SentinelLABS

New Rook Ransomware Feeds Off the Code of Babuk

JIM WALTER / DECEMBER 23, 2021

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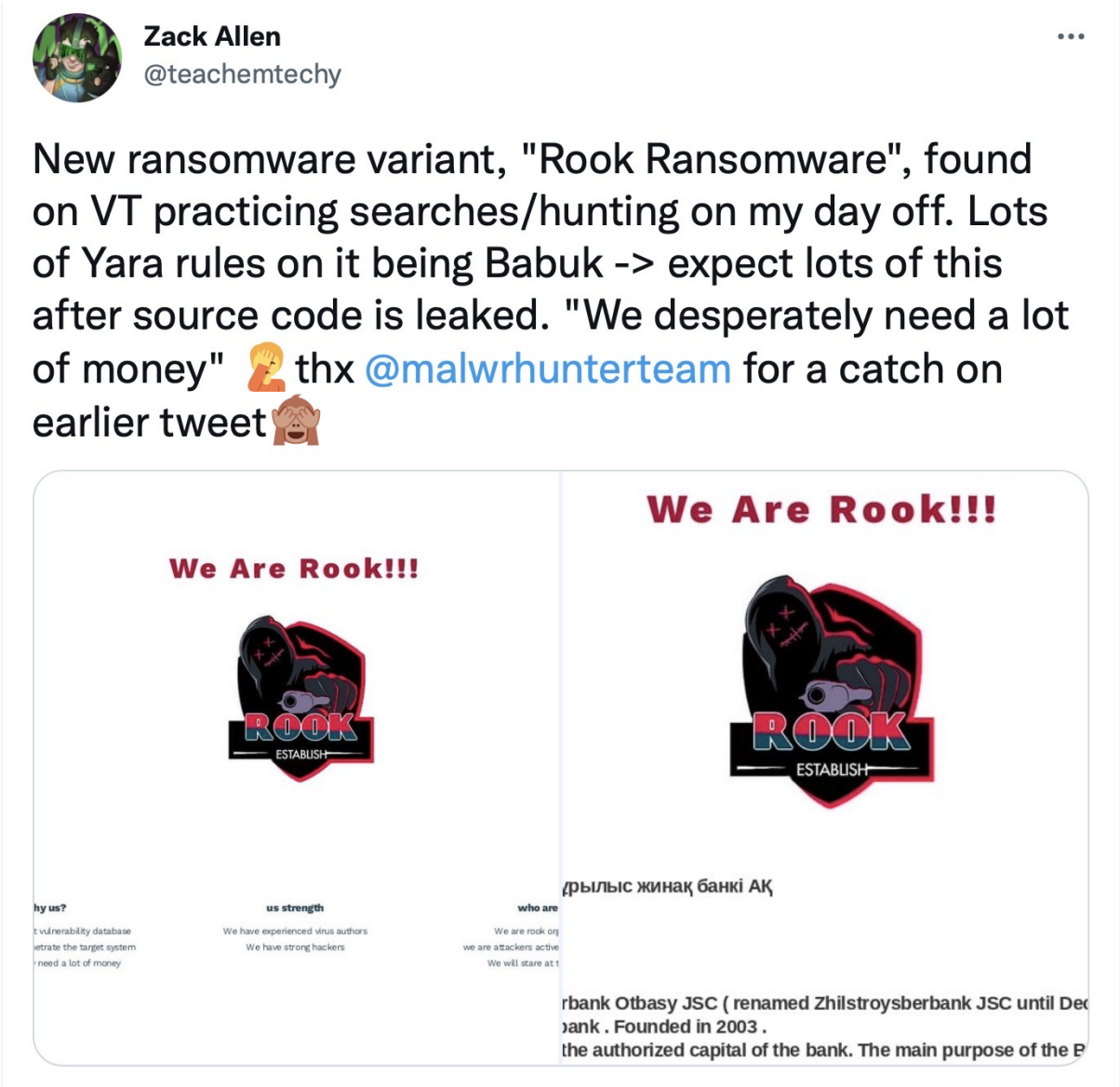
First noticed on VirusTotal on November 26th by researcher Zack Allen, Rook Ransomware initially attracted attention for the operators' rather unorthodox self-introduction, which stated that "We desperately need a lot of money" and "We will stare at the internet".



