



# Making Sense of Unstructured Threat Intelligence Data

Thursday, May 2  
IACD

HOSTED BY NICOLAS KSEIB,  
LEAD DATA SCIENTIST AT TRU\*STAR

# Before We Get Started

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## Why Are We Here?

1. About TruSTAR
2. Questions are encouraged
3. We'll send you all resources (Slides, GitHub, Blog) after the presentation.

## Agenda

1. Overview of Data Challenges
2. Why do we want to solve these challenges
3. How are solving them
4. NLP



Doc2Vec Learner



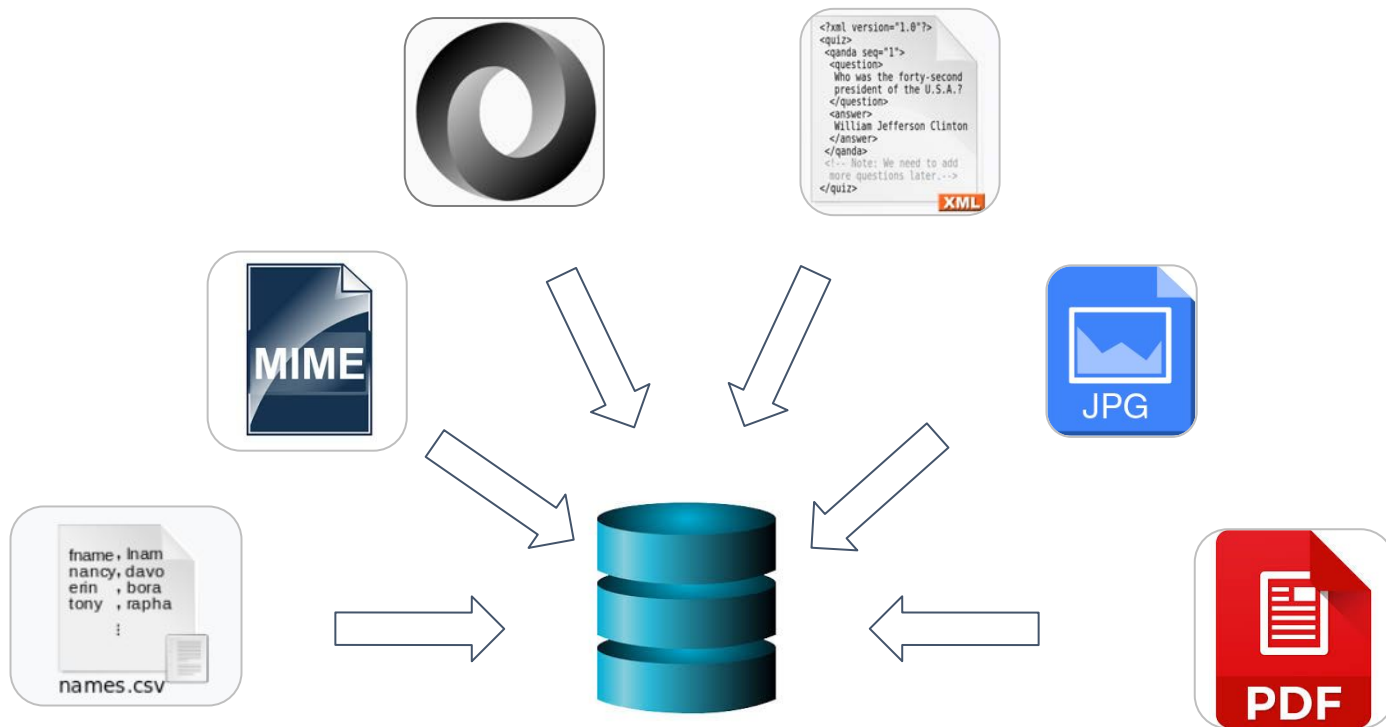
