Finding drive-by rookies using an automated active observation platform

Rintaro Koike (NTT Security Japan KK)
Yosuke Chubachi (Active Defense Institute, LTD)

Who are we?

- **Rintaro Koike**
  - SOC Analyst & Threat Researcher @ NTT Security Japan
  - Founder & Researcher @ nao_sec
- **Yosuke Chubachi**
  - One-man Start-up CEO/Founder @ Active Defense Institute, Ltd.
  - Active Defense provides:
    - Tactical Cyber Threat Intelligence Service focused on DbD
    - Consulting, Pentest and Hands-on Training
  - Researcher and operator of this automation system @ nao_sec
- **nao_sec**
  - Security Research Team (NOT COMPANY)
  - Independent & Non-Profit

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Introduction

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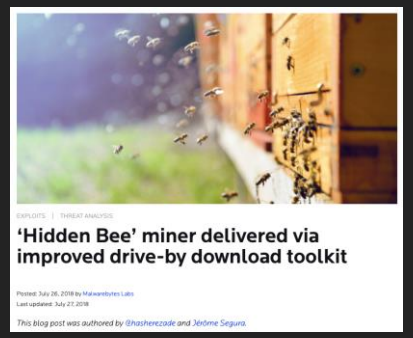
DbD Threat Landscape

2018-07
Underminer



2018-08
Fallout

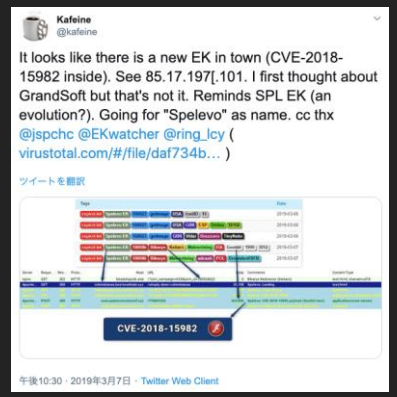
Hello "Fallout Exploit Kit"

2018-09-01

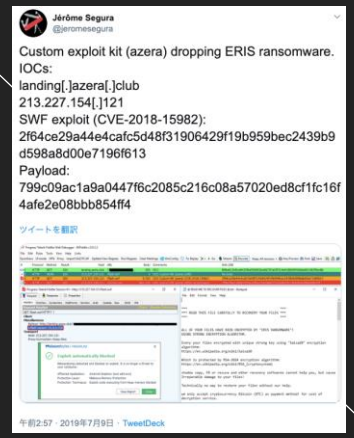
First

At the end of August 2018, we observed a new Exploit Kit. Its behavior (code generation using html) and URL pattern are similar to Nuclear Pack Exploit Kit. Therefore we named it "Fallout Exploit Kit". Fallout Exploit Kit is using CVE-2018-4878 and CVE-2018-8174. That code is distinctive and interesting.

2019-03
Spelevo



2019-07
azera



2019-07
Radio

Weak Drive-by Download attack with "Radio Exploit Kit"

2019-07-15

First

Since July 11 2019, we have observed a new Drive-by Download attack. It is redirected from the ad-network. It does not use a conventional Exploit Kit such as RIG or Fallout, but uses its own exploit kit. We call this “Radio Exploit Kit”.

2019-08
Lord

[1] https://blog.malwarebytes.com/threat-analysis/2018/07/hidden-bee-miner-delivered-via-improved-drive-by-download-toolkit/
[2] https://nao-sec.org/2018/09/hello-fallout-exploit-kit.html
[3] https://twitter.com/kafeine/status/1103649040800145409
[4] https://twitter.com/jeromesegura/status/1148289957716344832
[5] https://nao-sec.org/2019/07/weak-dbd-attack-with-radioek.html
[6] https://twitter.com/adrian__luca/status/1156934215566536705

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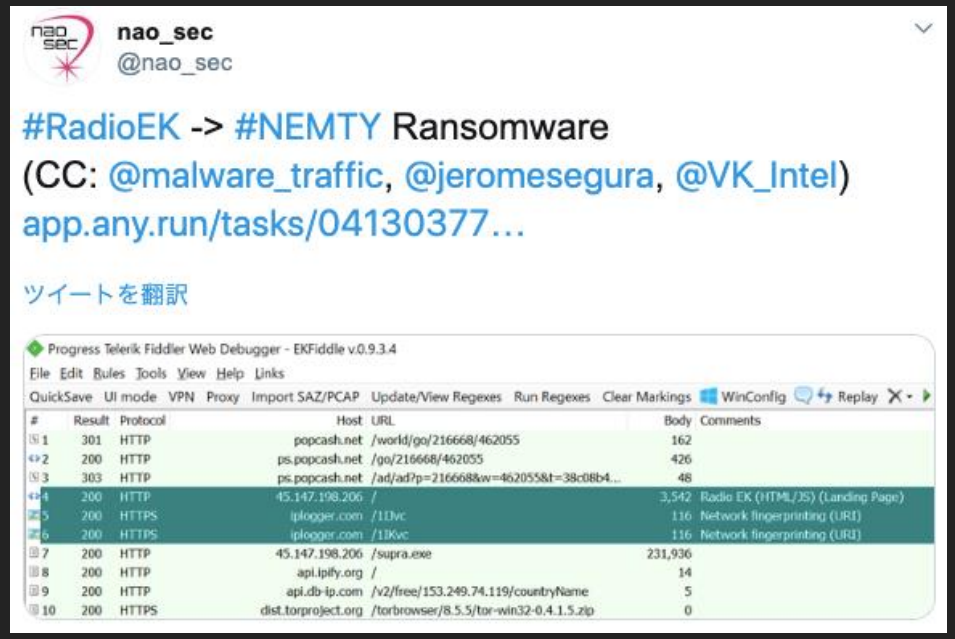
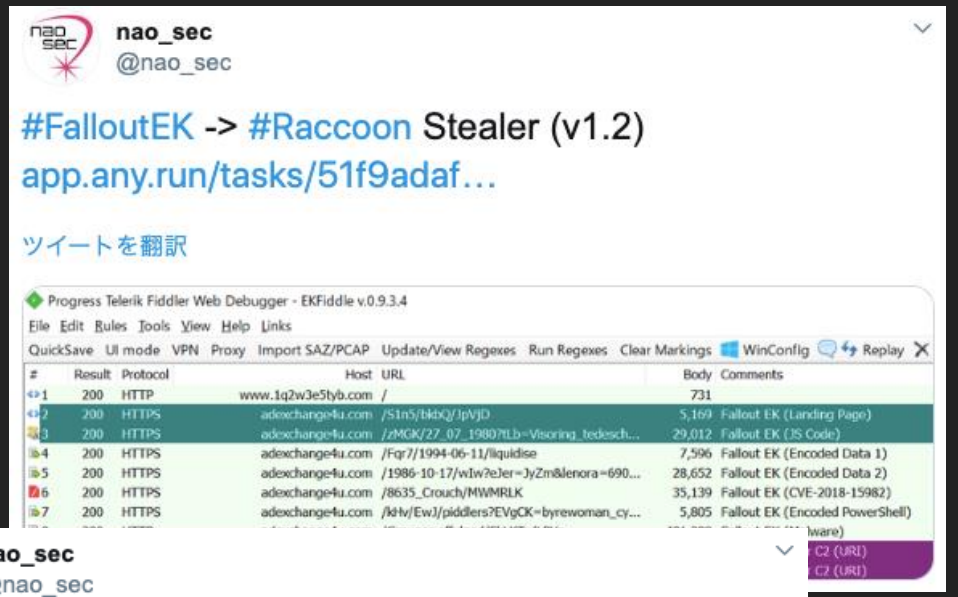
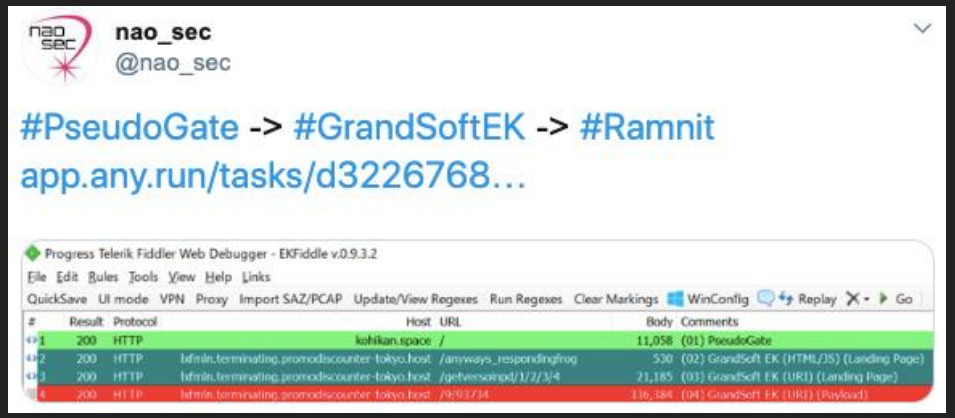
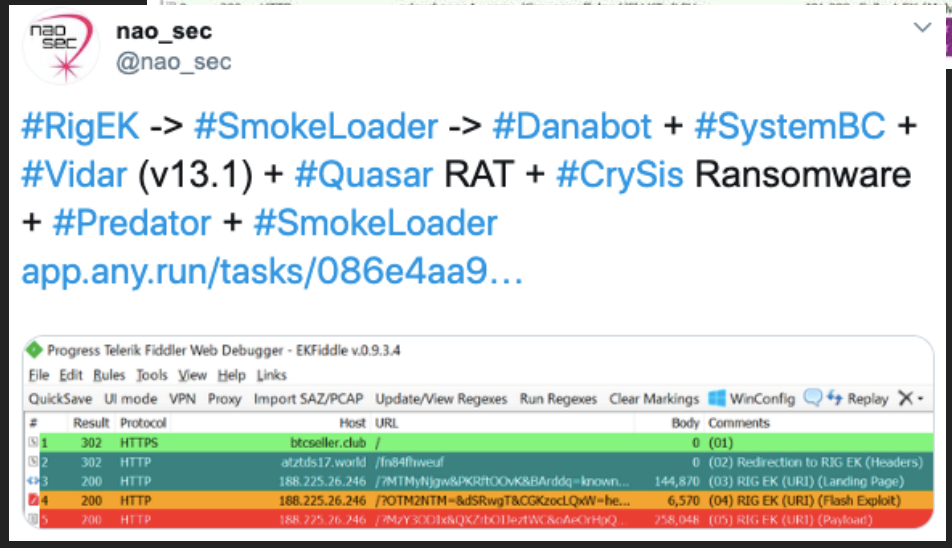
Our Research