These odd pronouncements prompted some mirth on social media, but they were followed a few days later by more serious news. On November 30th, Rook claimed its first victim: a Kazkh financial institution from which the Rook operators had stolen 1123 GB of data, according to the gang's victim website. Further victims have been claimed since then.

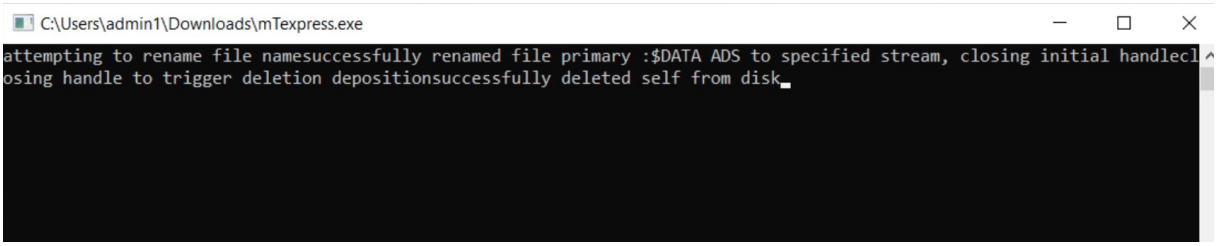
In this post, we offer the first technical write up of the Rook ransomware family, covering both its main high-level features and its ties to the Babuk codebase.

Technical Details

Rook ransomware is primarily delivered via a third-party framework, for example Cobalt Strike; however, delivery via phishing email has also been reported in the wild.

Individual samples are typically UPX packed, although alternate packers/crypters have been observed such as VMProtect.

Upon execution, Rook samples pop a command window, with differing output displayed. For example, some versions show the output path for `kph.sys` (a component of Process Hacker), while others display inaccurate information around the use of ADS (Alternate Data Streams).



False ADS message

```
C:\Users\admin1\Desktop\15a6_LIST.exe

[*] Driver path: C:\Users\admin1\Desktop\kph.sys
```

Rook dropping kph.sys

The ransomware attempts to terminate any process that may interfere with encryption. Interestingly, we see the `kph.sys` driver from Process Hacker come into play in process termination in some cases but not others. This likely reflects the attacker's need to leverage the driver to disable certain local security solutions on specific engagements.

There are numerous process names, service names and folder names included in each sample's configuration. For example, in sample `19CE538B2597DA454ABF835CFF676C28B8EB66F7`, the following processes, services and folders are excluded from the encryption process:

Processes names skipped:

```
sql.exe

oracle.exe

ocssd.exe
```

```
dbsnmp.exe

visio.exe

winword.exe

wordpad.exe

notepad.exe

excel.exe

onenote.exe

outlook.exe

synctime.exe

agntsvc.exe

isqlplussvc.exe

xfssvccon.exe

mydesktopservice.exe

ocautoupds.exe

encsvc.exe

firefox.exe

tbirdconfig.exe

mydesktopqos.exe

ocomm.exe

dbeng50.exe

sqbcoreservice.exe

infopath.exe

msaccess.exe
```

```
mspub.exe

powerpnt.exe

steam.exe

thebat.exe

thunderbird.exe
```

Service names terminated:

```
memtas

mepocs

veeam

backup

GxVss

GxBlr

GxFWD

GxCVD

GxCIMgr

DefWatch

ccEvtMgr

ccSetMgr

SavRoam

RTVscan

QBFCService

QBIDPService
```

```
Intuit.QuickBooks.FCS

QBCFMonitorService

AcrSch2Svc

AcronisAgent

CASAD2DWebSvc

CAARCUpdateSvc
```