NLST

TRU\*STAR

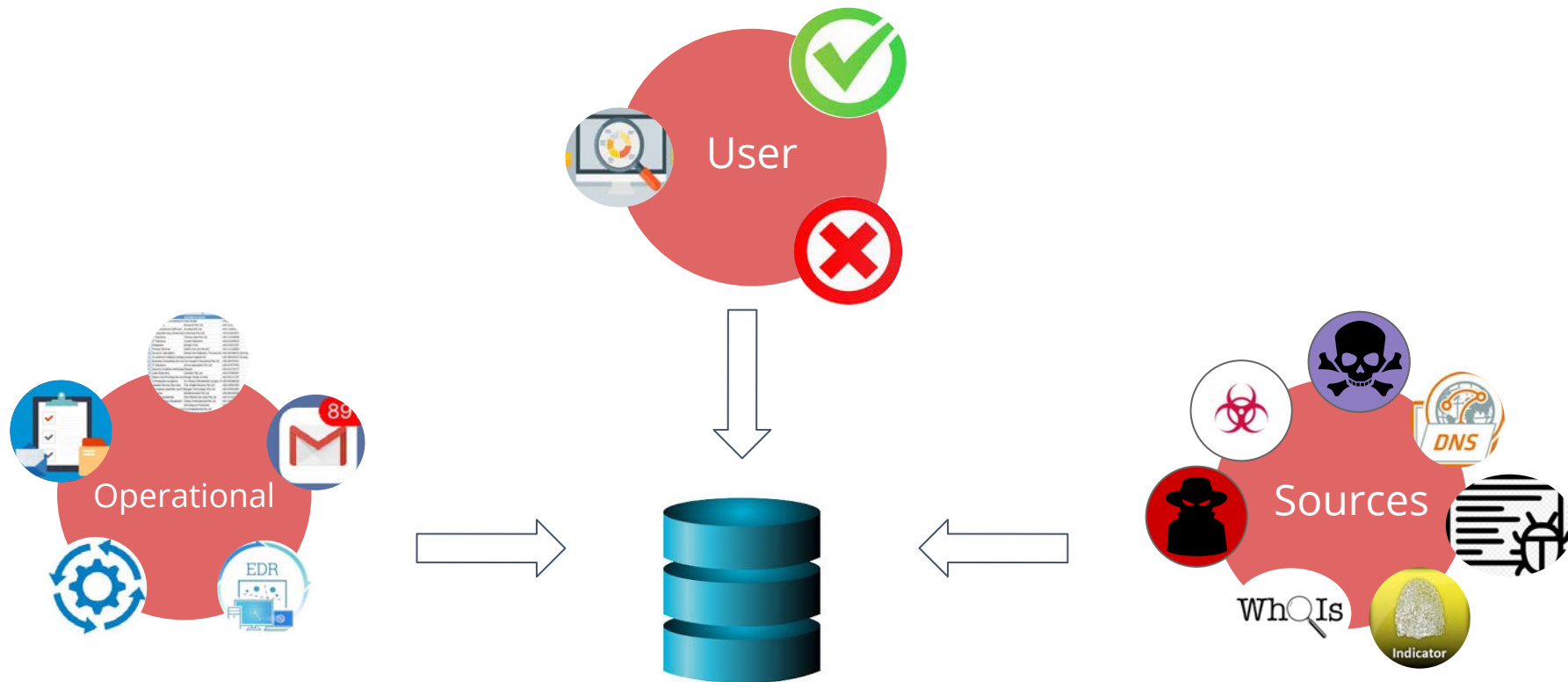


# **I. Overview of Data Challenges in Intelligence**

# Variety of Data Formats



# Variety of Data Sources



# Variety of Data Sources

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## Structured

action	date	device_id
Open	2019-04-03	8
Close	2019-04-18	57
Open	2019-04-21	69
Close	2019-04-14	43
Open	2019-04-15	49
Close	2019-04-18	59
Open	2019-04-18	57

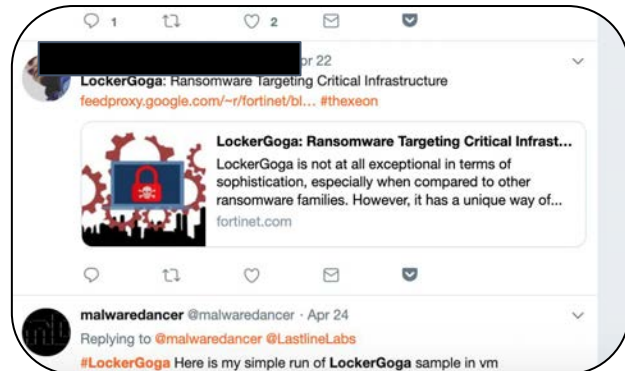
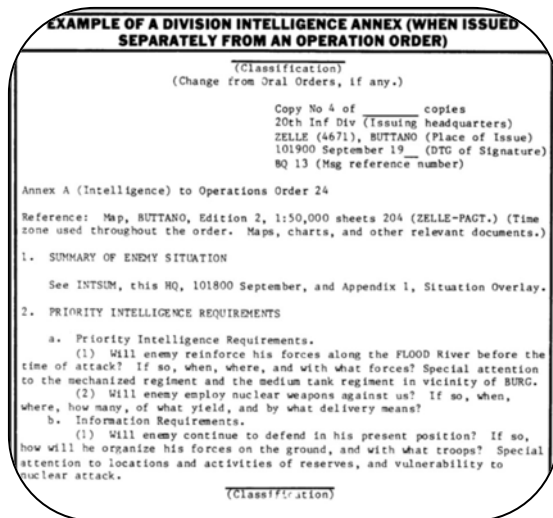
# Variety of Data Sources