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Motivation

- **Drive-by Download attack is still “ACTIVE”**
  - Many attack campaigns and EKs have appeared
- **Very difficult to observe manually**
- **Too late since the incident occurred**
- **Want to research the latest threat trends automatically**
  - Active Observation + Analysis + Extraction

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An automated active observation platform

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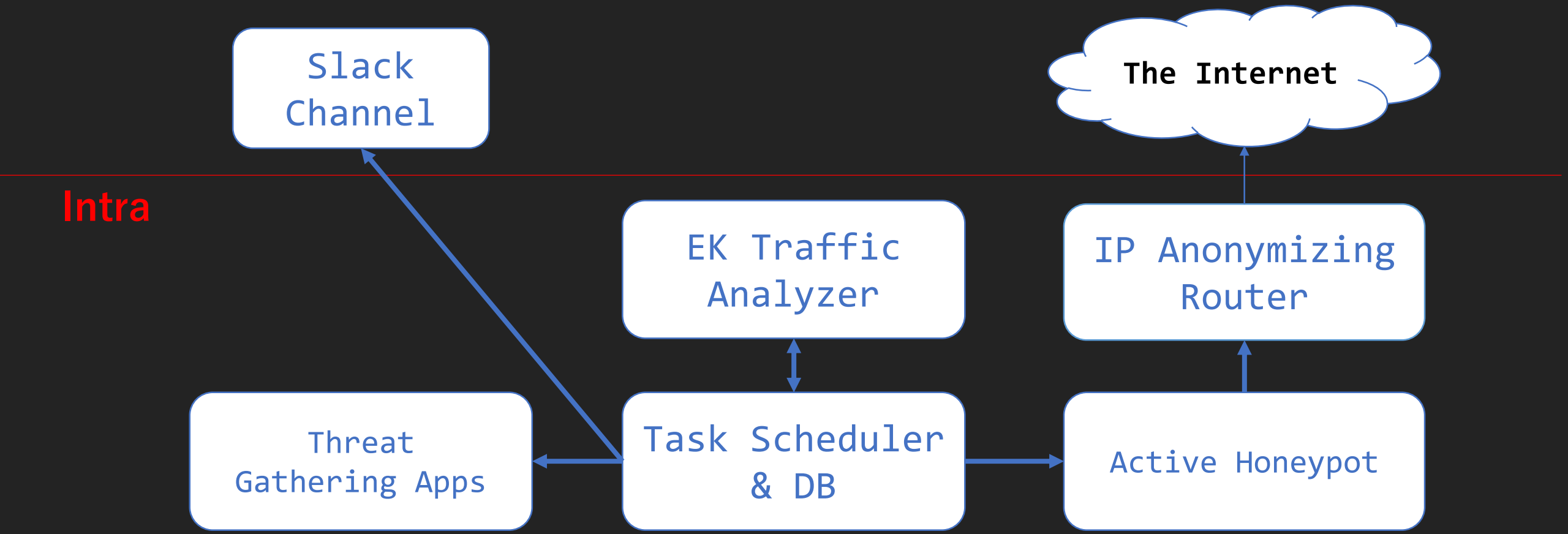
Our Observation Platform Overview



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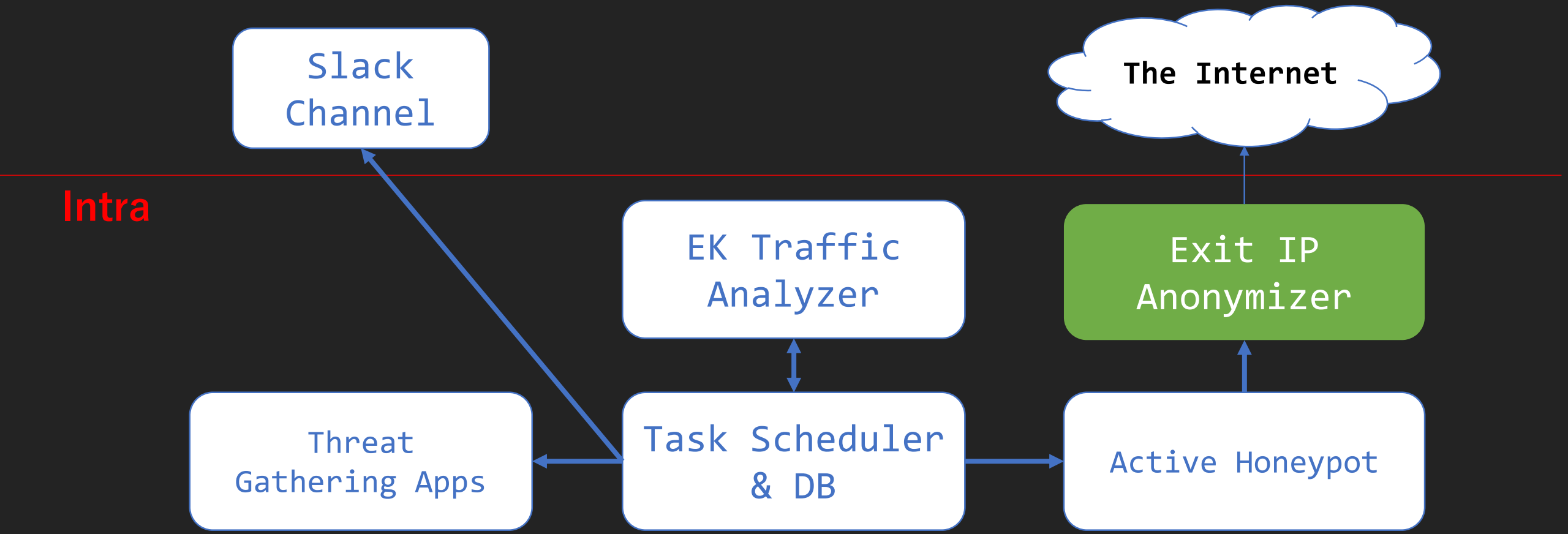
First, Exit IP Anonymizer



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Problems of Exploit Kit Crawling

- **EK and malware distribution infrastructure BAN specific IP address and range**
  - Example, TrendMicro, Symantec, public cloud IP range is BANNED by RIG EK
- **Also ad-network BANNED web-crawler because…**
  - Crawling access is malicious activity to ad-network lol

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Need Exit IP Addresses more and more!

