

# Analytical Results of a Cyber Threat Intelligence Survey

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# whoami()

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- “...career SOC-dweller” - sysAdmin > security analyst > IR > SOC Mgr
- SOC Ops Manager - General Dynamics & several USG
- *Author of “Practical Intrusion Analysis” © 2009*
- Developed a geospatial intrusion detection model
- Security Conference lectures include
  - DEFCON16, SANS, BlackHat 2014, ISACA ISRM, InfoSec World
- Chairman, Technical Advisory Board – Cyber Security AAS Collegiate program



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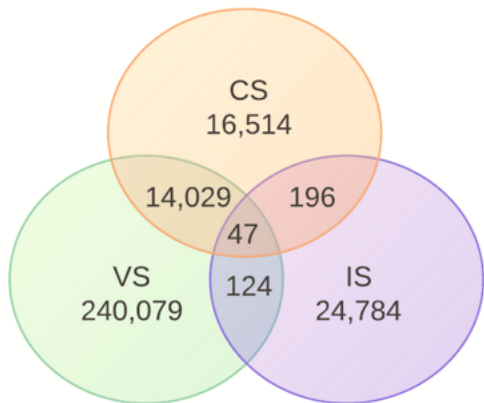
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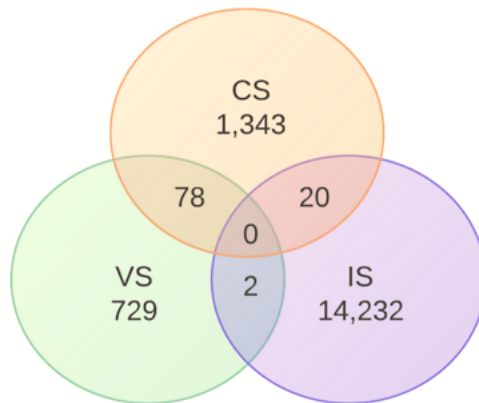
# Early vendor comparison triggered my fascination...

CS		IS		ID	
MD5/SHA-256/SHA-1	79%	MD5/SHA-256/SHA-1	20%	MD5	12%
Domain	18%	Domain	49%	Domain	83%
URL	2%	IPv4/CIDR	30%	URL	5%
IPv4/CIDR	<1%	Email Address	1%	IPv4	<1%
Email Address	<1%	Email Subject	1%	Mutex	<1%

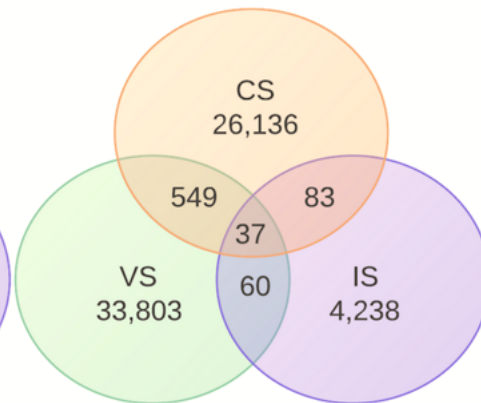
Domains



IP Address



MD5



# Survey Purpose

Commercial Intel Providers lean on various requirements before publishing datapoints – what dictates those requirements?

- DEADEND question as commercial providers won't tell you

Flip the curiosity on its head by posing the question to the industry

- What IOC Types and supporting Attributes pose the most value/benefit?



# Methodology

- Identify the top ~20 IOC Types across intel providers

CIDR	FQDN	MD5 Hash	SHA-512 Hash	User-Agent
Email Address	Fuzzy Hash	Service Name	Registry Key	X.509 S/N
Email Subject	IP Address	SHA-1 Hash	URL	X.509 Subject
Filename	Mutex	SHA-256 Hash	URL Path	

- Identify the top 35 TTPs [read: attributes] across intel providers

ASN	Role	Compile Time	Motivation	Targeted Industry	CNC Name
File Size	First Seen	Domain Type	Intent	Targeted Geography	Malware Name
Packer	Last Seen	Email Address Type	Languague	Malware Family	Malware Category
Port	Source of Information	IP Address Type	Adversary Group	Vector	Geolocation
Protocol	Confidence	Status	CVE	Attack Category	CVSS
Attack Country Origin	Threat/Risk Score	Severity	Impact	BotName	

- Design a questionnaire long enough to have stability but short enough where swamped analysts will actually complete it...and speak to you again!