## Semi-structured



# Variety of Data Sources

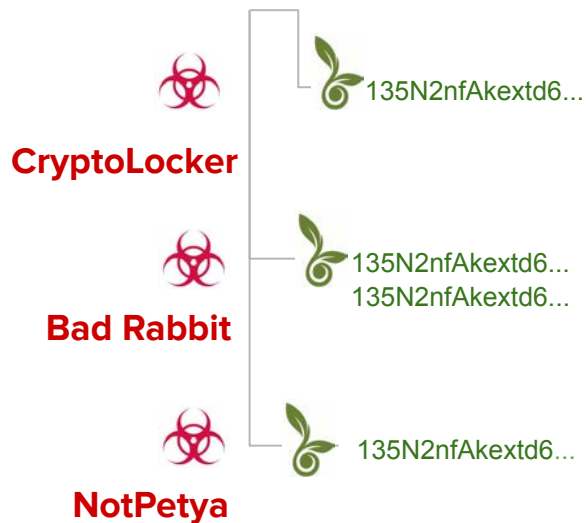
## Unstructured





# Extraction Challenges

## 1. Extract



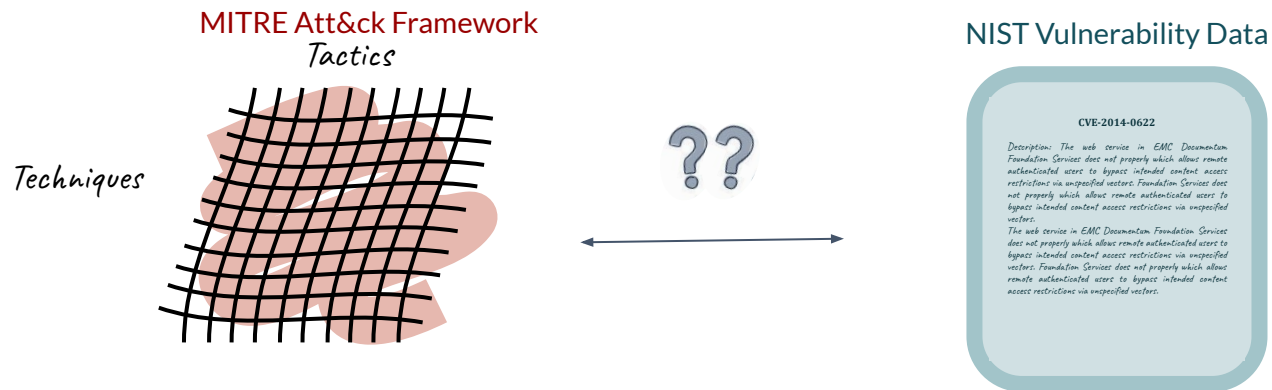
## 2. Disambiguate & Normalize

***Nuclear** is an Exploit Kit!*

*Germany's 17 **nuclear** power plants will be shut down in 2022.*

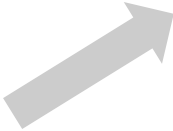
IP (4)		
6.0.5.1	VERSION NUMBER	✖ 🛡
6.0.5.0	VERSION NUMBER	✖ 🛡
121.2.3.5		🛡
121.2.3.4		🛡

# Inferring Relationships / Categorization




# Merging Sources into 1/N Standard Languages

**Extract /  
Categorization**



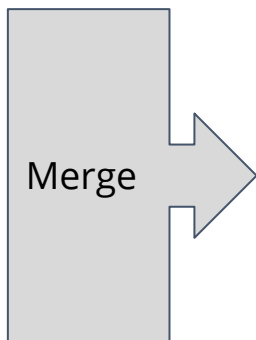
key	confidence	malware
1.1.1.1   ip	high	Mofksys
evil.com   domain	low	Ryuk