- Popular Solution: VPN Services
- Better Solution: VPNGate(more variety IPs)
- Our Solution:

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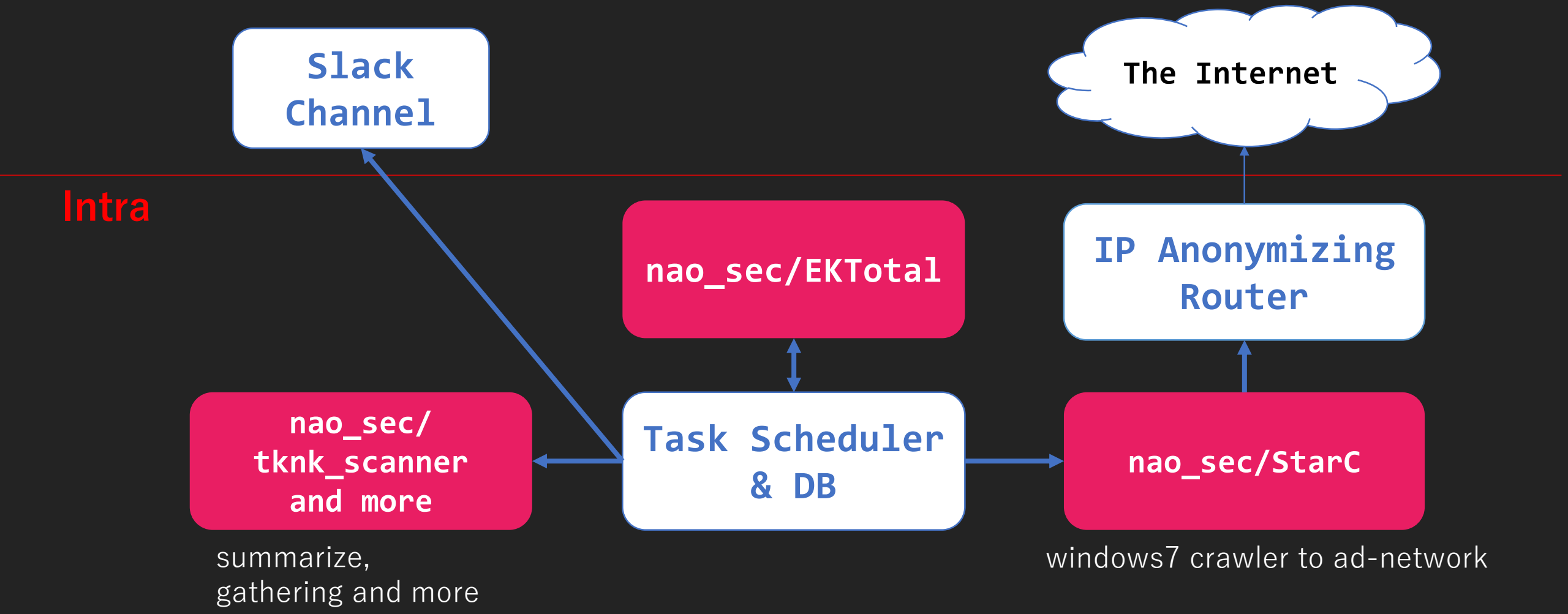
Next: nao_sec OSS Tools overview



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Active Honeypot (StarC)

- **Simple high-interactive client honeypot**
  - https://github.com/nao-sec/starc

  - Input a URL, StarC access and collect data
    - Traffic data (pcap & saz)
    - Screenshot
    - Temp directory files

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EK Traffic Analyzer (EKTotal)

- **Automatic DbD traffic analyzer**
  - https://github.com/nao-sec/ektotal

  - Input a pcap or saz, EKTotal analyze traffic data
    - Identify campaign & EK
    - Extract some information
      - Encode key
      - CVE Number
      - SWF file
      - Malware
    - Depends on EKFiddle's rules
      - https://github.com/malwareinfosec/EKFiddle
    - Lazy "Gate Estimation" added on July, 2019

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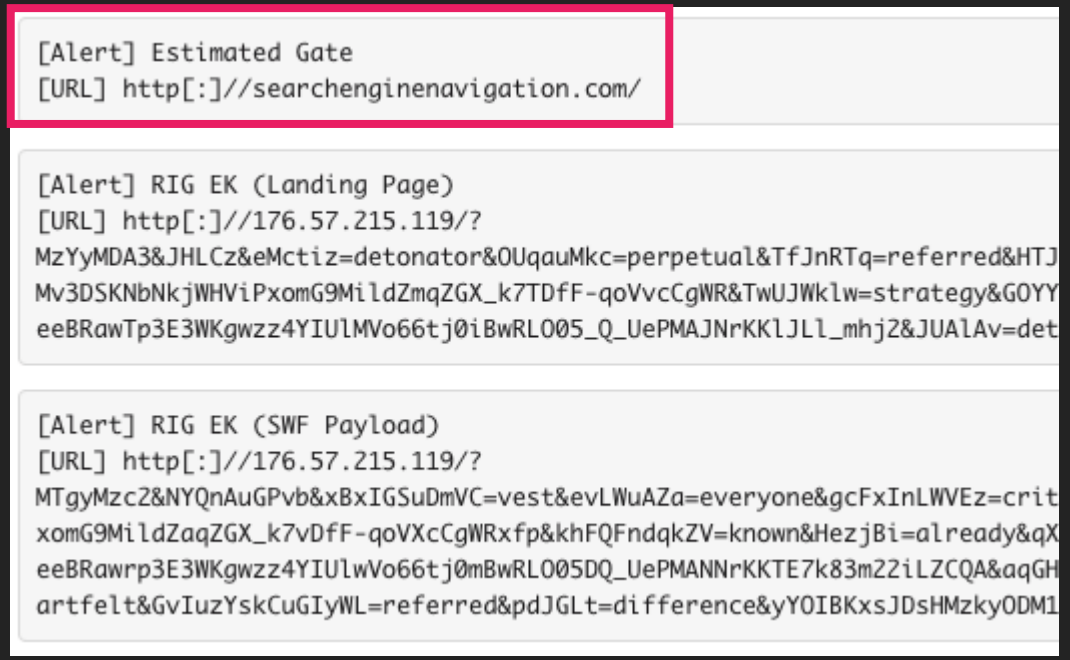
Lazy “Gate Estimation”

- **Gate**
  - Always leads to EK if you meet certain conditions
  - EKTotal can estimate Gate
  - This function helps identify and categorize campaigns



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Malware Identifier (tknk_scanner)

- tknk_scanner developed by Shota Nakajima and Keita Nomura @nao_sec
  - This tool introduced at Black Hat Europe 2018 Arsenal
- Fast Malware Identifier
  - Throw extracted unidentified binary by EKTotal
- https://github.com/nao-sec/tknk_scanner

