Carderbee Targets Hong Kong in Supply Chain Attack

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The PolySwarm *Blog*

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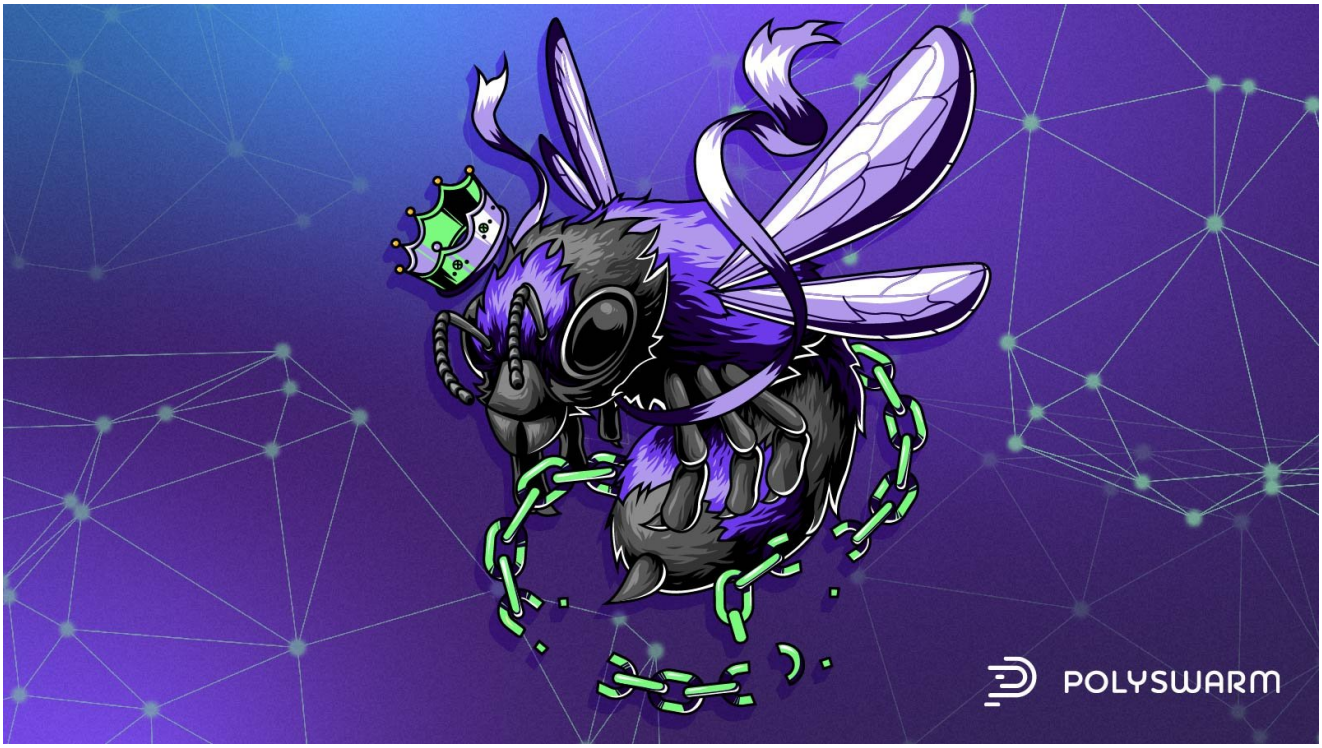

Related Families: Korplug, PlugX

Executive Summary

In a recent campaign, Carderbee targeted entities in Hong Kong and other regions of Asia via a supply chain attack leveraging the legitimate Cobra DocGuard software.

Key Takeaways

- A recent campaign targeted entities in Hong Kong and other regions of Asia via a supply chain attack leveraging the legitimate Cobra DocGuard software.
- The threat actors targeted these entities with the goal of deploying a version of Korplug (PlugX) on victim systems.
- Some of the malware used in the campaign was signed with a Microsoft certificate.
- Symantec attributed this activity to a previously unnamed group they dubbed Carderbee.

The Campaign

Symantec recently reported on activity attributed to a threat actor group dubbed Carderbee. In the campaign, the threat actors target entities in Hong Kong and other regions of Asia via a supply chain attack leveraging the legitimate Cobra DocGuard software. The activity began as early as September 2022.

The threat actors targeted these entities with the goal of deploying a version of Korplug (PlugX) on victim systems. The version of Korplug used had multiple capabilities including executing commands via CMD, enumerating files, checking running processes, downloading files, opening firewall ports, and keylogging. Some of the malware used in the campaign was signed with a Microsoft certificate. While over 2000 computers were affected by the Cobra DocGuard software used in the campaign, only about 100 had evidence of malicious activity. This likely indicates that Carderbee was selectively targeting certain entities.

Who is Carderbee?

Cobra DocGuard, legitimate encryption software, has been previously used by China nexus threat actor groups including Winnti and Budworm. Since the other TTPs did not seem to follow those of a known threat actor group, Symantec attributed this activity to a previously unnamed group they dubbed Carderbee. Symantec noted that Carderbee appears to consist of patient and skilled threat actors. At this time, no other details about the threat actor group are available.

IOCs

PolySwarm has multiple samples associated with this activity.

B5159f8ae16deda7aa5d55100a0eac6e5dacd1f6502689b543513a742353d1ea

96170614bbd02223dc79cec12afb6b11004c8edb8f3de91f78a6fc54d0844622

2400d8e66c652f4f8a13c99a5ffb67cb5c0510144b30e93122b1809b58614936

7e6d0f14302662f52e4379eb5b69a3749d8597e8f61266aeda74611258972a3d

1ff7b55dde007b7909f43dd47692f7c171caa2897d663eb9db01001062b1fe9d

f64267decaa982c63185d92e028f52c31c036e85b2731a6e0bccdb8f7b646e97

You can use the following CLI command to search for all related samples in our portal:

$ polyswarm link list -f Carderbee

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Topics: Threat Bulletin, Carderbee, Korplug, PlugX

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