Folders names skipped:

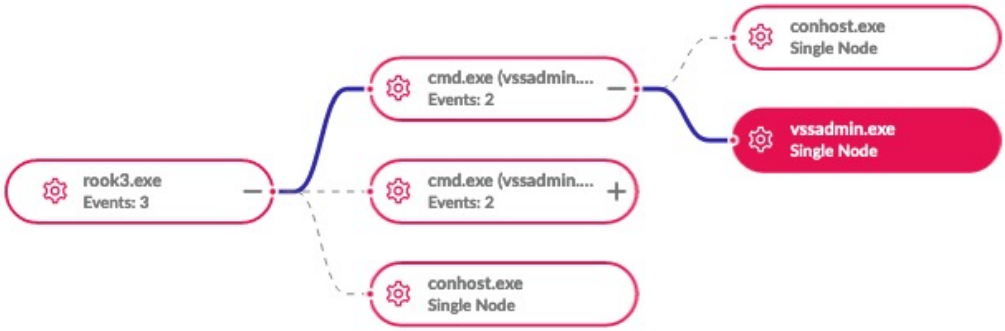
```
Program Files

Program Files (x86)

AppData

Windows

Windows.old

Tor Browser

Internet Explorer

Google

Opera

Opera Software

Mozilla
```

File names skipped:

```
autorun.inf

boot.ini

bootfont.bin
```

```
bootsect.bak

bootmgr

bootmgr.efi

bootmgfw.efi

desktop.ini

iconcache.db

ntldr

ntuser.dat

ntuser.dat.log

ntuser.ini

thumbs.db
```

As with most modern ransomware families, Rook will also attempt to delete volume shadow copies to prevent victims from restoring from backup. This is achieved via `vssadmin.exe`.

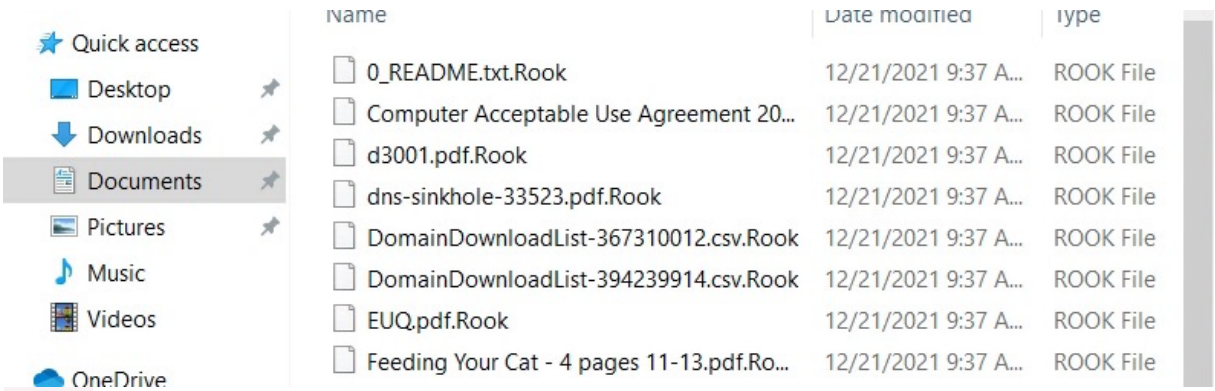


Rook & vssadmin.exe as seen in SentinelOne console

The following syntax is used:

```
vssadmin.exe delete shadows /all /quiet
```

Early variants of Rook were reported to have used a `.TOWER` extension. All current variants seen by SentinelLabs use the `.ROOK` extension.



`.ROOK` extension on affected files

In the samples we analyzed, no persistence mechanisms were observed, and after the malware runs through its execution, it cleans up by deleting itself.