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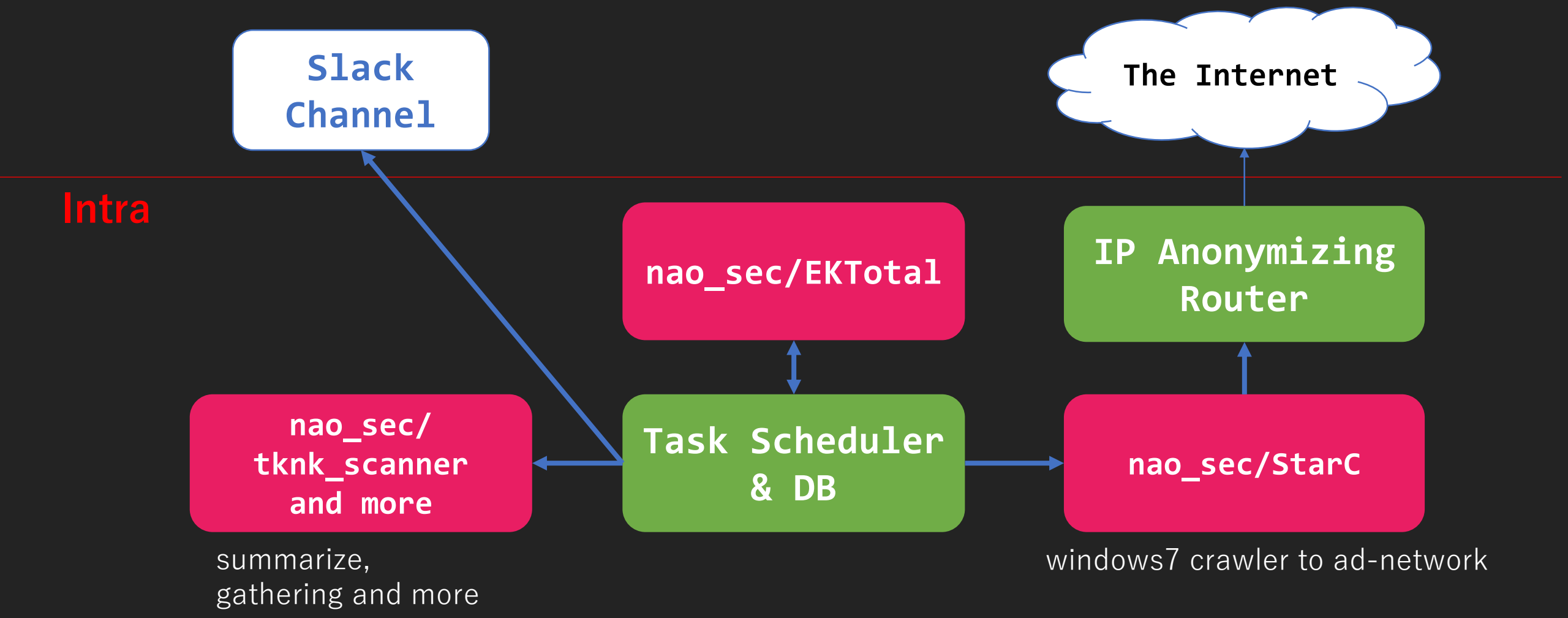
Workflow: Complex API calling :-<



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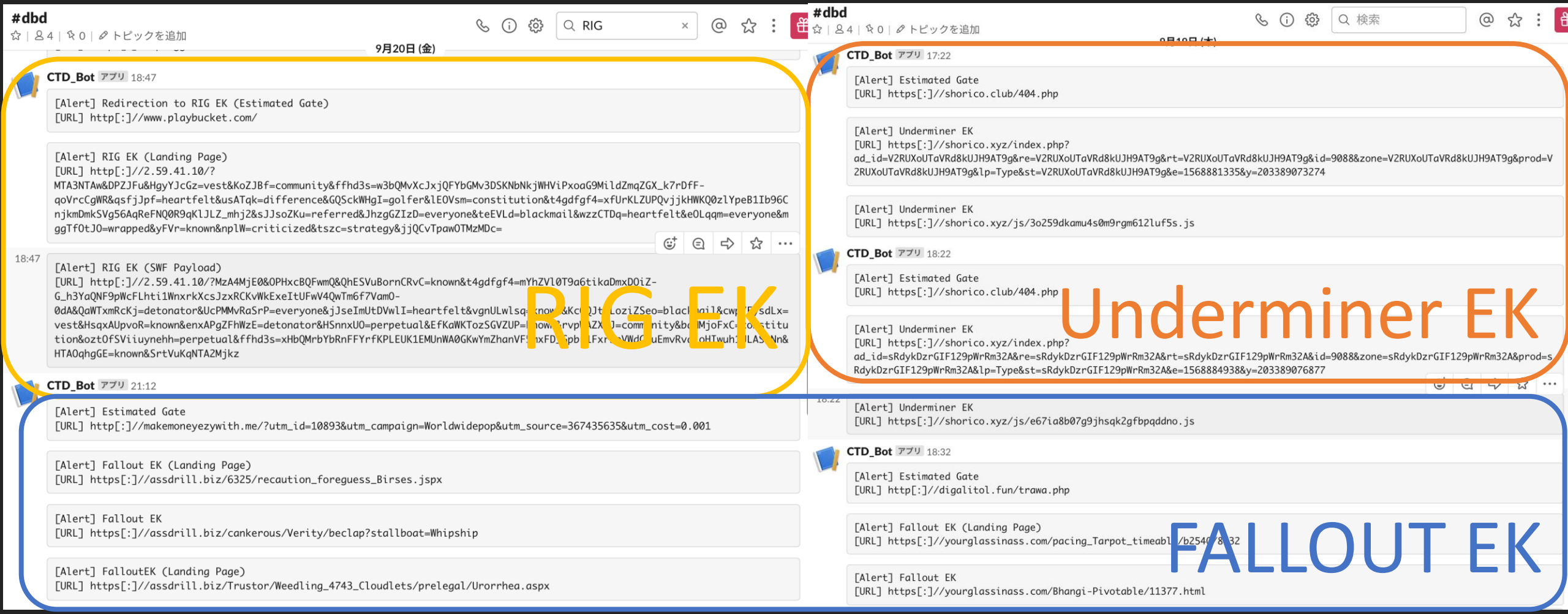
Finally...



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Try & Error

- Defeating Anti-Sandbox
- Selection Seed of Crawling
- Persistence of Crawling

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Defeating Anti-Sandbox:
Sandbox Detection by Display Resolution


```
window.screen.width <= 1024 &&
window.screen.height <= 768
```

kkrnt 4:33 PM

原因、完全に理解しました

```
try {
    window.screen.width <= 1024 && window.screen.height <= 768 && Array.fwseXvwxJjnx(hzwEUYkunV, xSGInKeyLN,
KWYUKeMDR);
} catch (HofRA) {
    window.location.replace(OAaXz(OYqEgOmSs, BNrcXtOtrWXbK(AXSmeYq, IswJDqfhaaoEq)));
};
```

これで死んでる

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Defeating Anti-Sandbox: Sandbox Detection by Display Resolution

kkrnt 4:33 PM

原因、完全に理解しました

```
try {
    w
KWYUK
} cat
    w
};
```

```
reen.height <= 768 && Array.fwseXvwxJjnx(hzwEUYkunV, xSGInKeyLN,

BNrcXtOtrWXbK(AXSmeYq, IswJDqfhaaoEq)));
```

