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Article

Detecting IoT Devices and How They Put Large Heterogeneous Networks at Security Risk

Sharad Agarwal [1,2†*], Pascal Oser [1,3] and Stefan Lueders [1]

[1] European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), Geneva, Switzerland
[2] University of Wisconsin Madison, Madison, WI 53706, USA
[3] Ulm University, Helmholtzstraße 16, 89081 Ulm, Germany
* Correspondence: sharad.agarwal@cern.ch; Tel.: +33-769-465-489 (S.A.)
† Current address: European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), 1211 Geneva 23, Switzerland

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Abstract: The introduction of the Internet of Things (IoT), i.e., the interconnection of embedded devices over the Internet, has changed the world we live in from the way we measure, make calls, print information and even the way we get energy in our offices or homes. The convenience of IoT products, like CCTV cameras, IP phones, and oscilloscopes, is overwhelming for end-users. In parallel, however, security issues have emerged and it is essential for infrastructure providers to assess the associated security risks. In this paper, we propose a novel method to detect IoT devices and identify the manufacturer, device model, and the firmware version currently running on the device using the page source from the web user interface. We performed automatic scans of the large-scale network at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) to evaluate our approach. Our tools identified 233 IoT devices that fell into eleven distinct device categories and included 49 device models manufactured by 26 vendors. This serves as the basis for automatic vulnerability assessment to be presented in a future paper.

Keywords: Internet of Things; Security; Vulnerabilities and protective measures; Control network security; Operation in multi-user environments; Risk assessment

1. Introduction

The Internet of Things has become the latest trend in today's world. For 2020, the installed base of Internet of Things devices is forecast to grow to almost 31 billion worldwide [1]. These days all devices like printers, switches, routers, phones and any other electrical devices are interconnected to increase the ease of access and maintenance, but at the same time, it increases the security risk of being compromised.

IoT devices do not have the traditional host-centric security solutions like antiviruses, firewalls, or any safety feature to detect malware. Instead, they all run on certain firmware which is hardware specific, and each type of device has a different protocol on whose principles it runs on. As the IoT devices collect a lot of data, these firmwares should be developed by the manufacturers in a secured style, but is rarely the case. Access to the data collected and stored by these devices can aid criminals to gain a lot of sensitive information like patients healthcare data or video footage of the cameras.

The European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), the world's largest High Energy Physics Laboratory and home to the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), is running a plethora of embedded IoT devices. It is important to know the security footprint of that IoT hardware that gets integrated into its network complex: Unknown devices can run on firmware versions which are not updated and use old legacy code which introduces vulnerabilities. However, to secure a device, we need to first learn all about the device. CERN as our primary resource, we argue how insecure IoT devices can escalate the security risk inherent in large heterogeneous networks.

CERN provides easy network access and allows users to set up and register devices which might help them in their work. The first step we took was to identify the devices installed at CERN and

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then do a manual security assessment. As shown in Figure 1. b, we classify the identified IoT devices into four vulnerability classes and adapt this paradigm to the CERN network. Since IoT devices are networked, they are attractive targets and may become the weakest link for breaking into a secure infrastructure [2] or, instead, leaking sensitive information [3] about users and their behaviours [4]. While integrating these unsecured IoT devices in mission-critical networks with industrial control systems, they put their directly controlled assets at risk and possibly endanger the whole connected facility. Earlier this year, the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA) published guidelines for the development or repositioning of standards, facilitating the adoption of standards and governance of EU standardisation in the area of Network Information Security (NIS) [5], but the manufacturers, consumers and the EU Authorities have not yet fully implemented it.

