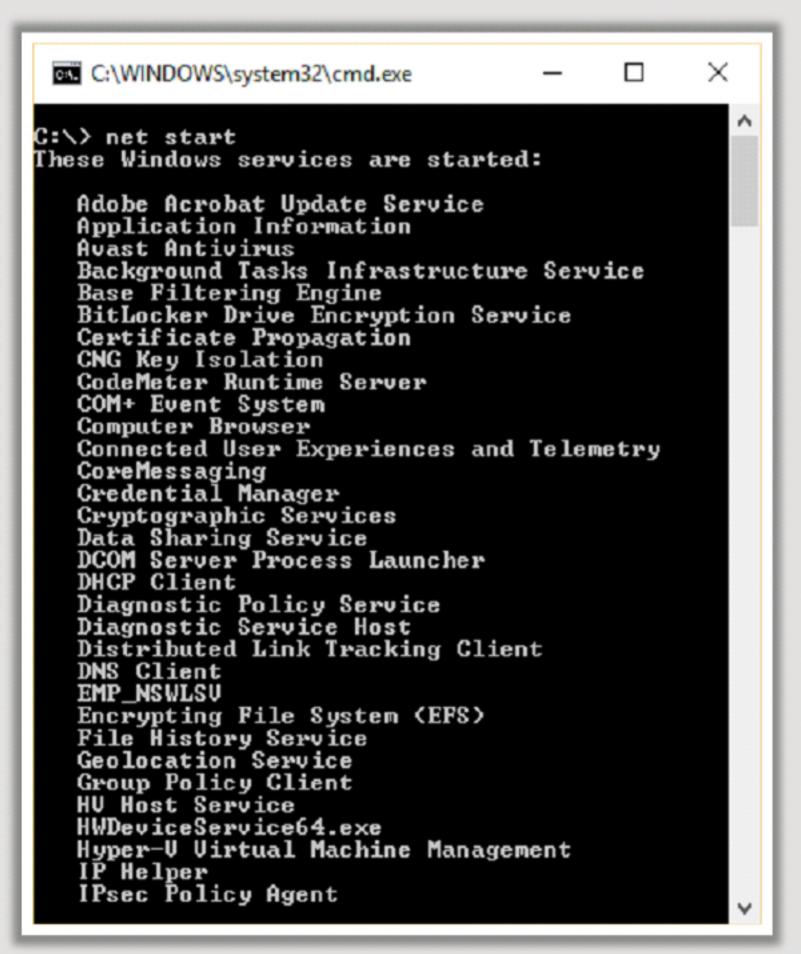






# Investigating Web Attacks in Windows-Based Servers (Cont'd)

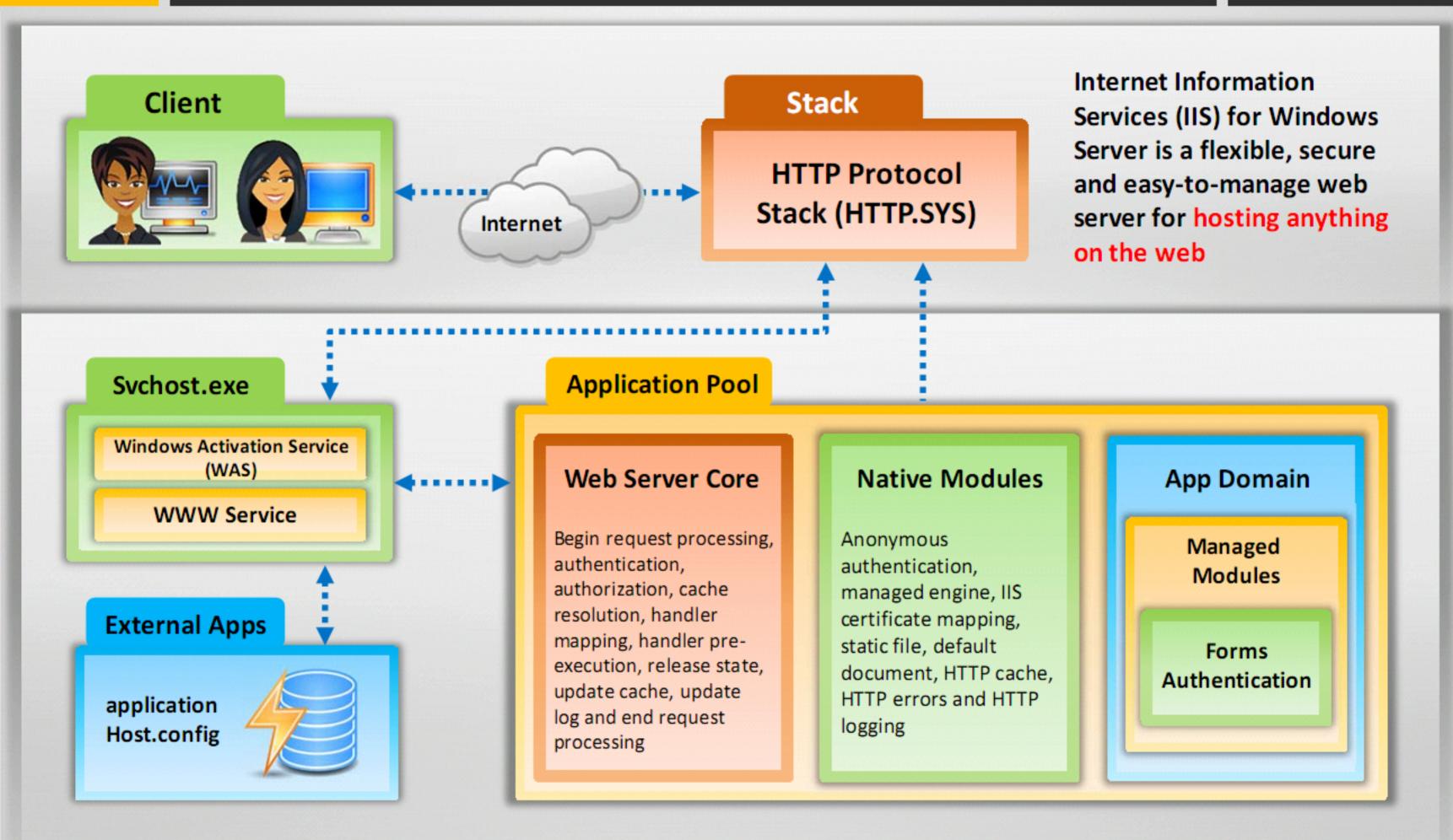




```
Find scheduled and unscheduled tasks on the local
host
                  C:\> schtasks.exe
Check for creation of new accounts in administrator
group
                 C:\> lusrmgr.msc
See if any unexpected processes are running in Task
Manager
                Start -> Run -> taskmgr -> OK
Look for unusual network services
                 C:\> net start
Check file space usage to look for a sudden decrease
in free space
                 C:\> dir
```

## **IIS Web Server Architecture**





## IIS Logs



- IIS logs all server visits in log files
- IIS logs provide useful information regarding the activity of various Web applications, such as connection time, IP address, user account, page URLs and actions
- The IIS server generates ASCII text-based log files
- On Windows Server 2012, the log files are stored by default in the %SystemDrive%\inetpub\logs\LogFiles

```
u_ex150417.log - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
#Date: 2015-04-17 07:45:07
#Fields: date time s-ip cs-method cs-uri-stem cs-uri-query s-port cs-username c-ip cs(User-Agent) (
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+NT+6.3;+WOW64)+AppleWebK:
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/ - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+NT+6.3;+WOW64)+AppleWeb!
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/css/reset.css - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+NT+6.3;+WON
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/css/banners.css - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+NT+6.3;+N
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/css/font-awesome.css - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+NT+6
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/js/init.js - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+NT+6.3;+WOW64)
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/css/main.css - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+NT+6.3;+WOW
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/css/ui.css - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+NT+6.3;+WOW64)
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/js/jquery.js - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+NT+6.3;+WOWE
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/js/jquery.ui-slider.js - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+N)
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/js/selectBox.min.js - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+NT+6
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/images/logo.png - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+NT+6.3;+N
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/images/background.jpg - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+NT-
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/images/shadow_left.jpg - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+N)
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/images/shadow_right.jpg - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+I
2015-04-17 19:06:21 ::1 GET /goodshopping/tmp/top_slider/slide1_bg.jpg - 80 - ::1 Mozilla/5.0+(Wind >
                   III
```

## Investigating IIS Logs



Example of IIS log file entry as viewed in a text editor:

> 2016-02-10 06:11:41 192.168.0.10 GET /images/content/bg\_body\_ 1.jpg - 80 - 192.168.0.27 Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+NT+ 6.3;+WOW64)+AppleWebKi t/537.36+(KHTML,+like+Gec ko)+Chrome/48.0.2564.103 +Safari/537.36 http://www.moviescope.co m/css/style.css 200 0 0 365