これで

```
window.screen.width <= 1024 &&
window.screen.height <= 768
```

Connected Display for debugging is too small lol

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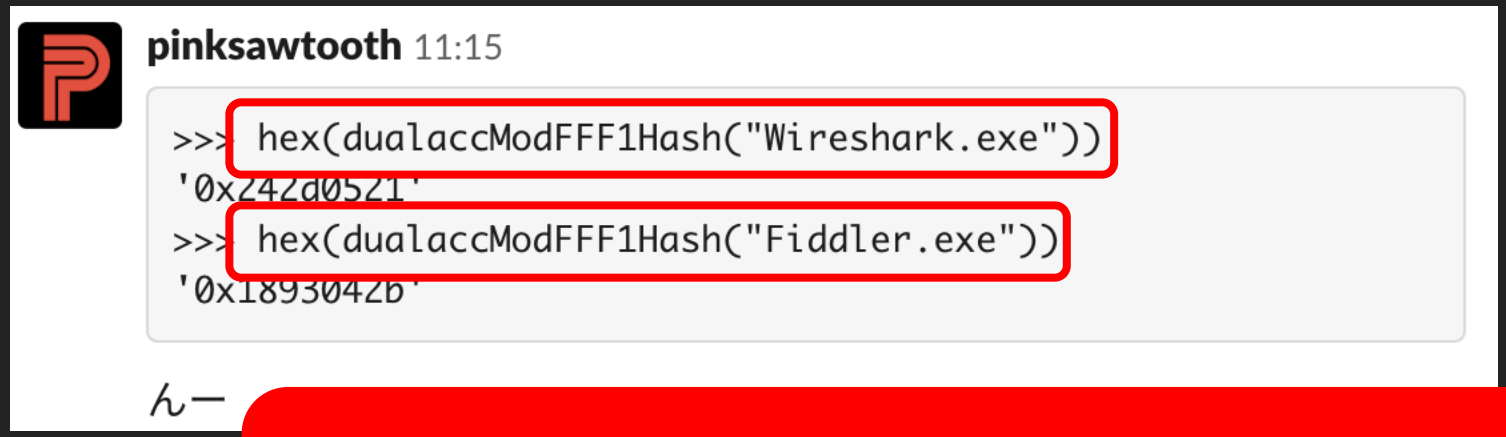
Defeating Anti-Sandbox: Process Detection



In Fallout shellcode, included hashed process name of major analysis tools

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Result of EK Observation by Our Platform

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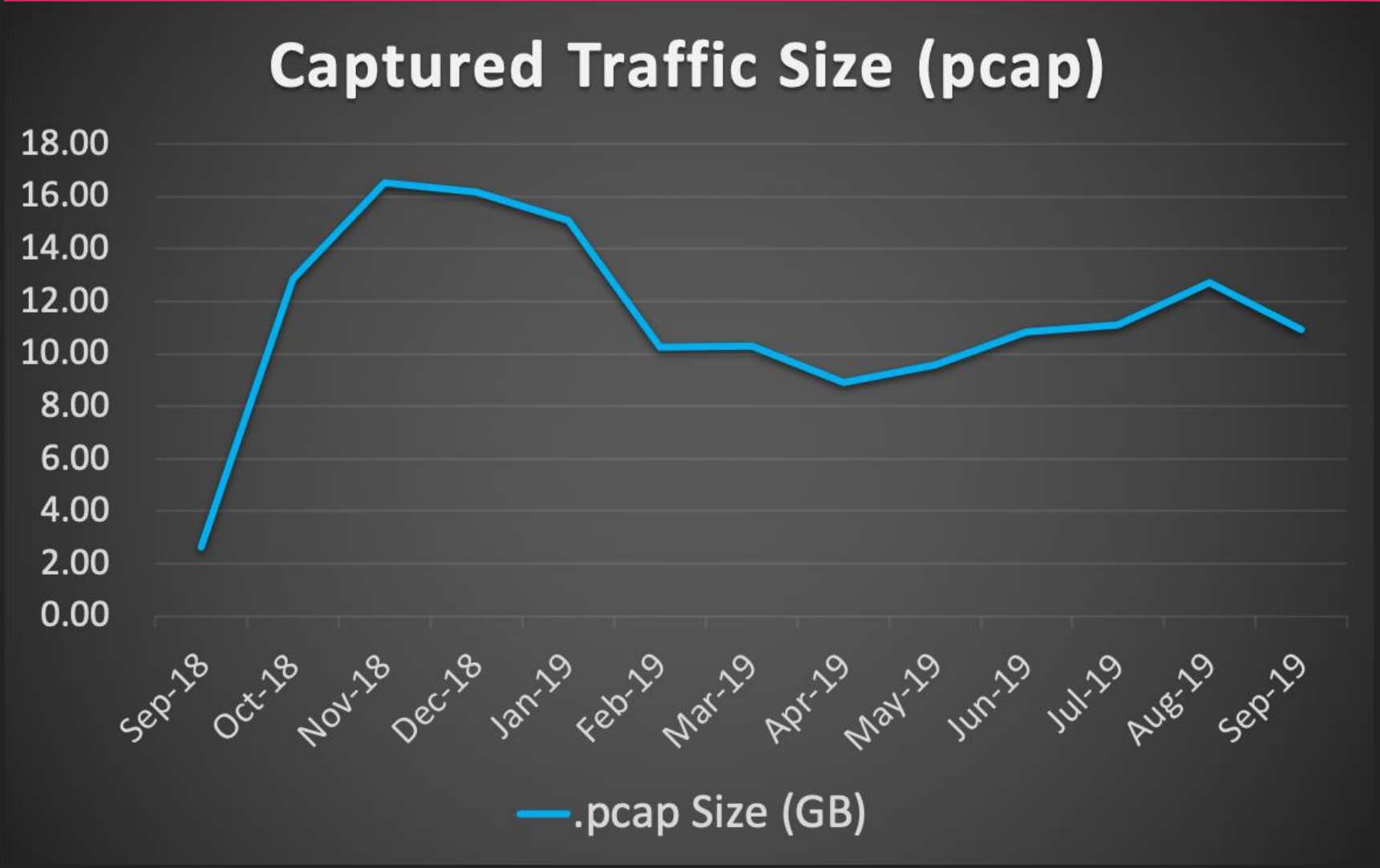
Statistics - Crawling



147.1

GB/Year

91,276

Crawl

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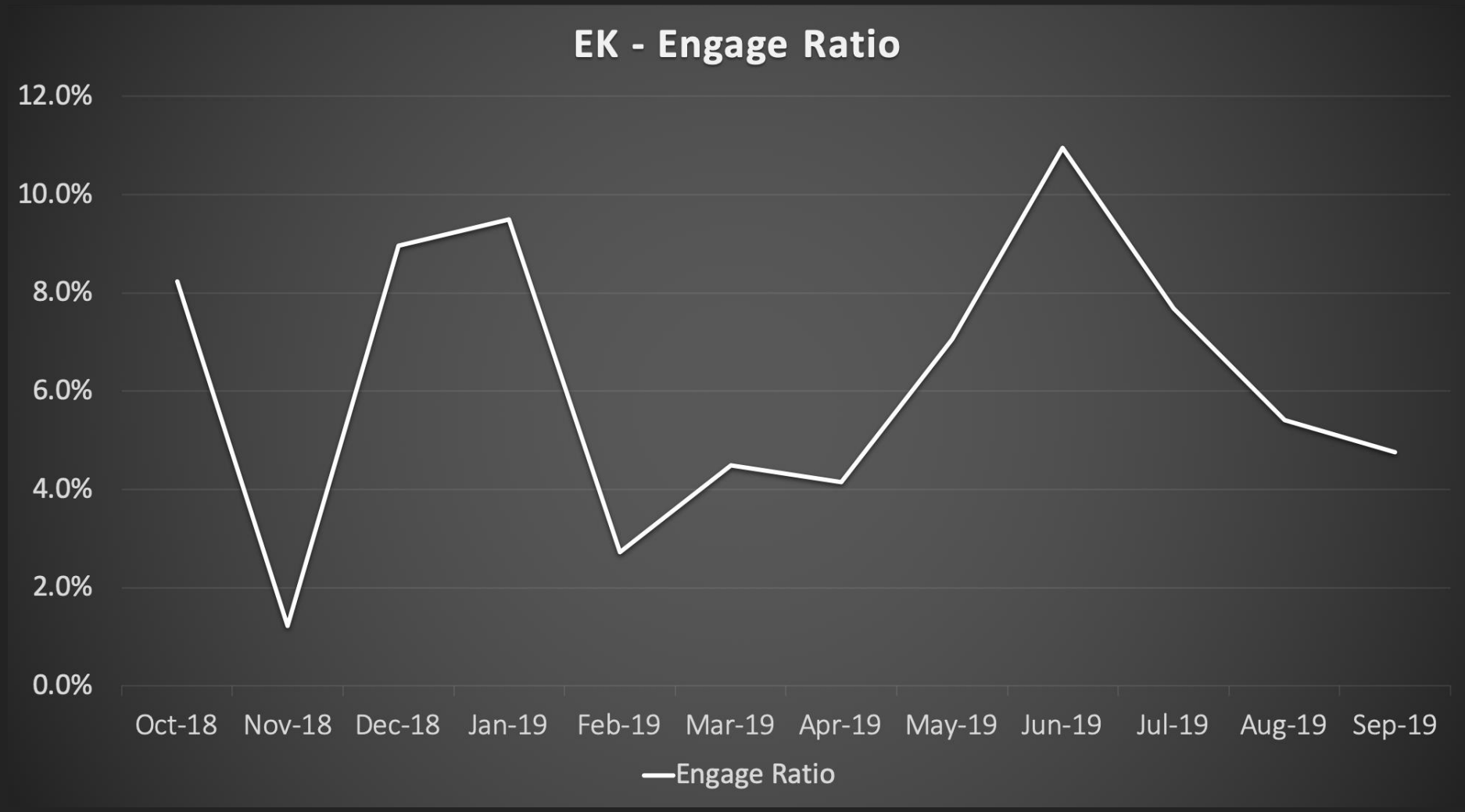
Statistics – Engagement Efficiency