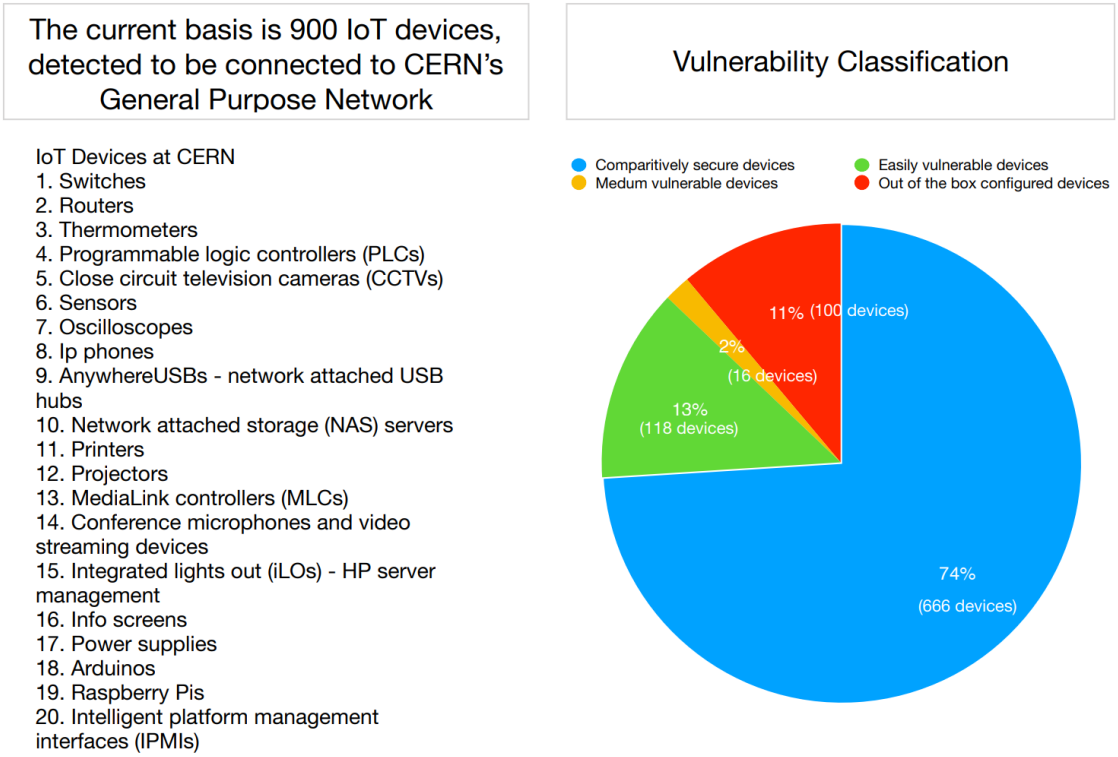

Figure 1. a Overview of IoT Devices at CERN. **b** Vulnerability Classification

In this paper, we identify and present a security assessment of 20 categories of various devices connected to the CERN network, as shown in Figure 1. We not only detected unprotected ports allowing changing the device's configuration but also the devices that are prone to remote code execution. Remote code execution can be used as a gateway for an attacker to gain access to the internal network from the outside and dig further while operating on a trustworthy device.

1.1. Contributions

In this paper, we present an approach to identify IoT devices, manufacturers, model names and firmware versions that we evaluated on a large heterogeneous network. Installing or modifying anything on the device under test (DUT) is not needed. We list our contributions as follows:

- A manual security assessment of 20 categories of devices that were found by our "NetScanIoT" tool on the highly heterogeneous, large scale network at CERN;
- We detected 900 physical IoT devices by "NetScanIoT";
- An approach to scan the CERN network without causing faults on remote devices and identify IoT device models based on the web interface;

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- We developed “Web-IoT Detection (WID)" to identify the manufacturer name, model and firmware versions of the respective IoT device;
- We identified 233 physical IoT devices consisting of eleven categories with our WID tool;
- We validate our approach by distinguishing 49 different device models, installed on our network;
- Our evaluation shows that we are able to detect 92.45% of IoT device models and 100% of IoT device that have a web user interface, through the WID tool.

The next subsection introduces related work and Section 2 explains the methodologies used for detection of IoT devices and the vulnerability assessment. Section 3 tells about the evaluation of the WID approach following the results of the vulnerability assessment before we discuss our findings.

1.2. Related Work

Most of the related work has identified very few unique categories of IoT devices by scanning a network. Scanning can be done either actively or passively. Active scanning is one-to-one probing communication and passive is where the client listens to every channel’s transmission, which is monitored periodically. Some tools also employ web interface fingerprinting but have assumptions and constraints like working on only single-page applications or analysing the HTTP response messages only [6]. Other tools depend on Nmap [7] port scanning and downloading the landing page using Curl [8] to find the firmware version for the IoT devices [9] which doesn’t work for all IoT devices. An IP-based IoT Device Detection approach requires the knowledge of servers run by the manufacturers and are able to evaluate using only ten device models by seven vendors [10]. Another solution, "IoTScanner", detects by passive measurement identifying devices using packet’s MAC address[11]. We cannot use passive scanning in our tool as we have 1000s of star points at CERN and depending only on MAC address is not sufficiently reliable.

2. Materials and Methods:

This section introduces the different approaches we developed to detect and identify IoT devices and the vulnerability assessment performed by us. The first subsection explains the tools we developed and the next subsection tells about the vulnerability assessment we tried manually on these identified IoT devices.