key	asn	country
1.1.1.1   ip	3265	NLD
evil.com   domain	1668	USA

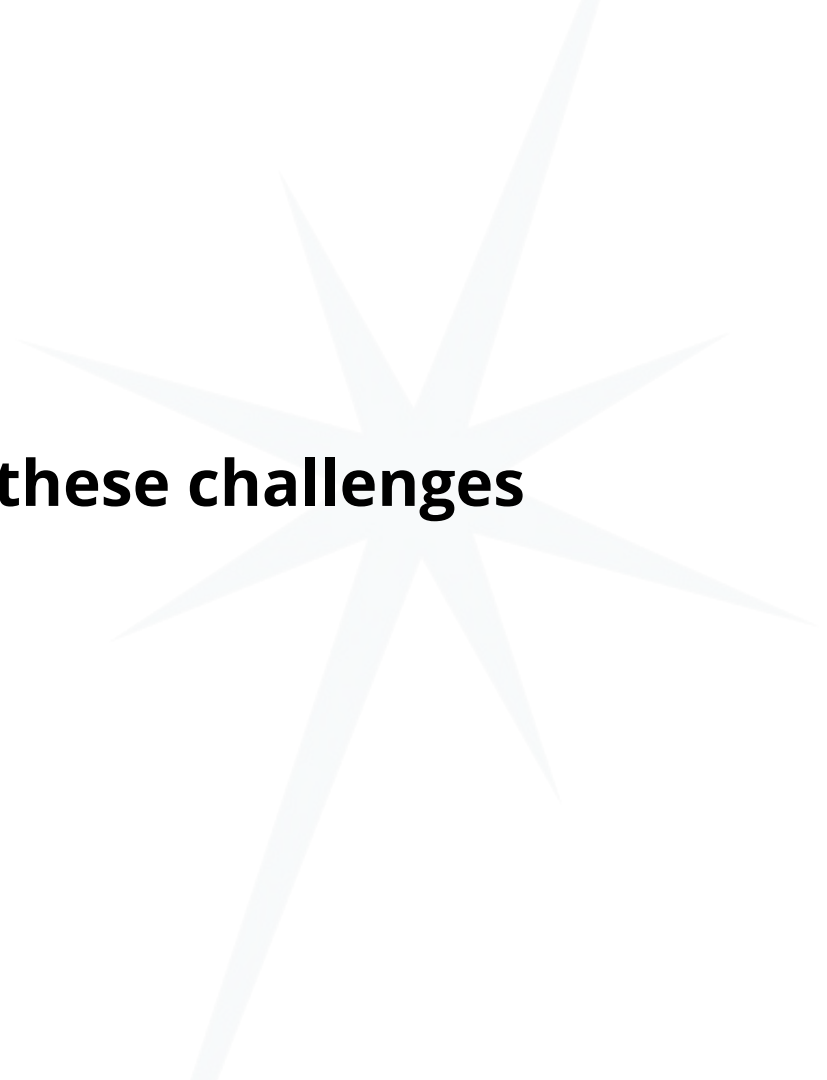
# Merging Sources into 1/N Standard Languages

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key	confidence	malware	asn	country
1.1.1.1   ip	high	Mofksys	3265	NLD
evil.com   domain	low	Ryuk	1668	USA

## **II. Why do we want to solve these challenges**



# Information Retrieval: Search & Querying

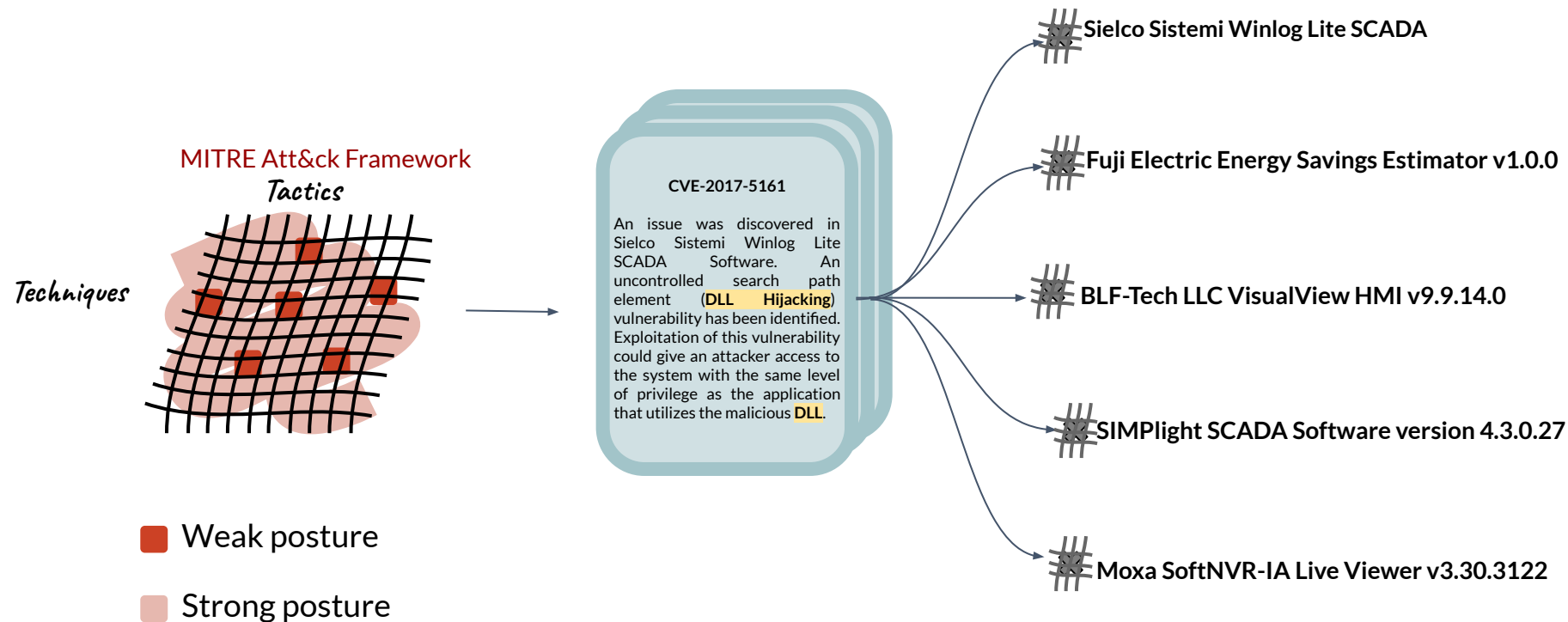
The screenshot displays the TRU\*STAR search interface. The top navigation bar includes 'Dashboard', 'Explore', and a search bar with the text 'Search by malware, IP address, email...'. On the left, a sidebar menu lists 'Reports', 'IOCs', 'Marketplace', and 'Cases'. The 'Filter & Refine' panel on the left shows 'My Enclaves (2)' with 'DS Demo' and 'Community' selected, and 'Open Sources' with 'Abuse Ransomware', 'Abuse SSL IP Blacklist', 'Bambenek', 'Broadanalysis', 'DHS-AIS', and 'EU-CERT' selected. The main content area shows '13 results for "Ryuk"', with 'IOCs (3)' and 'Reports (10)' links. Below this, 'Related keywords' are listed: 'emotet' and 'trickbot'. A table of results follows, with columns for 'FIRST SEEN' and 'LAST SEEN'.