Babuk Overlaps

There are a number of code similarities between Rook and Babuk. Based on the samples available so far, this appears to be an opportunistic result of the various Babuk source-code leaks we have seen over 2021, including leaks of both the compiled builders as well as the actual source. On this basis, we surmise that Rook is just the latest example of an apparent novel ransomware capitalizing on the ready availability of Babuk source-code.

Babuk and Rook use `EnumDependentServicesA` API to retrieve the name and status of each service that depends on the specified service before terminating. They enumerate all services in the system and stop all of those which exist in a hardcoded list in the malware.

Using `OpenSCManagerA` API, the code gets the Service Control Manager, gets the handle and then enumerates all services in the system.

```
lea     ecx, [ebp+pcbBytesNeeded]
push    ecx                     ; pcbBytesNeeded
mov     edx, [ebp+pcbBytesNeeded]
push    edx                     ; cbBufSize
mov     eax, [ebp+lpMem]
push    eax                     ; lpServices
push    1                       ; dwServiceState
mov     ecx, [ebp+hService]
push    ecx                     ; hService
call    ds:EnumDependentServicesA
test    eax, eax
jz      loc_404920
```

```
imul    esi, [ebp+var_10], 24h
add     esi, [ebp+lpMem]
mov     ecx, 9
lea     edi, [ebp+lpServiceName]
rep movsd
push    24h                     ; dwDesiredAccess
mov     edx, [ebp+lpServiceName]
push    edx                     ; lpServiceName
mov     eax, [ebp+hSCManager]
push    eax                     ; hSCManager
call    ds:OpenServiceA
mov     [ebp+hSCObject], eax
cmp     [ebp+hSCObject], 0
jz      short loc_404920
```

```
lea     ecx, [ebp+ServiceStatus]
push    ecx                     ; lpServiceStatus
push    1                       ; dwControl
mov     edx, [ebp+hSCObject]
push    edx                     ; hService
call    ds:ControlService
```