2.1. Identification

While all devices connected to CERN’s networks need to be centrally registered, CERN does not have a specific database for IoT devices in particular. There are hundreds of devices running on various networks and new devices being installed every day. This subsection explains the tools we developed to identify these IoT devices.

2.1.1. NetScanIoT Tool

We wrote a Python [12] tool called NetScanIoT, which pings the devices within the network and checks the ICMP [13] message if the target is reachable. If the device response is positive, we go for a nslookup [14] to find the hostname and save the list of the IP addresses along with their hostnames. We pre-filtered the output devices by port scanning and then manually also removed the non-IoT devices from the list connected to the network. We were able to identify 20 categories of IoT devices, as shown in Figure 1. a.

2.1.2. Web-IoT Detection (WID) Tool

Scraping a web page can be done with many available tools these days, but with so many different manufacturers, the challenge becomes tough. We initially tried to use Wget [15], Curl, Scrapy [16] and other tools, but there are multiple web pages that require to render JavaScript code, which these tools can not. The reason for doing so is that 20% of the device models’ web pages render JavaScript first in

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order to show the complete page source. Therefore, we wrote the WID tool in Python using Selenium [17] in headless mode, which renders the web page with a web driver (Chrome/Firefox) to get the page source. We first analysed the page source manually and identified six classifiers. With the help of Beautiful Soup [18], we used these classifiers and automated the process to find the category of the IoT device.

The WID tool produces the following output:

- IP-address and the host name of the device
- Web page availability of the device
- Category of device identified
- Manufacturer/Vendor name
- Model name
- Firmware version

2.2. Vulnerability Assessment

The Internet of Things being a very new technology; there is no specially designed vulnerability assessment tool that is known to us. There are some general tools like Nessus [19], OpenVAS [20] and others but do not deliver good results as they do for regular clients or servers. So, we started with the network and web interface of all the IoT devices since it is the primary interface through which the users can connect to the devices. We started looking for web interface injections and attacks to check for the devices. The first step was to use the top OWASP IoT Vulnerabilities [21] for investigating the IoT device's web interface and tried to get administrative access. Next aim was to find the network side vulnerabilities by scanning the devices and checking the open and filtered ports vulnerable to attack - some of them being secure shell (SSH) [22], Telnet [23], SIP [24], RTSP [25], JetDirect [26] - and get administrative access into the configurations of the devices. We used software like PRET [27] and Routerscan [28]. We also modified three available exploits from Google Hacking Database [29] to find vulnerable IoT devices on the network.

3. Results

3.1. Evaluation of tools

In this section, we elaborate on the results of the Web-IoT Detection (WID) tool. As mentioned in Table 1, we show the models and manufacturers names that we are successfully able to identify with our tool. It shows eleven out of 20 categories of devices that have a web interface and all of them were identified. We achieve an accuracy of 92.45% as only 49 out of 53 models were identified by the software using the six classifiers.

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Table 1. Devices Detected by WID

Category	Model	Manufacturer	Quantity
Matrox	Matrox Monarch HD	Matrox	26
Matrox	Matrox LCS	Matrox	2
Telepresence	SX20	Cisco	23
Telepresence	C20/40	Cisco	10
Oscilloscope	Tektronix	Tektronix	3
Oscilloscope	Lecroy	Teledyne Lecroy	3
Oscilloscope	Keysight53230A	Keysight Technologies	3
IP Phone	Polycom	Polycom	2
IP Phone	Cisco	Cisco	2
IP Phone	FLX	Revolabs	1
IP Phone	Yealink	Yealink	1
NAS	Diskstation	Synology	24
Printer	Color Laserjet M553	Hewlett Packard	5
Printer	Laserjet 500 color	Hewlett Packard	4
Printer	Color Laserjet m750	Hewlett Packard	2
Printer	Laserjet 2430	Hewlett Packard	3
Printer	3130cn	Dell	2
Printer	DCP-L	Brothers	2
Printer	HL-5470	Brothers	1
Printer	HL-3070CW	Brothers	1
Printer	mfc-8370dn	Brothers	1
Printer	Color Laserjet mfp m277	Hewlett Packard	3
Printer	Laserjet cp1525N	Hewlett Packard	1
Printer	Color Laserjet cm1312nfi mfp	Hewlett Packard	1
Printer	Laserjet 400 m401	Hewlett Packard	1
Printer	Star Asura	Star POS Printing Soln.	3
Printer	HP envy	Hewlett Packard	3
Printer	Photosmart plus printer	Hewlett Packard	2
Printer	Designjet T120	Hewlett Packard	2
Printer	Epson wf-3720 series	Epson	1
Printer	zebra zbr3878142	Zebra	1
Printer	sws / syncthru	Samsung	2
Printer	Officejet pro l7700	Hewlett Packard	1
Infoscreens	GM F420SEA F470S/GM F420S	JVC	9
CCTV Camera	cc8370	Vivotek	11
CCTV Camera	ip8365eh	Vivotek	9
CCTV Camera	Flexidome ip corner 9000mp	Bosch	6
CCTV Camera	M1114	Axis	2
CCTV Camera	q6000-e	Axis	3
CCTV Camera	P5635-E MKII	Axis	4
CCTV Camera	Q24	Mobotix AG	3
CCTV Camera	M24	Mobotix AG	2
CCTV Camera	M25	Mobotix AG	6
CCTV Camera	DCS-910	D-link	2
CCTV Camera	AW-HE60H	Panasonic	2
CCTV Camera	SNC-RZ50	Sony	1
PLC	Saia	SBC	10
Arduino	Arduino Yun/Uno	Arduino	9
IPMI	ILO	Hewlett Packard	12