	FIRST SEEN	LAST SEEN
<b>MALWARE: RYUK</b>	01-24-2019 04:51 PST	01-29-2019 16:36 PST
<b>URL: https://www.crowdstrike.com/blog/big-game-hunting-with-ryuk-another-lucrative-ta...</b>	01-09-2019 13:32 PST	01-24-2019 04:51 PST
<b>URL: https://www.zdnet.com/article/ryuk-ransomware-gang-probably-russian-not-north-...</b>	01-09-2019 13:32 PST	01-09-2019 13:32 PST

# Information Retrieval: Link Analysis



# Prioritization and Triage





### **III. How are we solving for these challenges**



# Using regex for entity extraction

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I start with a pattern to extract specific entities

```
\b\d{1,3}\.\d{1,3}\.\d{1,3}\.\d{1,3}\b
```

## **Upside:**

Easy to implement...

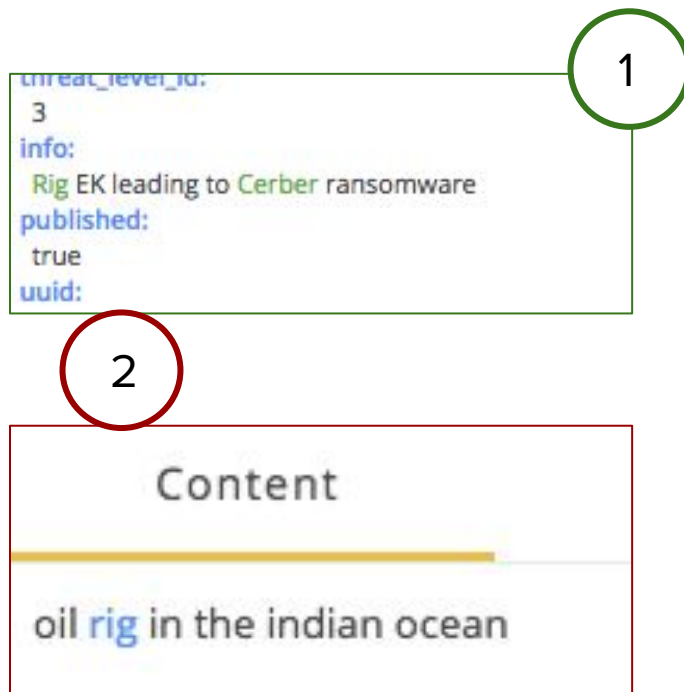
## **Downside:**

Low precision due to a high number of false positives

Requires a priori knowledge

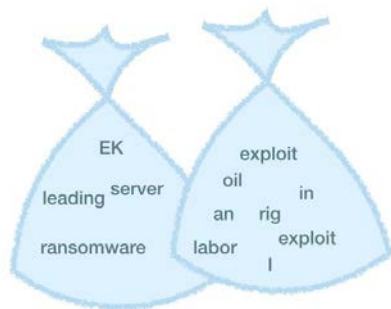
# ML to the rescue

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# ML to the rescue

1. Transform content to Contextual bag of words
2. Vectorize word counts and compute TF-IDF

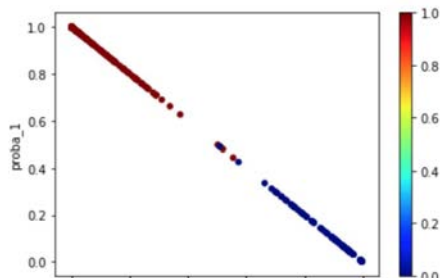


	Doc 1	Doc 2	Doc 3	Doc 4	Doc 5	Doc 6	Doc 7	Doc 8
Term 1	10	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Term 2	0	2	0	0	0	18	0	2
Term 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Term 4	6	0	0	4	6	0	0	0
Term 5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Term 6	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Term 7	0	1	8	0	0	0	0	0
Term 8	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0