Field	Appear As	Description	
Date	03/06/2015	Log file entry was made on June 03, 2015	
Time	8:45:30	Log life entry was recorded at 8:45 A.M	
Server IP	172.15.10.30	IP address of the server	
Client IP address	192.168.100.150	IP address of the client	
cs-method	GET	The user issued a GET or download command	
cs-uri-stem	/images/content/bg_bo dy_1.jpg	The user wanted to download the bg_body_1.jpg file from the Images folder	
cs-uri-query	•	The URI query did not occur (URI queries are necessary only for dynamic pages, such as ASP pages, so this field usually contains a hyphen for static pages.)	
s-port	80	The server port	
cs-username	•	The user was anonymous	
c-ip	192.168.0.27	The IP address of the client	
cs(User-Agent)	Mozilla/5.0+(Windows+ NT+6.3;+WOW64)+Appl eWebKit/537.36+(KHTM L,+like+Gecko)+Chrome/ 48.0.2564.103+Safari/5 37.36	The type of browser that the client used, as represented by the browser	
cs(Referer)	http://www.moviescop e.com/css/style.css	The Web page that provided the link to the Web site	
sc-status	200	The request was fulfilled without error	
time-taken	365	The action was completed in 365 milliseconds	

## Maintaining Credible IIS Log Files





- Investigators must ask themselves certain questions before presenting IIS logs in court as evidence of web attack. This includes:
  - What would happen if the credibility of the IIS logs was challenged in court?
  - What if the defense claims the logs are not reliable enough to be admissible as evidence?



An investigator must secure the evidence and ensure that it is accurate, authentic and accessible.



In order to prove that the log files are valid, the investigator needs to present them as acceptable and dependable sources by providing convincing arguments, which makes them valid evidences.

# Investigating IIS Logs: Best Practices



While handling IIS logs, the investigators must treat them carefully and consider these files as evidences

- IIS logs, in combination with other logs, such as firewall logs, IDS logs, and even TCPdump can provide more log credibility when used as an evidence
- Configure the IIS logs to record all the available fields
- Capture events with a accurate timestamp
- Maintain continuity in the logs
- Ensure IIS logs are not altered in any way from the time they have been originally recorded

## Coordinated Universal Time (UTC)





**IIS records logs using UTC** 



It helps in solving the synchronization issues when running servers in multiple time zones



Windows offsets the value of the system clock with the system time zone to calculate UTC



To check whether the UTC is correct, a network administrator must ensure accurateness of the local time zone setting

The network administrator must verify that during the process, the IIS is set to roll over logs using local time