3.2. Vulnerability Assessment Results

After doing the manual security assessment, we found out that 100 out of 900 devices have the default configuration and we classify this as "Out of the box configured" category. The devices of this category had no authentication setup on the web user interface or the command-line interface. The "Easily vulnerable" category consisted of 118 devices that had easily guessable or standard manufacturer configured credentials, which made them easily accessible to users within the network.

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Apart from this, there were certain devices like thermometers which had a hard-coded super admin password that cannot be changed. We also found 16 devices vulnerable to known exploits, which included Real Time Streaming Protocol (RTSP) Bypass authentication. This exploit affects two manufacturers' Close Circuit Television Cameras (CCTV) with various running firmware versions. There is more than one model prone to this exploit. Using the PRET software and the JetDirect port, we were able to access the configuration of printers installed at CERN. Apart from this, we also discovered that we are able to change the standard welcome message on most of the printers.

Once the vulnerability assessment was completed, we wanted to mitigate the vulnerabilities by reporting them to the administrators and users of the devices. Sending emails to each and every affected device administrator and user at CERN was a tedious task, so we used a platform called Fast Incidence Response (FIR) [30] modified at CERN according to our needs. FIR is a centralized and trusted platform and is used to report devices to the owners and responsible users. We used this to report about the affected devices to the responsible owners and provided them with more information on how to mitigate the issues. By doing this assessment, we raise security awareness at CERN. Adding all devices from the categories, as mentioned in Figure 1. b, there were 234 vulnerable devices, which were reported and suggested solutions to mitigate them as that could have caused security issues.

4. Discussion

We present our results to identify and assess IoT devices on a large-scale and heterogeneous network. With our NetScanIoT software, a total of 20 categories of IoT devices were identified successfully. After identifying these devices, we performed a manual vulnerability assessment on them. This assessment showed that IoT manufacturers did not secure their devices and, moreover, certain devices like the thermometers [31] did not even allow the user to change the credentials at all. The Web-IoT Detection (WID) tool was able to identify eleven out of 20 categories of IoT devices consisting of 49 various models, manufactured by 26 different vendors. We also identified the corresponding manufacturer and firmware version for these 49 device models of IoT devices which can be used for risk identification, associated with these firmware versions.

One of the significant findings was that 118 devices administered by 90 users were using default passwords and old firmware versions. The administrators did not consider to change them at all as they were not made aware by any kind of prompt that they have to change the default password or update to the latest firmware version of the device. Therefore, we propose periodical scans on all networks to detect devices that might be vulnerable.

We showed that the approach is working on a large-scale network with a larger dataset compared to related work. Moreover, no other work was able to classify this amount of heterogeneous IoT device models by using the web interface. For future work, we want to identify new types of IoT devices that come up together with industrial IoT devices on our accelerator complex testbed.

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

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IoT	Internet of Things
WID	Web-IoT Detection
CERN	European Organization for Nuclear Research
LHC	Large Hadron Collider
DUT	Device Under Test
PLC	Programmable Logic Controller
ENISA	European Union Agency for Network and Information Security
NIS	Network Information Security
UI	User Interface
NAS	Network Attached Storage
MLC	Media Layer Controller
IP	Internet Protocol
MAC	Media Access Control
HTTP	Hypertext Transfer Protocol
SSH	Secure Shell
CCTV	Close Circuit Television
OWASP	Open Web Application Security Project
SIP	Session Initiation Protocol
RTSP	Real Time Streaming Protocol

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Sample Availability: The dataset and the source code sample will be available from the authors Sharad Agarwal and Pascal Oser after the completion of the PhD of Pascal Oser.