Document Vector

Word Vector (Passage Vector)

3. Feed into a simple model



$$P(c|x) = \frac{P(x|c)P(c)}{P(x)}$$

Likelihood  $\rightarrow P(x|c)$       Class Prior Probability  $\rightarrow P(c)$   
 Posterior Probability  $\leftarrow P(c|x)$       Predictor Prior Probability  $\leftarrow P(x)$



4. Predict on production

COMMON WORD

RIG
✖ 🔍

🏆 MALWARE (1)
—

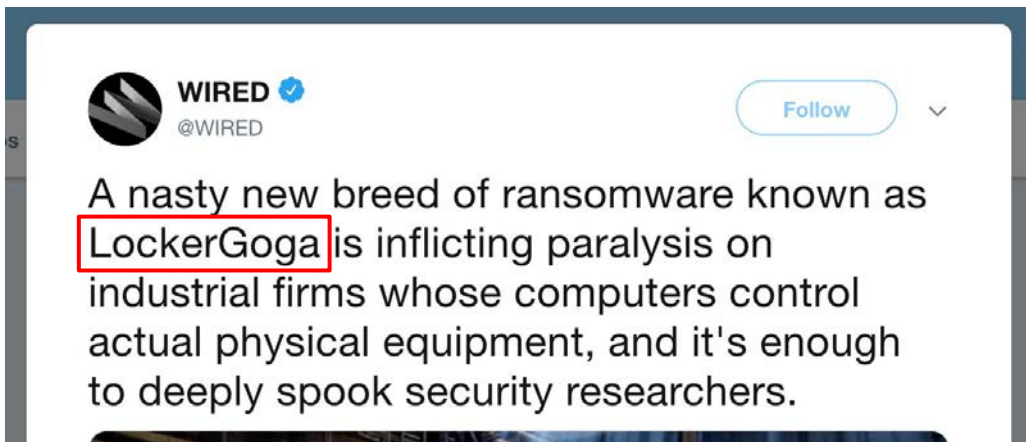
RIG
🔍

$$P(c|X) = P(x_1|c) \times P(x_2|c) \times \dots \times P(x_n|c) \times P(c)$$

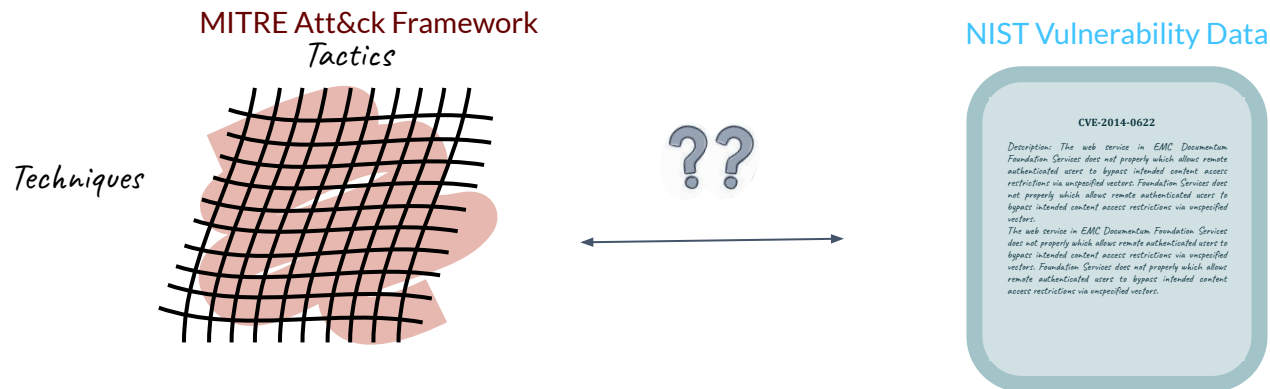
# But it's not always enough!

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New Malware names



# But it's not always enough!



## IV. Which brings us to NLP...

Work by **Zainab Danish** ([zdanish@trustar.co](mailto:zdanish@trustar.co))