Rook enumerates all services

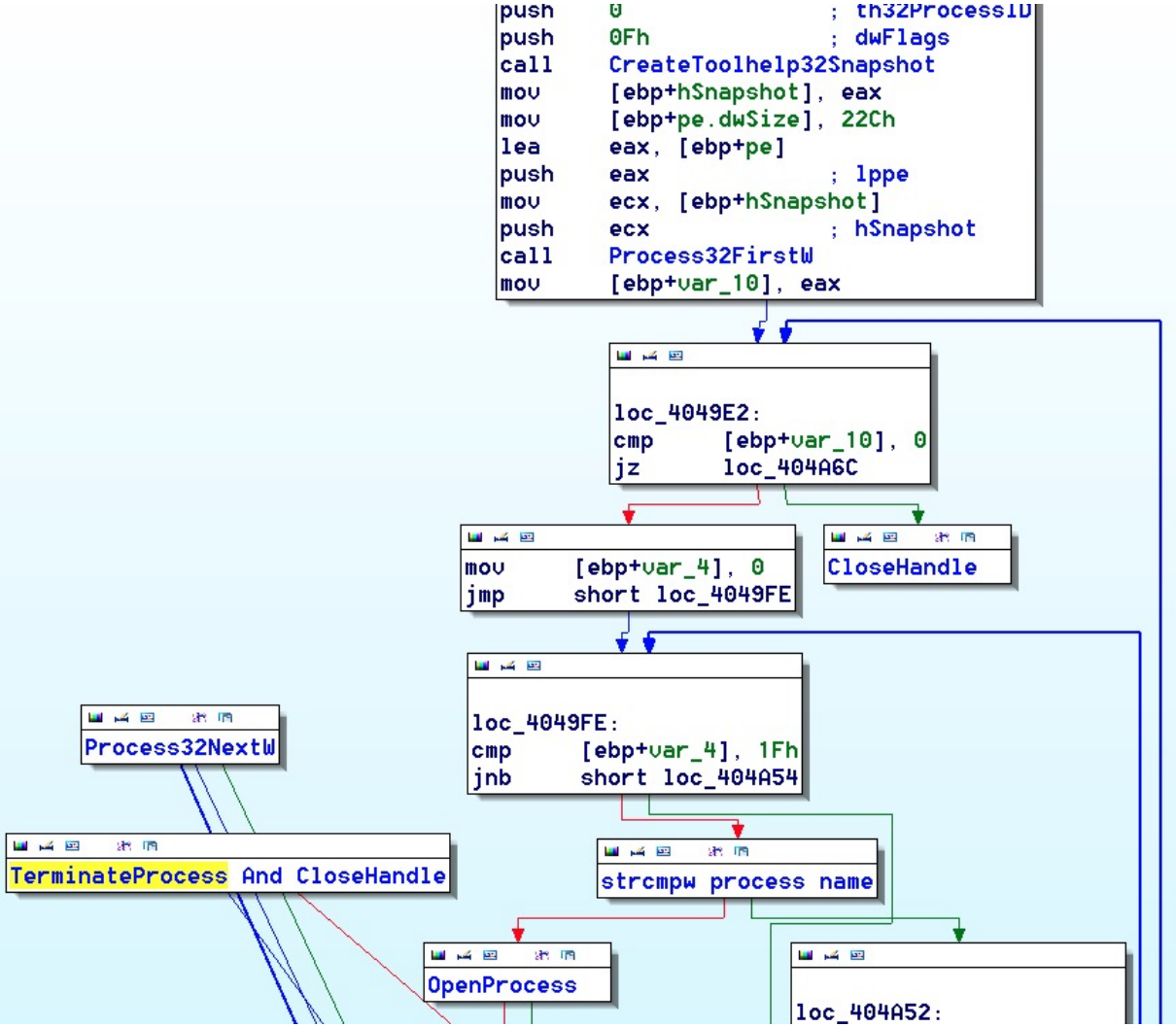
```
Veeam

Backup

GxVss

GxBlr

GxFWD

GxCVD

GXCIMgr

DefWatch

ccEvtMgr

ccSetMgr

SavRoam

RTVscan

QBFCService

QBIDPService

Intuit.QuickBooks.FCS

QBFCMonitorService

YooBAckup

YooIT

Zhudongfangyu

Sophos

Stc_raw_agent

VSNAPVSS
```

```
VeeamTransportSvc

VeeamDeploymentService

VeeamNFSSvc

Veeam

PDVFSService

BackupExecVSSProvider

BackupExecAgentAccelerator

BackupExecAgentBrowser

BackupExecDiveciMediaService

BackupExecJobEngine

BackupExecManagementService

BackupExecRPCServiceAcrSch25vc

AcronisAgent

CASAD2DWebSvc

CAARCUpdateSvc
```

```
000000000484   000000401084   0   SavRoam
00000000048C   00000040108C   0   RTVscan
000000000494   000000401094   0   QBFCService
0000000004A0   0000004010A0   0   QBIDPService
0000000004B0   0000004010B0   0   Intuit.QuickBooks.FCS
0000000004C8   0000004010C8   0   QBCFMonitorService
0000000004DC   0000004010DC   0   YooBackup
0000000004E8   0000004010E8   0   YooIT
0000000004F0   0000004010F0   0   zhudongfangyu
000000000500   000000401100   0   sophos
000000000508   000000401108   0   stc_raw_agent
000000000518   000000401118   0   VSNAPVSS
000000000524   000000401124   0   VeeamTransportSvc
000000000538   000000401138   0   VeeamDeploymentService
000000000550   000000401150   0   VeeamNFSSvc
```

Rook service termination

In addition, both Rook and Babuk use the functions `CreateToolhelp32Snapshot`, `Process32FirstW`, `Process32NextW`, `OpenProcess`, and `TerminateProcess` to enumerate running processes and kill any found to match those in a hardcoded list.