# Rating Scale – IOC TYPE

- Evaluate each IOC Type based on 3 characteristics
  - Strength – can it stand alone?
  - Deployment Versatility – how many detection technologies can it be deployed?
  - Burnability – how easy is it for the adversary to replenish/re-create?
- Scale 1-5 (5 = most valuable)
- 19 IOC Types \* 3 scores = 57 answers...***a big ask of the participant***

***Calculate AVERAGES and results in a fascinating multi-tier prioritization***



# Rating Scale - TTP

- TTP needed to be easier/faster – in fear the analyst wouldn't finish the survey!
- Assess each TTP
  1. No Value
  2. Poor Value
  3. Good Value
  4. Great Value
- A 4-option scale was strategic so participants could NOT be indifferent – and select the 'middle' option





# Participant Breakdown

...by the numbers

Security Analyst	258	Hunter	36
Incident Response	124	Malware	34
Intelligence Analyst	94	Other	19

...by the percentage

Security Analyst	46%	Hunter	6%
Incident Response	22%	Malware	6%
Intelligence Analyst	17%	Other	3%



# IOC Type Results Analysis

# Overall Results

Total Participants **565**

Security Analyst **258**  
 Incident Response **124**  
 Intelligence Analyst **94**

Malware **34**  
 Hunter **36**  
 Other **19**

## PART I : Indicator Type Assessment - Averages

Indicator Types	IOC Type Strength	Deployment Versatility	Item-ability	Average
CCIR	2.25	2.32	2.29	2.29
Email Address	3.04	2.99	2.52	2.85
Email Subject	2.54	2.81	2.27	2.54
Filename	2.56	2.82	2.15	2.51
FGDN	3.74	3.81	2.83	3.46
Fuzzy Hash	2.93	2.39	2.30	2.54
IP Address	3.04	4.29	2.56	3.30
Mutex	3.47	2.65	3.00	3.04
MDS Hash	4.01	3.47	3.07	3.52
Service Name	3.18	2.52	2.68	2.79
SHA-1 Hash	3.57	2.97	3.02	3.19
SHA-256 Hash	4.00	3.38	3.13	3.50
SHA-512 Hash	4.20	3.36	3.28	3.61
Registry Key	3.71	2.88	3.29	3.29
URL	3.36	3.91	2.52	3.26
URL Path	3.19	3.37	2.55	3.04
User-Agent	3.36	2.78	3.05	3.06
X.509 Serial Number	4.09	2.18	4.02	3.43
X.509 Subject	3.52	2.00	3.45	2.99

## PART II : Attribute Evaluation - Total Counts

Indicator Attributes	NO VALUE	POOR VALUE	GOOD VALUE	GREAT VALUE
ASN	215	184	156	10
File Size	158	155	223	29
Packer	54	133	335	43
Port	122	174	223	46
Protocol	146	188	200	31
Attack Country Origin	139	140	254	32
Role	9	53	177	326
First Seen	36	57	305	167
Last Seen	32	46	311	176
Source of Information	24	38	384	119
Confidence	108	201	164	92
Threat/Risk Score	84	194	199	88
Compile Time	201	104	215	45
Domain Type	17	41	342	165
Email Address Type	31	54	363	117
IP Address Type	15	37	345	168
Status	75	82	279	129
Severity	86	122	260	97

Adversary Attributes	NO VALUE	POOR VALUE	GOOD VALUE	GREAT VALUE
Motivation	77	119	265	104
Intent	70	127	273	95
Language	56	169	257	83
Adversary Group	40	28	363	134