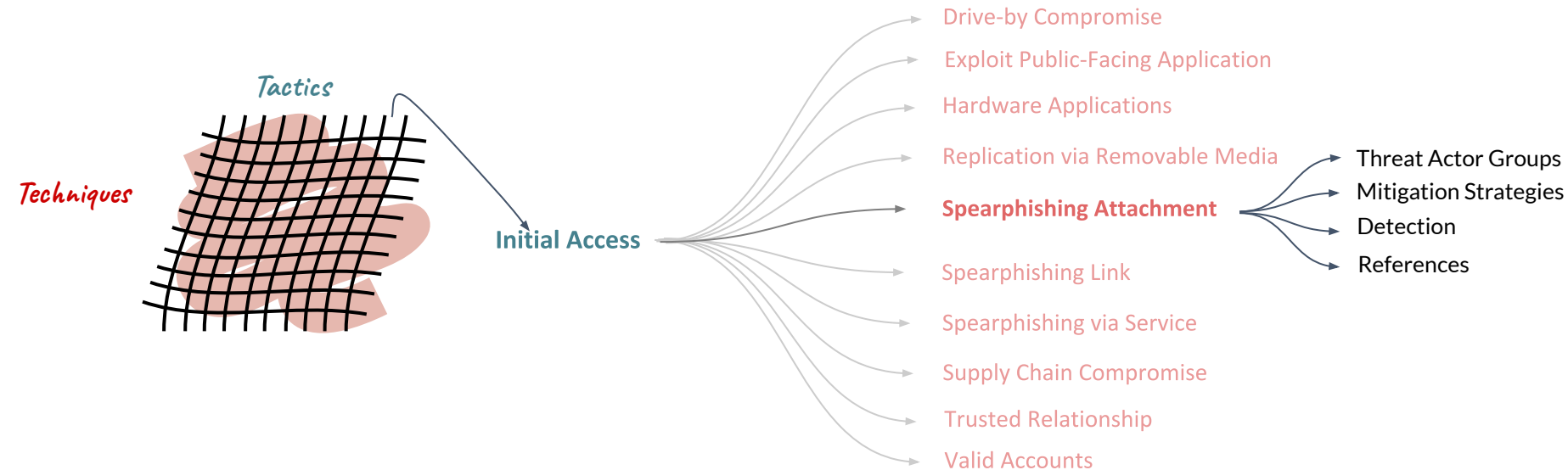
# Mitre ATT&CK Framework

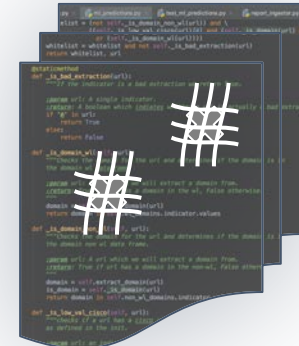
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- **Tactic** = Why?
- **Technique** = How?



# Mitre ATT&CK Framework





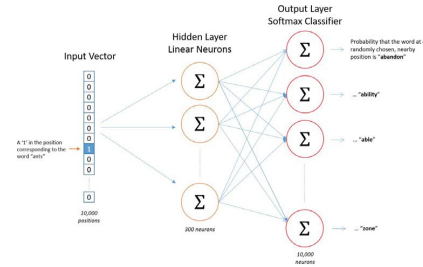
# Word2Vec

**What?** NLP technique that seeks to teach the computer to **understand, interpret and manipulate human language**.

**Why?** **Translate words into vectors** for mathematical manipulation.

**How?** By **leveraging context** and calculating probabilities.

I see ants on the tree. →  
(ants, I)  
(ants, see)  
(ants, on)  
(ants, the)



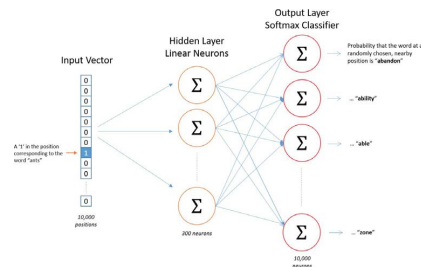
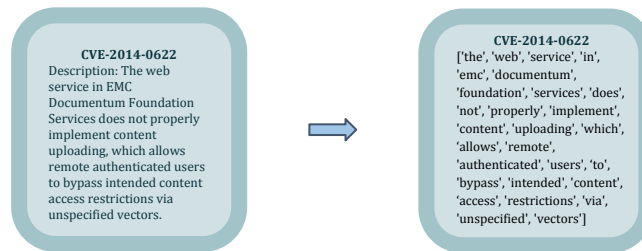
ants =  $[a_1 a_2 a_3 a_4 a_5 \dots a_d]$

# Doc2Vec

**What?** NLP technique that seeks to teach the computer to **understand, interpret and manipulate human language**.

**Why?** **Translate words and documents into vectors** for mathematical manipulation.

**How?** By **leveraging context** and calculating probabilities.



$$\text{CVE-2014-0622} = [a_1 a_2 a_3 a_4 a_5 \dots a_d]$$

# Process

## CVE-2014-0622

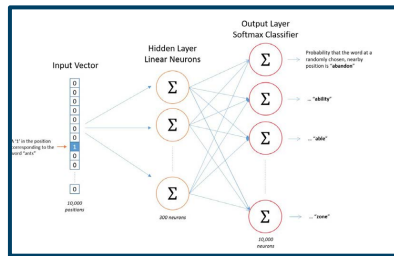
Description: The web service in EMC Documentum Foundation Services does not properly implement content uploading, which allows remote authenticated users to bypass intended content access restrictions via unspecified vectors.