Babuk and Rook share the same process exclusion list

Also similar is the use of the Windows Restart Manager API to aid with process termination, which includes processes related to MS Office products and the popular gaming platform Steam.

```
00000000083C    00000040143C    0    excel.exe
000000000850    000000401450    0    infopath.exe
00000000086C    00000040146C    0    msaccess.exe
000000000888    000000401488    0    mspub.exe
00000000089C    00000040149C    0    onenote.exe
0000000008B4    0000004014B4    0    outlook.exe
0000000008CC    0000004014CC    0    powerpnt.exe
0000000008E8    0000004014E8    0    steam.exe
0000000008FC    0000004014FC    0    thebat.exe
000000000914    000000401514    0
```

Babuk Process termination

We also noted overlap with regards to some of the environmental checks and subsequent behaviors, including the removal of Volume Shadow Copies.

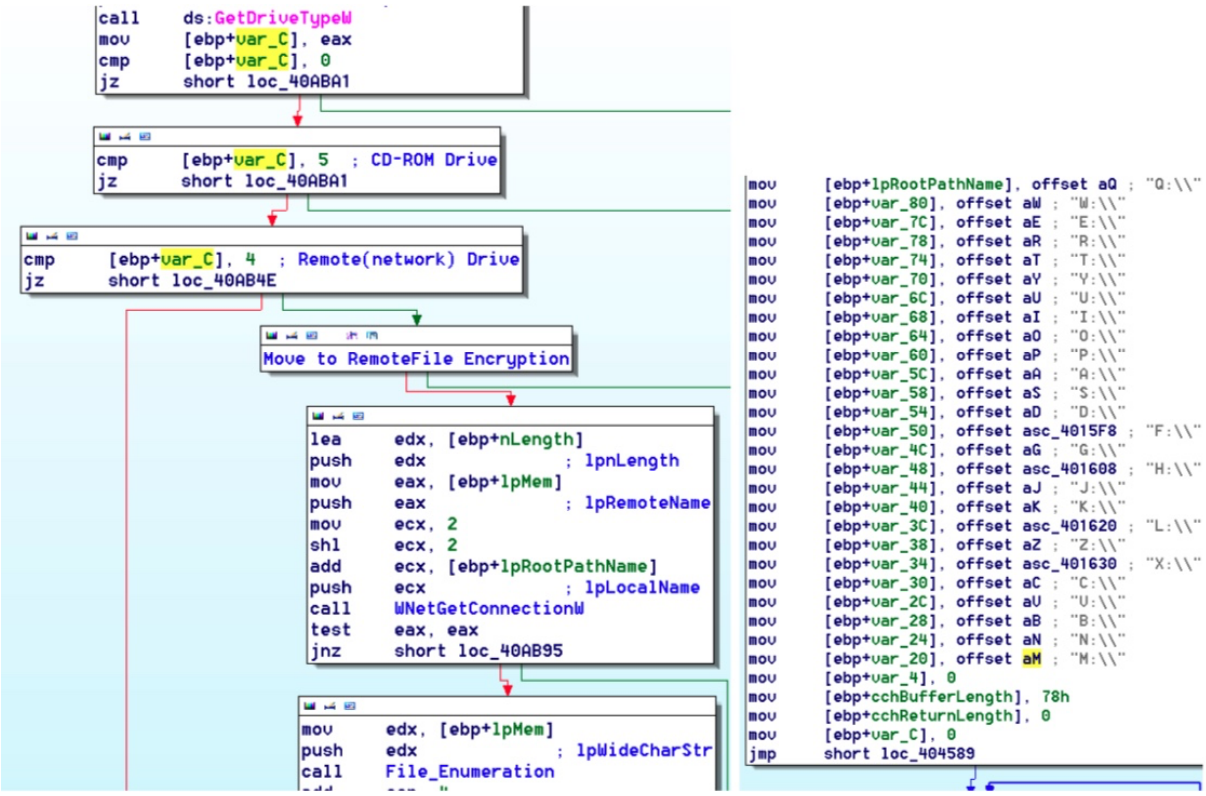
Both Babuk and Rook check if the sample is executed in a 64-bit OS, then delete the shadow volumes of the user machine. The code flows to `Wow64DisableWow64FsRedirection` to disable file system redirection before calling `ShellExecuteW` to delete shadow copies.

```
{
  HMODULE v0; // ST1C_4@2
  int result; // eax@4
  HMODULE v2; // eax@5
  int v3; // [sp+Ch] [bp-8h]@1
  FARPROC v4; // [sp+10h] [bp-4h]@2

  v3 = 0;
  if ( sub_404AD0() )
  {
    v0 = LoadLibraryA("kernel32.dll");
    v4 = GetProcAddress(v0, "Wow64DisableWow64FsRedirection");
    if ( v4 )
      ((void (__stdcall *)(int *))v4)(&v3);
  }
  ShellExecuteW(0, L"open", L"cmd.exe", L"/c vssadmin.exe delete shadows /all /quiet", 0, 0);
  result = sub_404AD0();
  if ( result )
  {
    v2 = LoadLibraryA("kernel32.dll");
    result = (int)GetProcAddress(v2, "Wow64RevertWow64FsRedirection");
    if ( result )
      result = ((int (__stdcall *)(int))result)(v3);
  }
  return result;
}
```