Attack Attributes	NO VALUE	POOR VALUE	GOOD VALUE	GREAT VALUE
CVE	58	139	247	121
Impact	55	99	312	99
Targeted Industry	58	79	249	179
Targeted Geography	174	162	142	87
Malware Family	33	62	280	190
Vector	17	48	411	89
Attack Category	14	32	275	244
BotName	16	48	256	245
CNC Name	18	54	244	249
Malware Name	29	61	275	200
Malware Category	8	26	304	227
Geolocation	112	224	173	56
CVSS	184	171	147	63



# IOC Type Results - Overall

	Strength	Deployment Versatility	Burnability	Average
SHA-512 Hash	4.20	3.36	3.28	3.61
MD5 Hash	4.01	3.47	3.07	3.52
SHA-256 Hash	4.00	3.38	3.13	3.50
FQDN	3.74	3.81	2.83	3.46
X.509 Serial Number	4.09	2.18	4.02	3.43
IP Address	3.04	4.29	2.56	3.30
Registry Key	3.71	2.88	3.29	3.29
URL	3.36	3.91	2.52	3.26
SHA-1 Hash	3.57	2.97	3.02	3.19
User-Agent	3.36	2.78	3.05	3.06
Mutex	3.47	2.65	3.00	3.04
URL Path	3.19	3.37	2.55	3.04
X.509 Subject	3.52	2.00	3.45	2.99
Email Address	3.04	2.99	2.52	2.85
Service Name	3.18	2.52	2.68	2.79
Fuzzy Hash	2.93	2.39	2.30	2.54
Email Subject	2.54	2.81	2.27	2.54
Filename	2.56	2.82	2.15	2.51
CIDR	2.25	2.32	2.29	2.29

HIGHEST	<b>Overall Highest</b>	<b>SHA-512</b>	<b>3.61</b>
	Strength	SHA-512	4.20
	Deployment	IP Address	4.29
	Burnability	X.509 S/N	4.02
LOWEST	<b>Overall Lowest</b>	<b>CIDR</b>	<b>2.29</b>
	Strength	CIDR	2.25
	Deployment	X.509 Subject	2.00
	Burnability	Filename	2.15



# IOC Type Result by Category

IOC Type Strength Order	IOC Type Strength	Deployment Order	Deployment Versatility	Burnability Order	Burnability
SHA-512 Hash	4.20	IP Address	4.29	X.509 Serial Number	4.02
X.509 Serial Number	4.09	URL	3.91	X.509 Subject	3.45
MD5 Hash	4.01	FQDN	3.81	Registry Key	3.29
SHA-256 Hash	4.00	MD5 Hash	3.47	SHA-512 Hash	3.28
FQDN	3.74	SHA-256 Hash	3.38	SHA-256 Hash	3.13
Registry Key	3.71	URL Path	3.37	MD5 Hash	3.07
SHA-1 Hash	3.57	SHA-512 Hash	3.36	User-Agent	3.05
X.509 Subject	3.52	Email Address	2.99	SHA-1 Hash	3.02
Mutex	3.47	SHA-1 Hash	2.97	Mutex	3.00
URL	3.36	Registry Key	2.88	FQDN	2.83
User-Agent	3.36	Filename	2.82	Service Name	2.68
URL Path	3.19	Email Subject	2.81	IP Address	2.56
Service Name	3.18	User-Agent	2.78	URL Path	2.55
IP Address	3.04	Mutex	2.65	URL	2.52
Email Address	3.04	Service Name	2.52	Email Address	2.52
Fuzzy Hash	2.93	Fuzzy Hash	2.39	Fuzzy Hash	2.30
Filename	2.56	CIDR	2.32	CIDR	2.29
Email Subject	2.54	X.509 Serial Number	2.18	Email Subject	2.27
CIDR	2.25	X.509 Subject	2.00	Filename	2.15



# Attribute Results Analysis



# List of TTPs/Attributes

## **IOC-centric Attribute:**

ASN  
File Size  
Packer  
Port  
Protocol  
Attack Country Origin  
Role  
First Seen  
Last Seen  
Source of Info  
Confidence  
Threat/Risk Score  
Compile Time