6.2%

Engage Ratio (Ave.)

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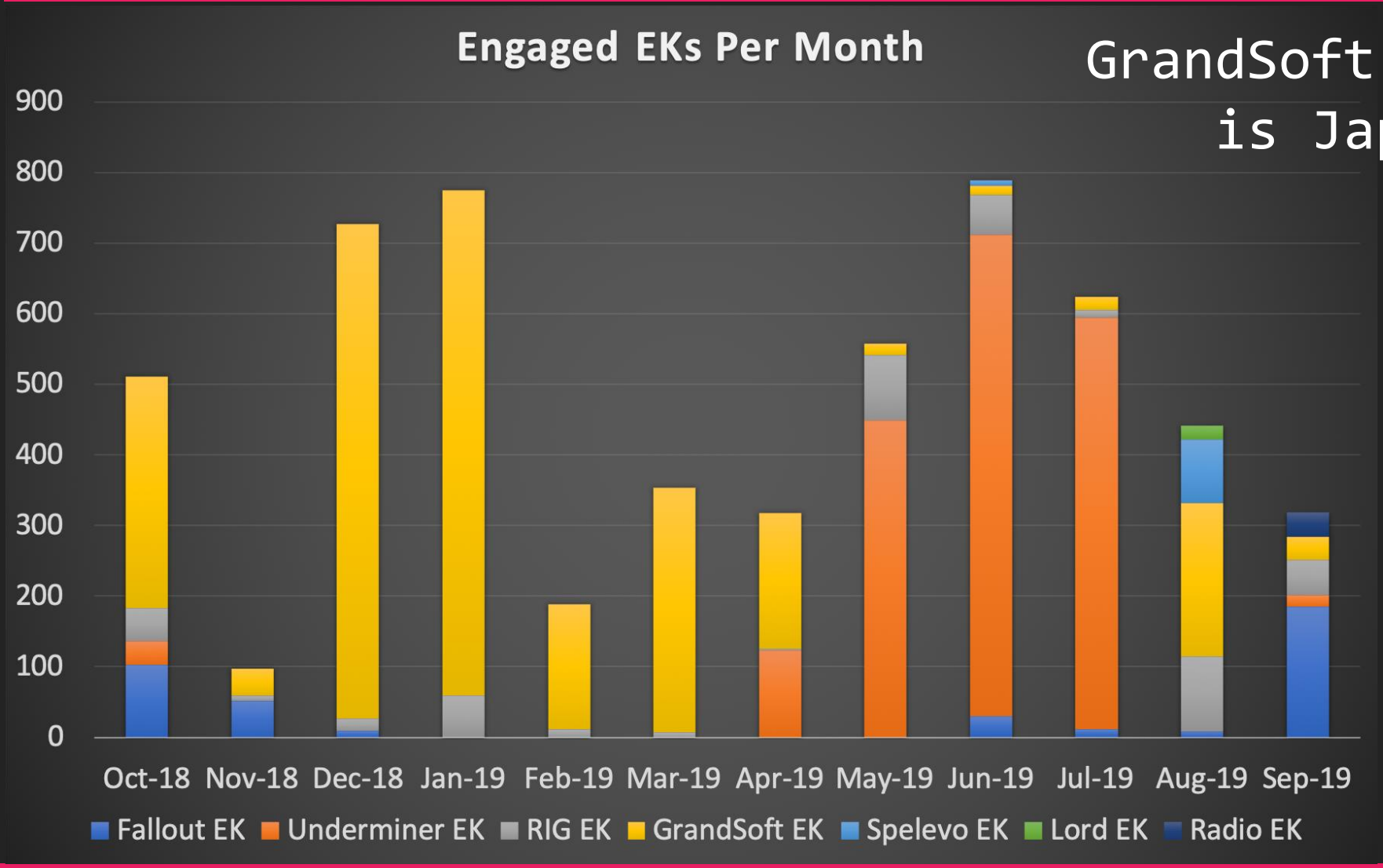
Statistics – Engaged EKs



GrandSoft mainly target is Japan and Canada

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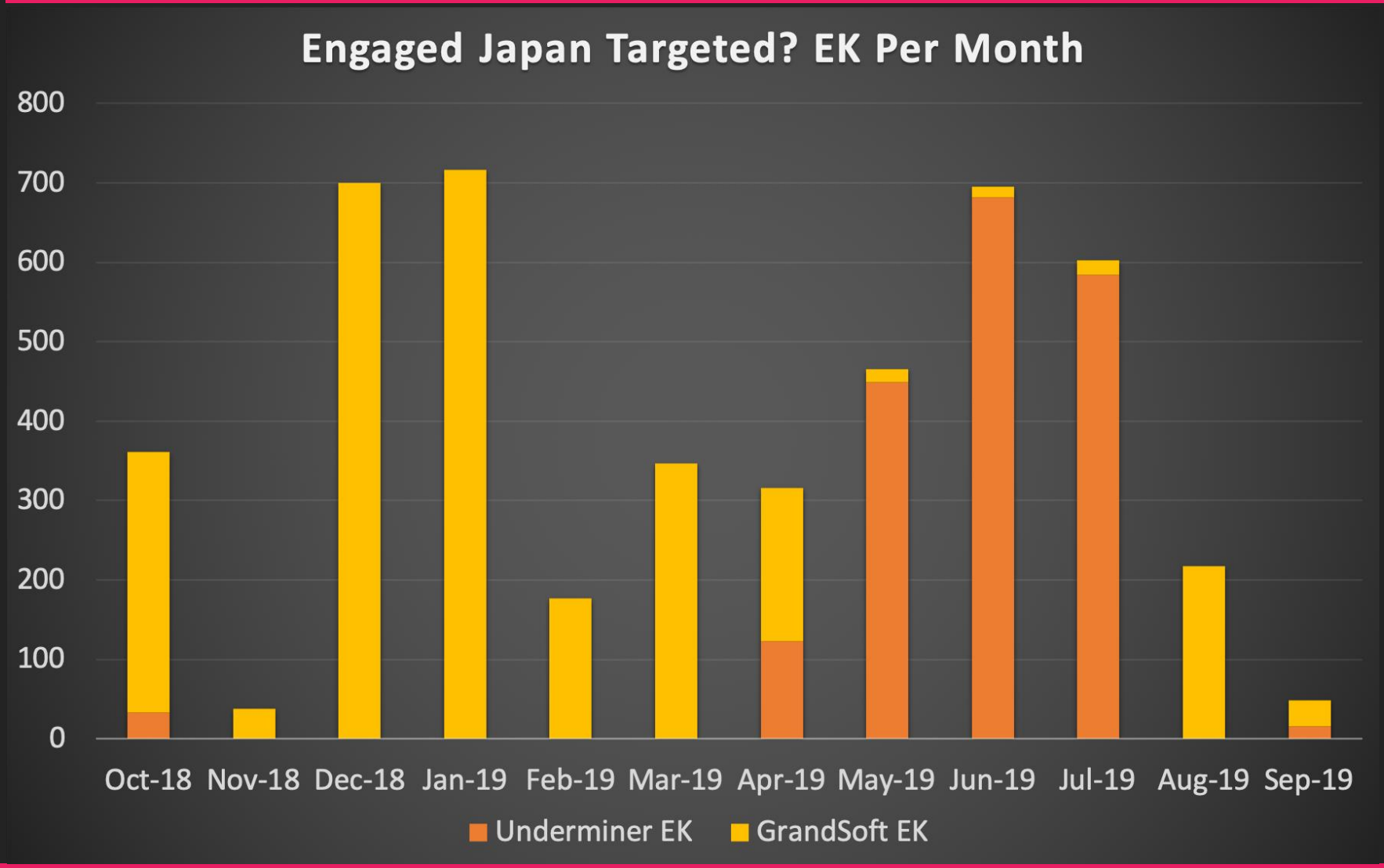
Insight: Underminer EK & GrandSoft EK