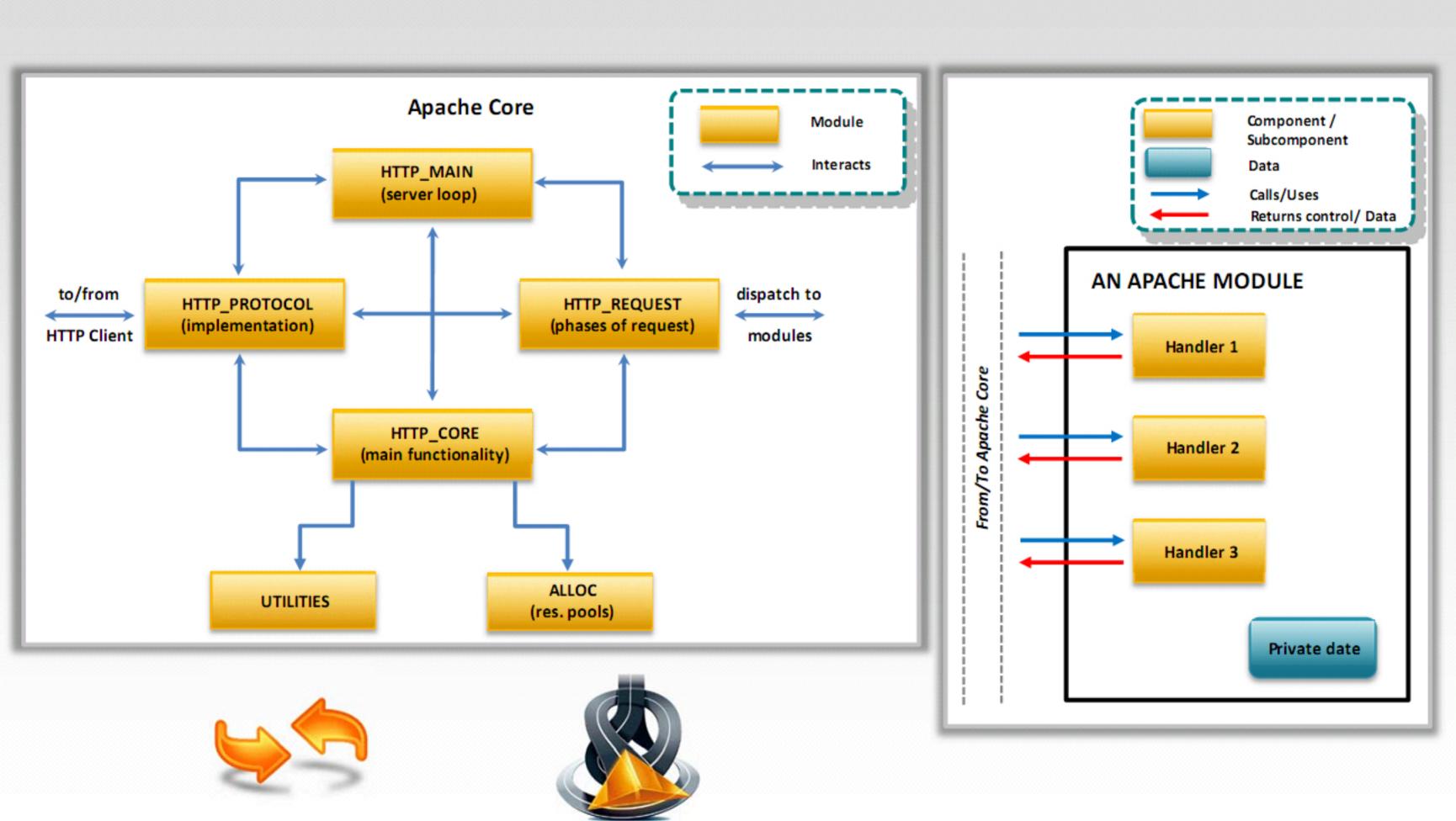


A network administrator can verify a server's time zone setting by looking at the first entries in the log file.

If the server is set to UTC -06:00, then the first log entries should appear around 18:00 (00:00 - 06:00 = 18:00).

## Apache Web Server Architecture





# Apache Web Server Logs



# Apache HTTP Server

Apache HTTP Server is a web server that supports many operating systems, such as Unix, GNU, FreeBSD, Linux, Solaris, Novell NetWare, AmigaOS, Mac OS X, Microsoft Windows, OS/2 and TPF



## Apache Log Information

- Apache logs provide information about web application activities, such as:
  - IP address of the client
  - Ident of client machine
  - User ID of client
  - Time
  - Request line from client
  - Status code
  - Size of the object returned to the client

# Apache Log Format

- Common Apache log format :
  - LogFormat "%h %l %u %t \"%r\" %>s %b" common
  - CustomLog "logs/access\_log" common



# Investigating Apache Logs



### **Error Log**

- The Apache server saves diagnostic information and error messages that it encounters while processing requests in the error logs
- It is an important piece of evidence from an investigator's point of view
- The default location of error logs:

RHEL/Red Hat/CentOS/Fedora Linux: /var/log/httpd/error\_log

Debian/Ubuntu Linux: /var/log/apache2/error.log

FreeBSD: /var/log/httpd-error.log

### **Access Log**

- It contains requests processed by the Apache server
- The default location of error logs:

RHEL/Red Hat/CentOS/Fedora Linux: /var/log/httpd/access log

Debian/Ubuntu Linux: /var/log/apache2/access.log

FreeBSD Linux: /var/log/httpd-access.log

Check the following locations for Apache configuration file to find the exact location of the log files:

- RHEL/Red Hat/CentOS/Fedora Linux: /usr/local/etc/apache22/httpd.conf
- Debian/Ubuntu Linux: /etc/apache2/apache2.conf
- FreeBSD: /etc/httpd/conf/httpd.conf

# Investigating Apache Logs (Cont'd)



## **Access log/Common Log format**

"%h %l %u %t \"%r\" %>s %b"

### Example of Apache access log file entry, as viewed in a text editor:

10.10.10.10 - jason [17/Aug/2016:00:12:34 +0300] "GET /images/content/bg\_body\_1.jpg HTTP/1.0" 500 1458

Apache Log Fields						
%a - RemoteIPOrHost	%r - Request	%X - ConnectionStatus				
%A - LocalIPOrHost	%>s - HttpStatusCode	%{Referer}i - Referer				
%b or %B - Size	%t - eventTime	%{User-agent}i - UserAgent				
%D - RequestTimeUs (microseconds)	%T - RequestTimeSeconds	%{UNIQUE_ID}e - UniqueId				
%h - RemoteIPOrHost	%u - RemoteUser	%{X-Forwarded-For}i - XForwardedFor				
%k - KeepAliveRequests	%U - UrlPath	%{Host}i - Host				
% - RemoteLogname	%v - VirtualHost					

# Investigating Apache Logs (Cont'd)



### Example of Apache error log file entry as viewed in a text editor:

[Mon Sep 16 14:25:33.812856 2016] [core:error] [pid 12485:tid 8589745621] [client 10.10.255.14] File does not exist: /images/content/bg\_body\_1.jpg