Domain Type  
Email Address Type  
IP Address Type  
Status  
Severity

## **Adversary-centric Attribute:**

Motivation  
Intent  
Language  
Adversary Group

## **Attack-centric Attribute:**

CVE  
Impact  
Targeted Industry  
Targeted Geography  
Malware Family  
Vector  
Attack Category  
BotName  
CNC Name  
Malware Name  
Geolocation  
CVSS



# Attributes Results

Total	No Value	Poor Value	Good Value	Great Value
ASN	38%	33%	28%	2%
File Size	28%	27%	39%	5%
Packer	10%	24%	59%	8%
Port	22%	31%	39%	8%
Protocol	26%	33%	35%	5%
Attack Country	25%	25%	45%	6%
Origin	2%	9%	31%	58%
Role	6%	10%	54%	30%
First Seen	6%	8%	55%	31%
Last Seen	4%	7%	68%	21%
Source of Information	19%	36%	29%	16%
Confidence	15%	34%	35%	16%
Threat/Risk Score	36%	18%	38%	8%
Compile Time	3%	7%	61%	29%
Domain Type	5%	10%	64%	21%
Email Address Type	3%	7%	61%	30%
IP Address Type	13%	15%	49%	23%
Status				

Total	No Value	Poor Value	Good Value	Great Value
Severity	15%	22%	46%	17%
Motivation	14%	21%	47%	18%
Intent	12%	22%	48%	17%
Languague	10%	30%	45%	15%
Adversary Group	7%	5%	64%	24%
CVE	10%	25%	44%	21%
Impact	10%	18%	55%	18%
Targeted Industry	10%	14%	44%	32%
Targeted Geography	31%	29%	25%	15%
Malware Family	6%	11%	50%	34%
Vector	3%	8%	73%	16%
Attack Category	2%	6%	49%	43%
BotName	3%	8%	45%	43%
CNC Name	3%	10%	43%	44%
Malware Name	5%	11%	49%	35%
Malware Category	1%	5%	54%	40%
Geolocation	20%	40%	31%	10%
CVSS	33%	30%	26%	11%





# Security Analyst Results Breakdown

# Security Analyst Results

## Role Summary Security Analyst

45.7 % of participants

### PART I : Indicator Type Assessment

Indicator Types	IOC Type Strength	Deployment Versatility	Burn-ability	Average
CIDR	1.56	1.47	1.32	1.45
Email Address	2.52	2.63	1.92	2.36
Email Subject	2.65	3.02	1.57	2.41
Filename	2.39	3.12	2.10	2.54
FQDN	3.51	3.84	2.53	3.29
Fuzzy Hash	2.12	1.92	2.23	2.09
IP Address	2.73	4.89	2.18	3.27
Mutex	3.05	3.16	2.34	2.85
MDS Hash	4.50	2.56	2.50	3.19
Service Name	3.41	2.21	2.58	2.73
SHA-1 Hash	4.15	3.86	2.78	3.60
SHA-256 Hash	4.56	3.95	2.70	3.74
SHA-512 Hash	4.65	3.92	2.75	3.77
Registry Key	3.54	3.61	3.21	3.45
URL	3.51	3.78	2.18	3.16
URL Path	3.28	3.48	2.16	2.97
User-Agent	3.93	2.89	3.24	3.35
X.509 Serial Number	4.82	2.48	4.82	4.04
X.509 Subject	4.11	2.75	4.38	3.75

### PART II : Attribute Evaluation

Indicator Attributes	NO VALUE	POOR VALUE	GOOD VALUE	GREAT VALUE
ASN	98	101	55	4
File Size	43	81	123	11
Packer	23	94	134	7
Port	36	84	129	9
Protocol	64	120	57	17
Attack Country Origin	72	26	143	17
Role	1	13	77	167
First Seen	15	21	143	79
Last Seen	13	15	149	81
Source of Information	12	7	203	36
Confidence	31	92	72	63
Threat/Risk Score	25	87	88	58
Compile Time	129	69	47	13
Domain Type	0	14	167	77
Email Address Type	12	22	172	52
IP Address Type	0	11	172	75
Status	24	8	153	73
Severity	23	76	120	39