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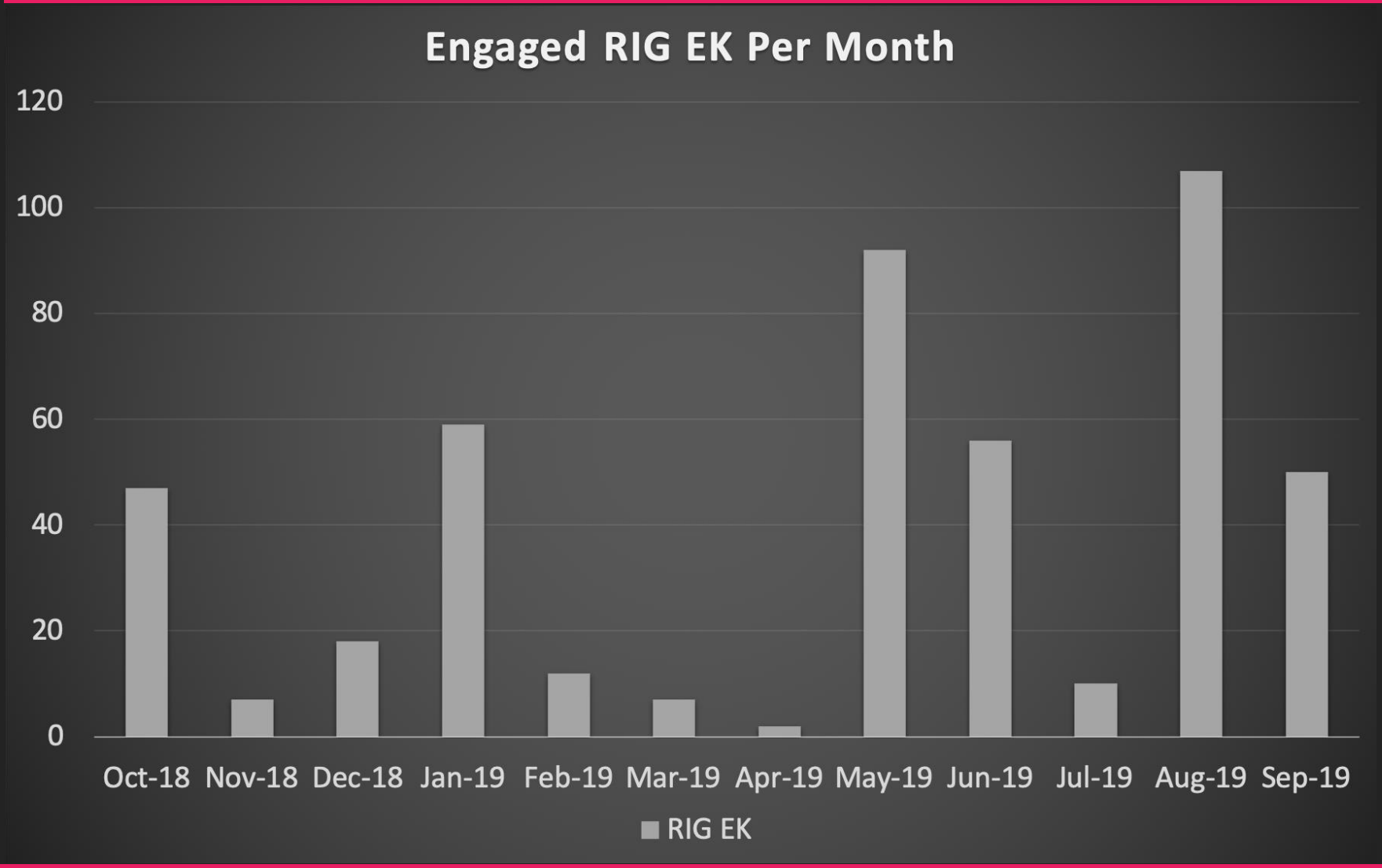
Insight: RIG EK



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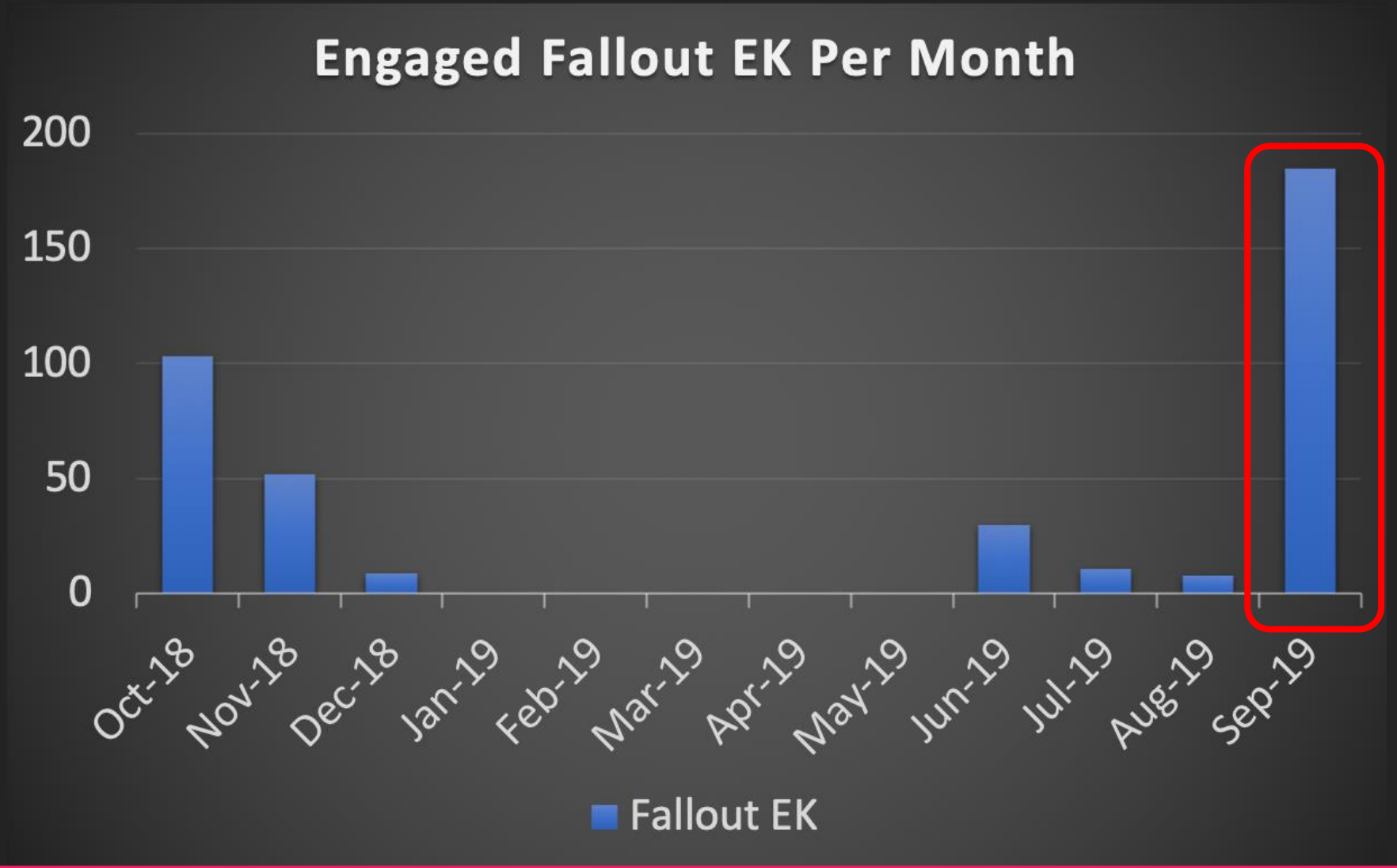
Insight: Fallout EK