[First element] - Day, month, date, time, and year of the log [Second element] - Severity of the error [Third element] - Process ID and its corresponding thread ID [Fourth element] - IP address of the client that generated the error [Fifth element] - Message itself (In this example, the message shows that the "File does not exist")

Severity	Description	Example
emerg	Emergencies — system is unusable	"Child cannot open lock file. Exiting"
alert	Immediate action required	"getpwuid: couldn't determine user name from uid"
crit	Critical conditions	"socket: Failed to get a socket, exiting child"
error	Error conditions	"Premature end of script headers"
warn	Warning conditions	"child process 1234 did not exit, sending another SIGHUP"
notice	Normal but significant condition	"httpd: caught SIGBUS, attempting to dump core in"
info	Informational	"Server seems busy"
debug	Debug-level messages	"opening config file"
trace1-8	Trace messages	"proxy: FTP: "

# Investigating Cross-Site Scripting (XSS)



- Common XSS attacks use HTML tags, such as <script></script>, <IMG>, <INPUT>, <BODY>, etc.
- Attackers use various obfuscation techniques to avoid detection by application firewalls and IDS/IPS systems
  - Hex encoding
- Toggle case
- In-line comment
- Replaced Keywords
- Char encoding
- White space manipulation
- For example, all the scripts below mean the same:

```
<script>alert("XSS")</script>
```

- %253cscript%253ealert(1)%253c/script%253e......(Double encoding)
- Investigators can use regex search to find HTML tags, other XSS signature words and their equivalents in web access logs to check for XSS attacks

# Investigating XSS: Using Regex to Search XSS Strings





The regular expression below checks for attacks that may contain HTML opening and closing tags (<>) with any text inside, along with their hex and double encoding equivalents







0



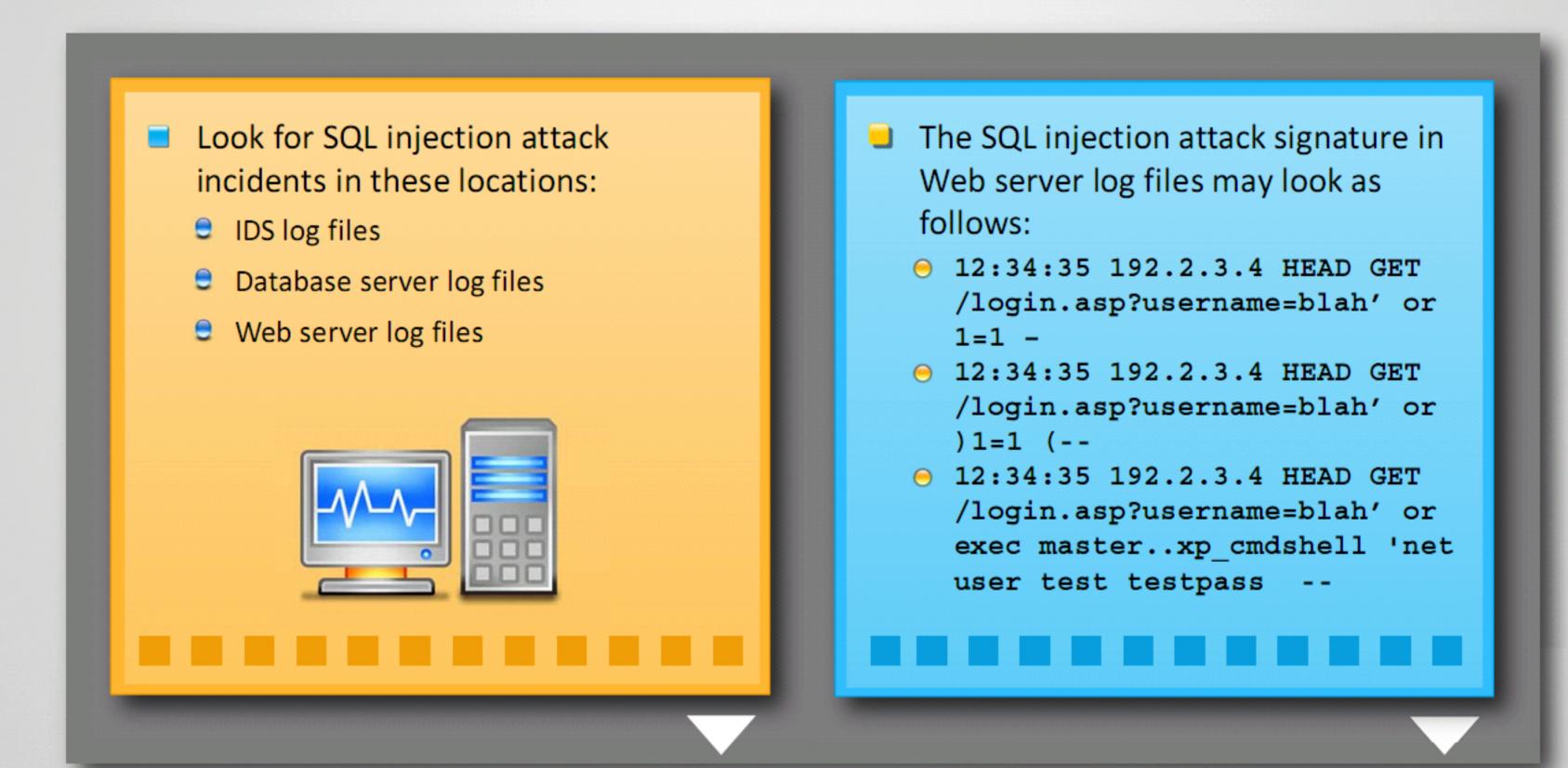
- ((\%3C) | (\%253C) | <) Checks for opening angle bracket, its hex or double-encoded hex equivalent</p>
- ((\%2F) | (\%252F) | \/) \* Checks for forward slash for a closing tag, its hex or double-encoded hex equivalent
- [a-zA-Z0-9\%] + Checks for upper and lower-case alphanumeric string inside the tag, or its hex representation
- ((\%3E) | (\%253E) | >) Checks for closing angle bracket, hex or double-encoded hex equivalent