Adversary Attributes	NO VALUE	POOR VALUE	GOOD VALUE	GREAT VALUE
Motivation	27	72	109	50
Intent	27	85	114	32
Language	19	64	134	41
Adversary Group	23	14	172	49

Attack Attributes	NO VALUE	POOR VALUE	GOOD VALUE	GREAT VALUE
CVE	26	69	118	45
Impact	16	53	149	40
Targeted Industry	12	28	95	123
Targeted Geography	94	77	45	42
Malware Family	17	12	152	77
Vector	2	12	221	23
Attack Category	0	13	143	102
BotName	8	15	137	98
CNC Name	4	21	129	104
Malware Name	15	9	158	76
Malware Category	0	8	149	101
Geolocation	48	152	37	21
CVSS	119	68	51	20

# SecAnalyst – Results & Observations

## Observations:

- Interesting several host-based hash IOCs ranked so high
  - Maybe de-sensitized by number of false positives from IP/FQDN/URL/etc.?
- Delta score [2.59] between the highest and lowest average amongst the various IOC types is the highest spread across the various roles
- A .27 difference between #1 [4.04] and #2 [3.77] is a huge gap comparatively
- Interesting X.509 Subject was so high (#3); the highest position another role had it was #10
- Deployment – IP Address yielded the highest score in the survey w/ 4.89

Security Analyst	IOC Type Strength	Deployment Versatility	Burn-ability	AVERAGE
X.509 Serial Number	4.82	2.48	4.82	4.04
SHA-512 Hash	4.65	3.92	2.75	3.77
X.509 Subject	4.11	2.75	4.38	3.75
SHA-256 Hash	4.56	3.95	2.70	3.74
SHA-1 Hash	4.15	3.86	2.78	3.60
Registry Key	3.54	3.61	3.21	3.45
User-Agent	3.93	2.89	3.24	3.35
FQDN	3.51	3.84	2.53	3.29
IP Address	2.73	4.89	2.18	3.27
MD5 Hash	4.50	2.56	2.50	3.19
URL	3.51	3.78	2.18	3.16
URL Path	3.28	3.48	2.16	2.97
Mutex	3.05	3.16	2.34	2.85
Service Name	3.41	2.21	2.58	2.73
Filename	2.39	3.12	2.10	2.54
Email Subject	2.65	3.02	1.57	2.41
Email Address	2.52	2.63	1.92	2.36
Fuzzy Hash	2.12	1.92	2.23	2.09
CIDR	1.56	1.47	1.32	1.45
<b>DELTA</b>	<b>3.26</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>2.59</b>



# SecAnalyst – IOC Type Breakdown

	IOC Type Strength
X.509 Serial Number	4.82
SHA-512 Hash	4.65
SHA-256 Hash	4.56
MD5 Hash	4.50
SHA-1 Hash	4.15
X.509 Subject	4.11
User-Agent	3.93
Registry Key	3.54
FQDN	3.51
URL	3.51
Service Name	3.41
URL Path	3.28
Mutex	3.05
IP Address	2.73
Email Subject	2.65
Email Address	2.52
Filename	2.39
Fuzzy Hash	2.12
CIDR	1.56

*Notable amount of host-based*

	Deployment Versatility
IP Address	4.89
SHA-256 Hash	3.95
SHA-512 Hash	3.92
SHA-1 Hash	3.86
FQDN	3.84
URL	3.78
Registry Key	3.61
URL Path	3.48
Mutex	3.16
Filename	3.12
Email Subject	3.02
User-Agent	2.89
X.509 Subject	2.75
Email Address	2.63
MD5 Hash	2.56
X.509 Serial Number	2.48
Service Name	2.21
Fuzzy Hash	1.92
CIDR	1.47