Babuk VSS deletion (similar to Rook)

Babuk and Rook implement similar code for enumerating local drives.

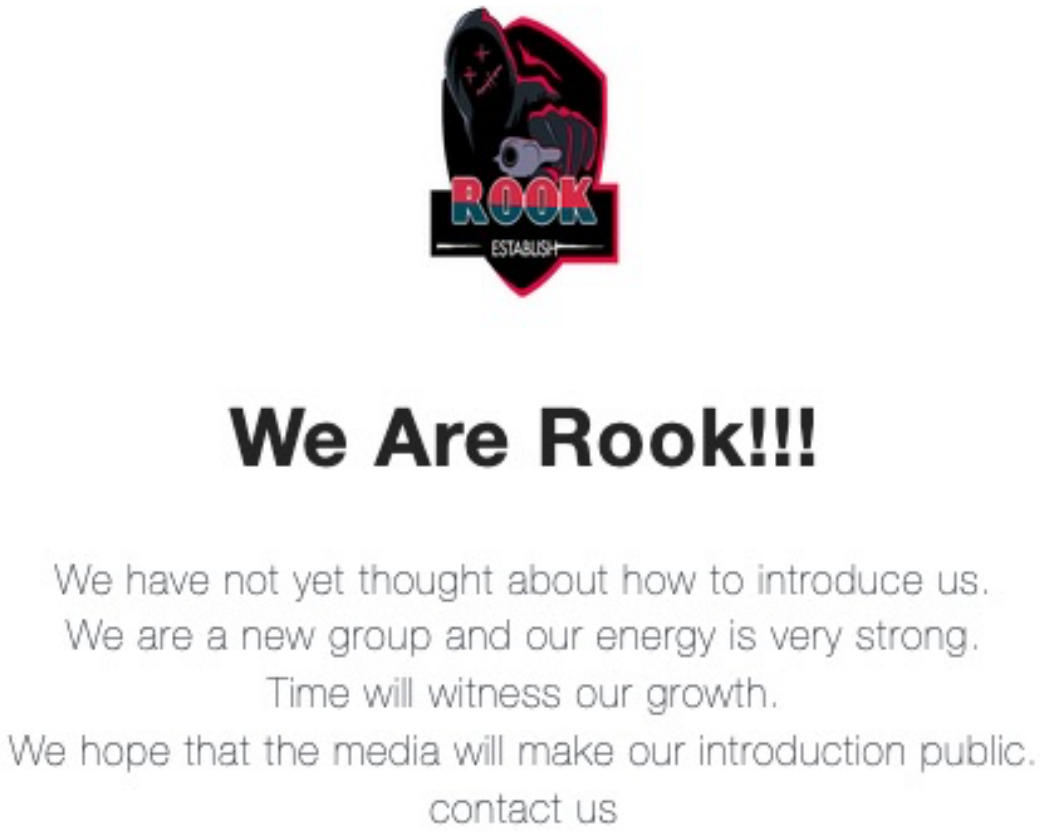
Rook checks for the local drives alphabetically as shown below.