# Investigating SQL Injection Attacks





# Investigating SQL Injection Attacks (Cont'd)

EB F6 52 00

9080

LOG



- The regular expression mentioned below checks for attacks that may contain SQL specific meta-characters, such as the single-quote (') or the double-dash (--) with any text inside and their hex equivalents
- Regular expression for detection of SQL meta-characters:
  - (\%27) | (\¹) | (\-\-) | (\%23) | (#)/ix
- Snort signature
  - alert tcp \$EXTERNAL\_NET any ->
    \$HTTP\_SERVERS \$HTTP\_PORTS(msg:
     "SQL Injection Paranoid";
    flow:to\_server, established;
    uricontent: ".pl";pcre: "/
     (\%27) | (\') | (\-\-) | (%23)
     |(#)/i"; classtype:Webapplication-attack;
    sid:9099; rev:5;)

- Modified Regular expression for detection of SQL meta-characters:
  - /((\%3D) | (=)) [^\n] \*((\%27) | (\') | (\-\) | (\%3B) | (;)) /i
    - Regular expression for typical SQL injection attack:
      - /\w\*((\%27)|(\'))((\%6F)
        |o|(\%4F))((\%72)|r|
        (\%52))/ix
    - Regular expression for detecting SQL injection with the UNION keyword:
    - /((\%27) | (\'))union/ix
- Regular expression for detecting SQL injection attacks on a MS SQL Server:
  - /exec(\s|\+)+(s|x)p\w+/ix

# Pen-Testing CSRF Validation Fields



		4	
Δ	C		7
Œ	3		

Confirm that the validation field is unique for each user

## Test 2

Make sure that another user cannot identify the validation field

- If the attacker can create the same validation field for another user, then creation of a new validation field becomes valueless
- The validation field must be unique for each site

## Test 3

Verify that the validation field is never sent on the query string, because this data could be leaked to the attacker in places like the HTTP referrer

### Test 4

Verify that the request fails if the validation field is missing

# Investigating Code Injection Attack



1

Intrusion detection systems (IDS) and a series of sandbox execution environments provided by the OS helps in detection of code injection attacks



2

When the IDS finds a series of executable instructions in the network traffic, it transfers the suspicious packet's payload to the execution environment matching the packet's destination



3

The proper execution environment is determined with the help of the destination IP address of the incoming packets



4

The packet payload is then executed in the corresponding monitored environment, and a report of the payload's OS resource usage is passed to the IDS



5

If the report contains evidence of OS resource usage, the IDS alerts the user that the incoming packet contains malicious data



# Investigating Cookie Poisoning Attack





Intrusion prevention products help in detecting cookie poisoning attacks



These products trace the cookie's set command given by the Web server



For every set command, information such as **cookie name**, **cookie value**, IP address, time, and the session to which the cookie was assigned is stored



After this, the intrusion prevention product catches every HTTP request sent to the Web server and compares any cookie information sent with all stored cookies



If an attacker changes the cookie's contents, they will not match up with the stored cookies, and the intrusion prevention product will determine the occurrence of an attack