	Burn-ability
X.509 Serial Number	4.82
X.509 Subject	4.38
User-Agent	3.24
Registry Key	3.21
SHA-1 Hash	2.78
SHA-512 Hash	2.75
SHA-256 Hash	2.70
Service Name	2.58
FQDN	2.53
MD5 Hash	2.50
Mutex	2.34
Fuzzy Hash	2.23
IP Address	2.18
URL	2.18
URL Path	2.16
Filename	2.10
Email Address	1.92
Email Subject	1.57
CIDR	1.32



# SecAnalyst – IOC-centric Breakdown

Observations within this attribute category:

- *Role* was superior (65%) for Great Value
- *Source of Information* (79%) for Good Value
- *Domain/Email Address/IP Type* also demonstrated consistent consensus amongst SecAnalysts
- *Compile Time* received the most pushback (50%) for No Value

Security Analyst	No Value	Poor Value	Good Value	Great Value
ASN	38%	39%	21%	2%
File Size	17%	31%	48%	4%
Packer	9%	36%	52%	3%
Port	14%	33%	50%	3%
Protocol	25%	47%	22%	7%
Attack Country Origin	28%	10%	55%	7%
Role	0%	5%	30%	65%
First Seen	6%	8%	55%	31%
Last Seen	5%	6%	58%	31%
Source of Information	5%	3%	79%	14%
Confidence	12%	36%	28%	24%
Threat/Risk Score	10%	34%	34%	22%
Compile Time	50%	27%	18%	5%
Domain Type	0%	5%	65%	30%
Email Address Type	5%	9%	67%	20%
IP Address Type	0%	4%	67%	29%
Status	9%	3%	59%	28%
Severity	9%	29%	47%	15%



# SecAnalyst – Adversary-centric Breakdown

Observations within this attribute category:

- Overall a pretty boring split across Adversary-centric attributes

Security Analyst	No Value	Poor Value	Good Value	Great Value
Motivation	10%	28%	42%	19%
Intent	10%	33%	44%	12%
Language	7%	25%	52%	16%
Adversary Group	9%	5%	67%	19%



# SecAnalyst – Attack-centric Breakdown

Observations within this attribute category:

- *Vector* (86%) dominated the results with a Good Value
- *Targeted Geography* and *CVSS* received the most pushback (36%) and (46%) respectively for No Value

Security Analyst	No Value	Poor Value	Good Value	Great Value
CVE	10%	27%	46%	17%
Impact	6%	21%	58%	16%
Targeted Industry	5%	11%	37%	48%
Targeted Geography	36%	30%	17%	16%
Malware Family	7%	5%	59%	30%
Vector	1%	5%	86%	9%
Attack Category	0%	5%	55%	40%
BotName	3%	6%	53%	38%
CNC Name	2%	8%	50%	40%
Malware Name	6%	3%	61%	29%
Malware Category	0%	3%	58%	39%
Geolocation	19%	59%	14%	8%
CVSS	46%	26%	20%	8%



# SecAnalyst – Attribute Analysis

Security Analyst	No Value	Poor Value	Good Value	Great Value
Total Average	12%	19%	48%	21%
IOC-Centric Average	13%	21%	47%	19%
Adversary-Centric Average	9%	23%	51%	17%
Attack-Centric Average	11%	16%	47%	26%



...compare assessments within a category



...compare categories

Total Average Observation – Security Analyst predominantly lean towards “Good Value”

Attribute Breakdown Observation:

- re: Great Value scores SecAnalysts lean towards Attack-centric TTPs vs. IOC- or Adversary-centric
- re: All other categories are pretty evenly split across the survey participants







# Lessons Learned

# Lessons Learned

Participate breakdown by Role resulted in interesting data; however, should have asked

- **# of years of experience!**
- Average size of team across work experience
- Previous career path (i.e., 10 years as a security analyst and now spearhead incident response, etc.)

*Get more friends who aren't Security Analysts!*



**Questions?**  
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