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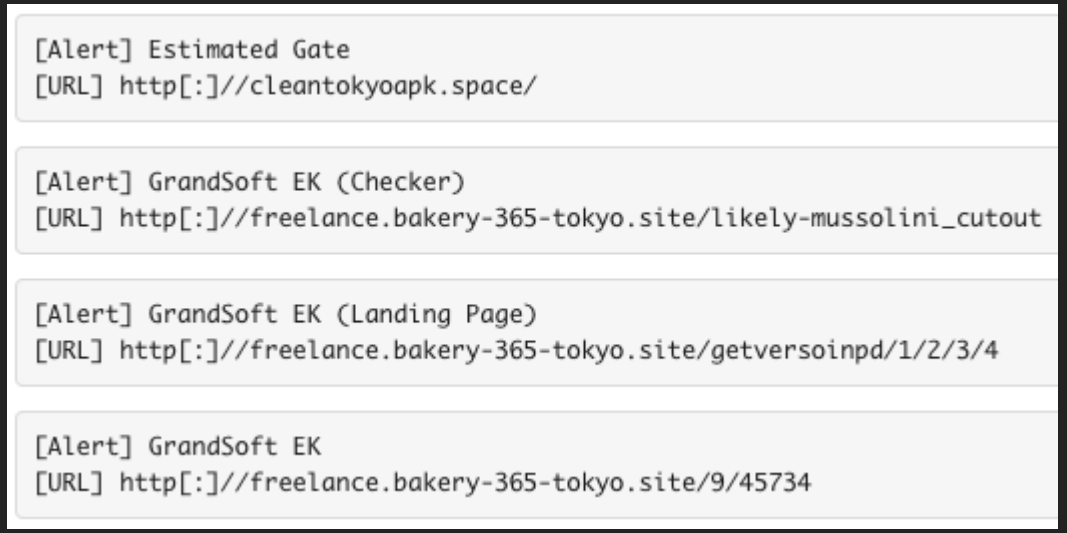
Discovery of New Campaigns

- **PseudoGate**
  - Observed in Japan and Canada
  - Using a Gate that looks like a legitimate website
  - Pushing Ramnit with GrandSoft Exploit Kit
  - Maybe related to Seamless campaign



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Discovery of New Exploit Kits

- **Fallout**
  - Discovered during the debugging of our system
  - Detected with “naosec” string in the domain
  - Automatic observation of all version upgrades

- **Radio**
  - The system discovered and informed us
  - Detected with CVE-2016-0189 signature

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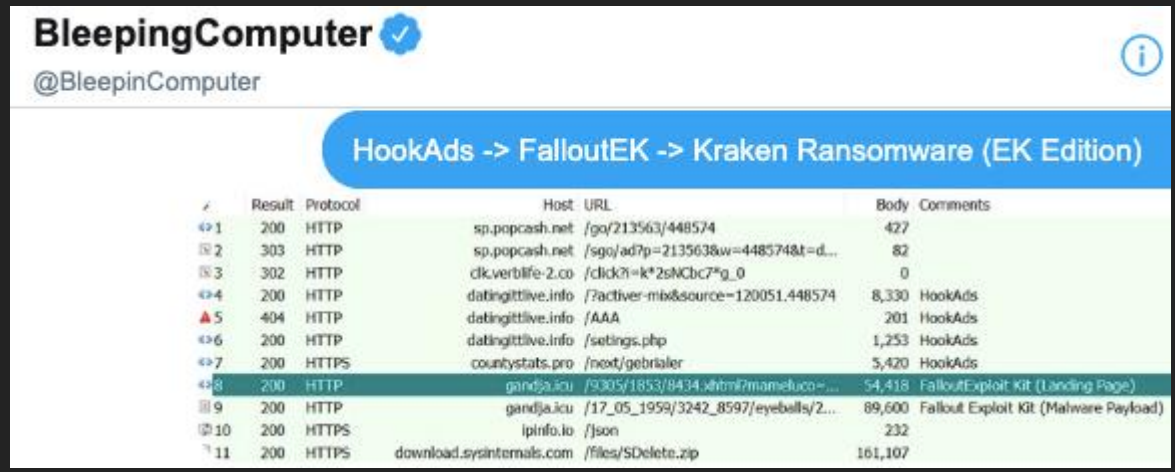
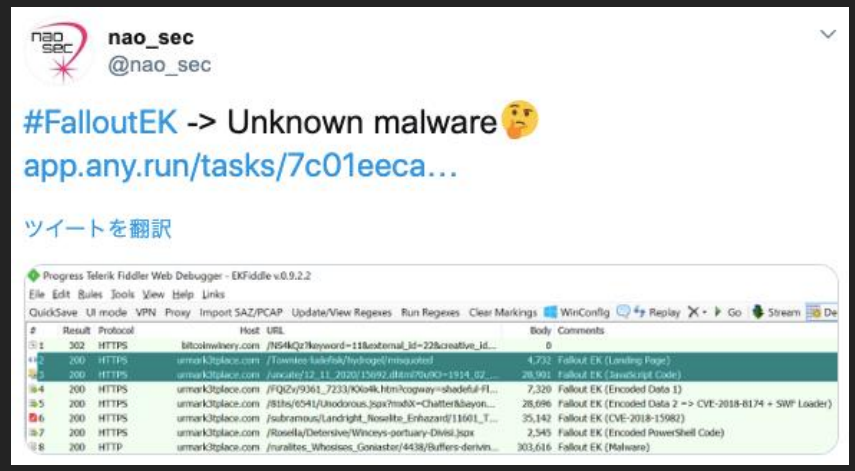
Discovery of New Malwares

- Kraken Cryptor
- GetCrypt
- Buran
- SystemBC





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Weak Point of Our System

- **Manual research can be more sensitive**
  - OPSEC fail
    - Leaking info
      - EK API
      - Directory listing
- Finding a new one is not easy
  - Need to combine other logic
- **Observation environmet**
  - Windows version, IP geolocation

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Our Contributions

- **The number of times our research has been referred**
  - More than 40 public reports from various organizations
- **Dataset for academic research in Japan**

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Conclusion

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Conclusion

- Introducing the design, effectiveness and practical use cases of an automated active analysis platform
- We show the changes to the threat landscape by using the results from our platform
- We talked about how we continue to discover and track new attack campaigns and Exploit Kits, such as the Fallout and Radio Exploit Kit

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