Attacker sends invalid cookies to server



**Attacker** 

Server

# Web Log Viewers



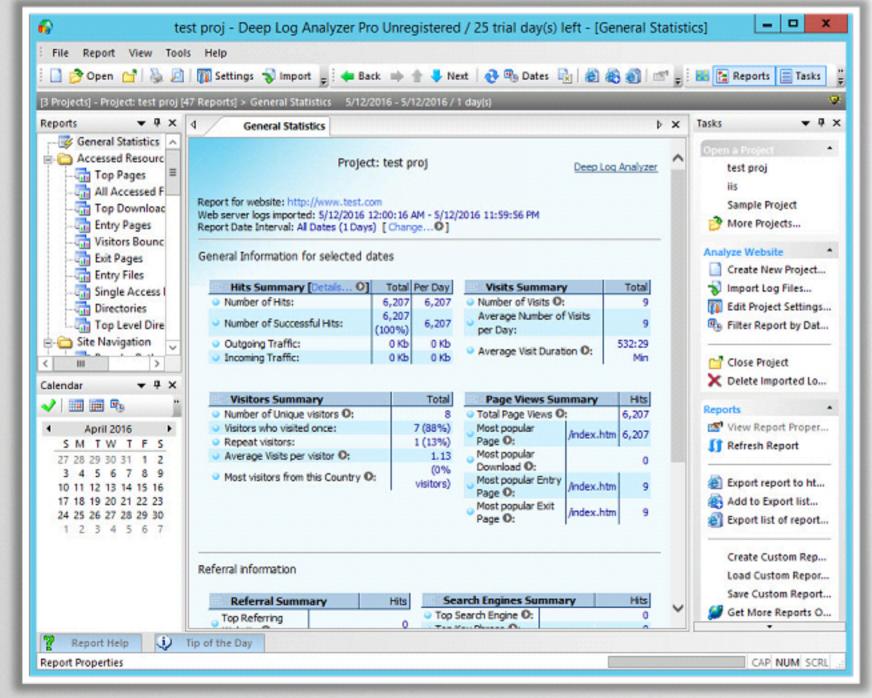
\_ D X

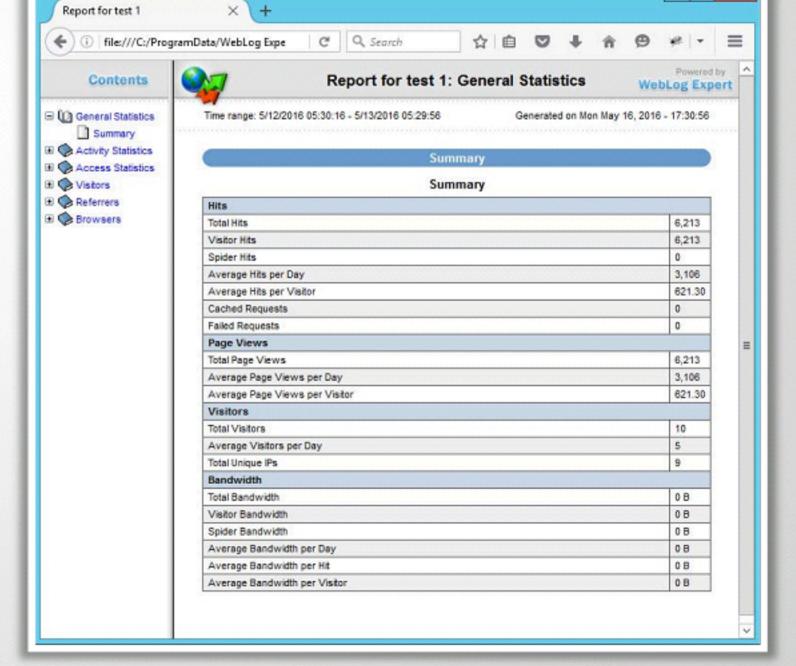
## **Deep Log Analyzer**

It is a web analytics solution that enables you to analyze logs from web servers, such IIS on Windows, Apache or Nginx on Unix/Linux and more

## **WebLog Expert**

It is an access log analyzer that enables you to analyze logs of Apache, IIS and Nginx web servers





