

RE: Re: Remote connections

Source: <http://www.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/securityfocus/focus-ms/2004-10/0086.html>

From: Jordan Wiseman (Jordan_Wiseman_at_Valleymed.org)

Date: 10/19/04

Date: Tue, 19 Oct 2004 10:34:36 -0700

To: "John Fleming" <jfleming@creativeventuresofboca.com>, "Laura Robinson" <larobins@verizon.net>

Actually, the TSWeb client is a simple and ActiveX based terminal server client. It allow simply deployment (web based) of a relatively limited client.

Check out:

<http://blogs.msdn.com/tristank/archive/2004/03/18/91806.aspx>

BTW, the last issue of (now) Windows IT Pro had an article about using RDP securely too (instant doc 43877). Basically, it is a best practices approach. The main tips being:

- Require maximum encryption
- Require password (disable pass-thru for TS login)
- Disable most redirection to local resources

My two cents on the subject of various remote control programs:

RDP works fairly well, even over slow links. With XP/2000 the lack of actual console access is annoying for certain tasks. At least this is corrected with 2003.

VNC in its various forms is quick and can actually be setup easily remotely if necessary (provided with access to administrative shares of course). Very nice that most VNC clients can connect to most VNC servers regardless of actual version. Lack of build-in security beyond simple password limits its security. Yes, you can use VNC over SSH, and there is even a distro that supports stream encryption modules...but this is not default and you can not guarantee that EVERY server you which to connect to supports the encryption unless you set it up yourself.

I have not actually used Radmin but I have used most of the desktop management remote control programs (LanDesk, Novell ZEN, Trackit Remote) which all appear to be based on one originally developed by Intel. Good performance, ability to use other modules (file transfer, command execution, etc) but security is usually proprietary.

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All these systems suffer from connection stability issues at depending on how the terminal server is configured (in the case of RDP) you can loose your session once disconnected and have to start over instead of simply reconnecting.

Anyway, that's my opinion. I think in the end this subject is more like "what's the best shell" "what's the best editor" or "what's the best scripting language" we all have our preferences that we swear are the only real solution.

Jordan

-----Original Message-----

From: John Fleming [mailto:jfleming@creativeventuresofboca.com]
Sent: Monday, October 18, 2004 8:04 PM
To: 'Laura Robinson'; 'GuidoZ'; focus-ms@securityfocus.com
Cc: bugtraq@planetcobalt.net; paviles@adjoined.com
Subject: RE: Re: Remote connections

Aside from creating a VPN tunnel and then performing a Remote Desktop session, the only other secure way that I was taught, but never tested was through SSL.

Aparently there is a Remote Desktop Web Connection feature that can be installed with IIS 6.0. This can act as a gateway to 2000 and 2003 Server Terminal Services and XP and 2003 server Remote Desktop machines. You communicate through HTTP port 80 or SSL 443. Terminal Services Web Connection is installed on the web server to a Virtual Directory called TSWEB. It is supposed to act as a gateway between the client and terminal server. Like I said, I have never tried it, but would love to hear some input on it if anyone has.

Regards,

John

-----Original Message-----

From: Laura Robinson [mailto:larobins@verizon.net]
Sent: Saturday, October 16, 2004 5:34 PM
To: GuidoZ; focus-ms@securityfocus.com
Cc: bugtraq@planetcobalt.net; paviles@adjoined.com
Subject: Re: Re: Remote connections

> > *Why not? I don't know of any current exploit for RDP set to high encryption, and even if there were any, connections may very well be shielded by encrypted tunnels.*
>
> *I'm not aware of any currently either, but as their track record proves, that's meaningless.*

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RDP has been around and used for *years*. Just because Microsoft makes something doesn't inherently mean that it is broken and requiring of a knee-jerk bigoted approach to it.

> > *RDP can be tunneled thru SSH as well and has much better performance*

> > *than VNC (don't know about Radmin).*

>

> *This may very well be true. I'm not up to par as much as I'd like on
> RDP, although I'm quite well learned on VNC and such. TightVNC has
> some of the best compression I've ever seen on a remote control app,
> I've used TightVNC through Dial-up many a times without delay or a
> problem. I'd love to see RDP perform the same feat.*

Um, it does. I've done it many, many times. And RAdmin is garbage as far as what it does to the machine on which it's running unless you remember to crank down its refresh rate to a near-nonexistent level.

>

> *But I digress. Again, I very well could be wrong about RDP. I've
> always leaned towards other remote control programs due to problems
> that usually arises with proprietary programs. (I've been using a form*

> *of WinVNC since before RDP was even thought of.)*

Don't be too sure— do you know where RDP came from? With that said, I think it's time for you to take a look at it before making what you admit are biased statements about it. Never comment on something you've not used is usually a good approach, I find.

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