Enumerating local drives

The Rook Victim Website

Like other recent ransomware varieties, Rook embraces a dual-pronged extortion approach: an initial demand for payment to unlock encrypted files, followed by public threats via the operators' website to leak exfiltrated data should the victim fail to comply with the ransom demand.



Rook's welcome message (TOR-based website)

This TOR-based site is used to name victims and host any data should the victim decide not to cooperate. Rook also uses the site to openly boast of having the "latest vulnerability database" and "we can always penetrate

the target system” as well as their desire for success: “We desperately need a lot of money”.

These statements appear under the heading of “why us?” and could be intended to attract affiliates as well as convince victims that they mean business.

why us?
contact us
who are us

why us?

We have the latest vulnerability database
We can always penetrate the target system
We desperately need a lot of money

contact us

rook@securityrook.com
securityrook@securityrook.com

who are us

We are rook organization
we are attackers active on the front line
We will stare at the internet

Powered by Rook!!! RSS

About Rook (TOR-based website)
At the time of writing, three companies have been listed on the Rook blog, spanning different industries.

Leaked data size: 1123GB

https://mega.nz/fold[redacted]
(10G data will be released now, 200G data will be released in a week, and all data will be released in two week.)
https://mega.nz/[redacted]
https://mega.nz
/file/m3wEQKZJ#3[redacted]

Industry:

Bank

introduce:

Company Profile: Zhilstroysberbank Otbasy JSC (renamed Zhilstroysberbank JSC until December 20, 2020) is a joint-stock company, a second-tier bank . Founded in 2003 .
The state participates 100% in the authorized capital of the bank. The main purpose of the Bank is to finance long-term housing construction on the basis of personal savings to finance loans to improve the living conditions of citizens who do not have sufficient funds to pay the down payment when obtaining a mortgage loan from tier two banks .
The authorized capital is 1.5 billion tenge. tenge. 20031.05 thousand depositors have been attracted since September 29, 2013.
The total contract amount for housing construction savings attracted by the Bank is 900 mln. about tenge.

Expanded victim data

Conclusion

Given the economics of ransomware – high reward for low risk – and the ready availability of source code from leaks like Babuk, it's inevitable that the proliferation of new ransomware groups we're seeing now is only going to continue. Rook may be here today and gone tomorrow, or it could stick around until the actors behind it decide they've had enough (or made

enough), but what is certain is that Rook won't be the last malware we see feeding off the leaked Babuk code.

Add that to the incentive provided by recent vulnerabilities such as log4j2 that can allow initial access without great technical skill, and enterprise security teams have a recipe for a busy year ahead. Prevention is critical, along with well-documented and tested DRP and BCP procedures. All SentinelOne customers are protected from Rook ransomware.

Indicators of Compromise

SHA1

104d9e31e34ba8517f701552594f1fc167550964

19ce538b2597da454abf835cff676c28b8eb66f7

36de7997949ac3b9b456023fb072b9a8cd84ade8

SHA256

f87be226e26e873275bde549539f70210ffe5e3a129448ae807a319cbdcf7789

c2d46d256b8f9490c9599eea11ecef19fde7d4fdd2dea93604cee3cea8e172ac

96f7df1c984c1753289600f7f373f3a98a4f09f82acc1be8ecfd5790763a3

55b

MITRE ATT&CK

T1027.002 – Obfuscated Files or Information: Software Packing

T1007 – System Service Discovery

T1059 – Command and Scripting Interpreter

TA0010 – Exfiltration

T1082 – System Information Discovery

T1490 – Inhibit System Recovery