http://www.deep-software.com

https://www.weblogexpert.com

# Web Log Viewers (Cont'd)





### Apache Logs Viewer (ALV)

http://www.apacheviewer.com



#### **AWStats**

http://www.awstats.org



### **Nagios Log Server**

https://www.nagios.com



### Splunk

http://www.splunk.com



### **Web Log Storming**

http://www.weblogstorming.com



### LogCruncher

https://logentries.com



#### **GoAccess**

https://goaccess.io



#### HTTP-ANALYZE

http://http-analyze.org



### **Active LogView**

http://www.softcab.com



#### Webalizer

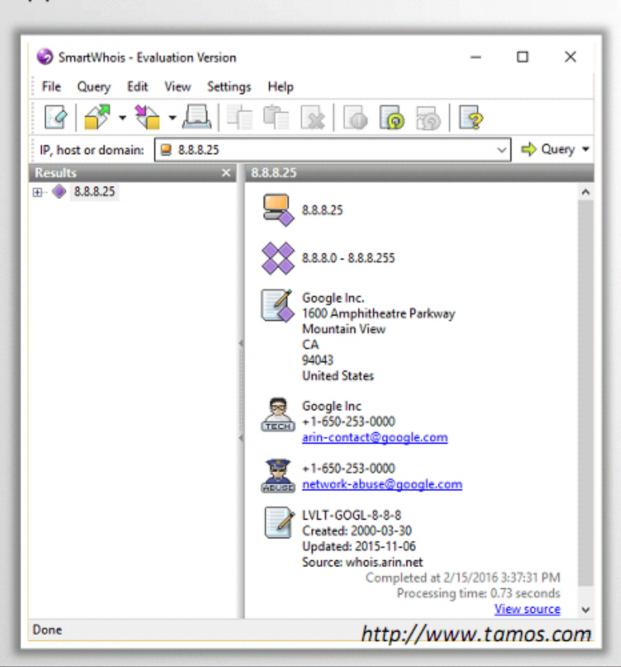
http://www.webalizer.org

## IP Address Locating Tools



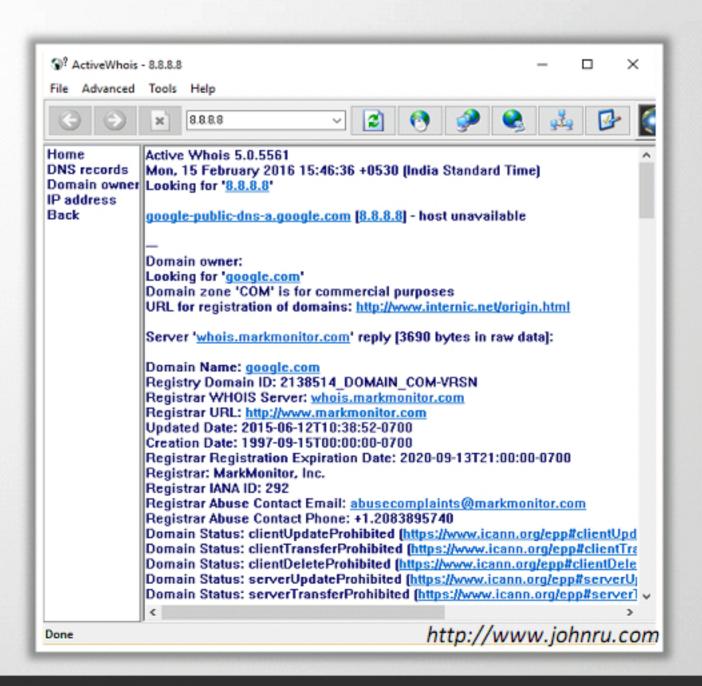
### **SmartWhois**

Network information utility that allows to look up for all the available information about an IP address, hostname or domain, including country, state or province, city, name of the network provider, administrator and technical support contact information



### **ActiveWhois**

- Network tool to find any information about the owners of IP address or Internet domain
- You can determine the country, personal and postal addresses of owner, and/or user of IP address and domains



## WHOIS Lookup Tools





#### LanWhols

http://lantricks.com



#### **Batch IP Converter**

http://www.networkmost.com



### **CallerIP**

http://www.callerippro.com



### Sobolsoft

http://www.sobolsoft.com



### Whols Analyzer Pro

http://www.whoisanalyzer.com



#### **HotWhois**

http://www.tialsoft.com



#### **ActiveWhois**

http://www.johnru.com



### WhoisThisDomain

http://www.nirsoft.net



### SoftFuse Whois

http://www.softfuse.com



#### Whois

http://technet.microsoft.com

# WHOIS Lookup Tools (Cont'd)





#### **Domain Dossier**

http://centralops.net



#### **BetterWhois**

http://www.betterwhois.com



#### Whois Online

http://whois.online-domain-tools.com



#### Web Wiz

http://www.webwiz.co.uk/domaintools/whois-lookup.htm



#### Network-Tools.com

http://network-tools.com



#### Whois

http://tools.whois.net



### **DNSstuff**

http://www.dnsstuff.com



### **Network Solutions Whois**

http://www.networksolutions.com



#### WebToolHub

http://www.webtoolhub.com/tn56138 1-whois-lookup.aspx



#### **UltraTools**

https://www.ultratools.com/whois/home

# Module Summary