Data Cleaning

## CVE-2014-0622

['the', 'web', 'service', 'in', 'emc', 'documentum', 'foundation', 'services', 'does', 'not', 'properly', 'implement', 'content', 'uploading', 'which', 'allows', 'remote', 'authenticated', 'users', 'to', 'bypass', 'intended', 'content', 'access', 'restrictions', 'via', 'unspecified', 'vectors']

Tokenization



Model Training

CVE-2014-0622  $[a_1 a_2 a_3 a_4 a_5 \dots a_d]$   
CVE-2015-0765  $[a_1 a_2 a_3 a_4 a_5 \dots a_d]$   
...  
attack-pattern12  $[a_1 a_2 a_3 a_4 a_5 \dots a_d]$

Numeric Vectors

# CVE Clusters: Data Categorization / Tagging

Initial number of docs:



~100,000

Total discovered clusters:



~100

Browser Vulnerabilities

Overflow Vulnerabilities

Privilege Escalation Vulnerabilities

# CVE Clusters: Privilege Escalation

The compilation daemon in Scala before 2.10.7 uses weak permissions for private files in scalac-compile-server-port, which allows local users to write to arbitrary class files and consequently gain privileges.

The overlayfs implementation in the Linux kernel through 4.5.2 does not properly restrict the mount namespace, which allows local users to gain privileges by mounting an overlayfs filesystem on top of a FUSE filesystem, and then executing a crafted setuid program.

Directory traversal vulnerability in the Shared Folders feature for VMware Workstation before 5.5.4, when a folder is shared, allows users on the guest system to write to arbitrary files on the host system via the "Backdoor I/O Port" interface.

The Outlook Extension in IBM Content Collector 4.0.0.x before 4.0.0.0-ICC-OE-IF004 allows local users to bypass the intended Reviewer privilege requirement and read e-mail messages from an arbitrary mailbox by invoking the Search function.

# Connecting the two worlds...

## Dylib Hijacking

macOS and OS X use a common method to look for required **dynamic libraries (dylib)** to load into a program based on search paths. Adversaries can take advantage of ambiguous paths to plant dylibs to gain privilege escalation or persistence. A common method is to see what dylibs an application uses, then plant a malicious version with the same name higher up in the search path. This typically results in the dylib being in the same folder as the application itself. If the program is configured to run at a higher privilege level than the current user, then when the dylib is loaded into the application, the dylib will also run at that elevated level. This can be used by adversaries as a privilege escalation technique.

## CVE-2017-6329

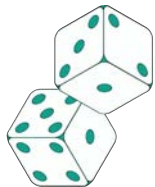
Symantec VIP Access for Desktop prior to 2.2.4 can be susceptible to a **DLL** Pre-Loading vulnerability. These types of issues occur when an application looks to call a **DLL** for execution and an attacker provides a malicious DLL to use instead. Depending on how the application is configured, the application will generally follow a specific search path to locate the DLL. The exploitation of the vulnerability manifests as a simple file write (or potentially an over-write) which results in a foreign executable running under the context of the application.

$$\text{similarity} = \cos(\theta) = \frac{\mathbf{A} \cdot \mathbf{B}}{\|\mathbf{A}\| \|\mathbf{B}\|} > 0.5$$



# Evaluation

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100 naturally  
forming clusters

1/100 chance of  
getting it right at  
random

1% accurate  
associations



50% accurate  
associations

# What next...

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## Limitations:

- Language and schema differences deteriorate the quality of the models.
- Hard to scale for many to many relationships.

## Potential solutions:

- Investigate training models on recent data only.
- Investigate more sophisticated Neural Networks algorithms (RadialGANs).

# QUESTIONS?

# TRU★STAR

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Access Our Codebase & Resources Here:

**[TRUSTAR.CO](https://trustar.co) / [NLP](#)**



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Twitter: [@NKseib](#)  
Email: [nkseib@trustar.co](mailto:nkseib@trustar.co)



**Zainab Danish**

Email: [zdanish@trustar.co](mailto:zdanish@trustar.co)

# THANK YOU!

# TRU★STAR

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## Sample Enterprise Customers



Prudential



## Sample Hosted Exchange Groups



Columbus  
Collaboratory

The Academy

R-CISC



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**Extra**

# Faster Incident Response

## CVE-2017-5161

An issue was discovered in Sielco Sistemi Winlog Lite SCADA Software. An uncontrolled search path element (**DLL Hijacking**) vulnerability has been identified. Exploitation of this vulnerability could give an attacker access to the system with the same level of privilege as the application that utilizes the malicious **DLL**.

## Dylib Hijacking

macOS and OS X use a common method to look for required **dynamic libraries (dylib)** to load into a program based on search paths. Adversaries can take advantage of ambiguous paths to plant dylibs to gain privilege escalation or persistence. A common method is to see what dylibs an application uses, then plant a malicious version with the same name higher up in the search path. This typically results in the dylib being in the same folder as the application itself. If the program is configured to run at a higher privilege level than the current user, then when the dylib is loaded into the application, the dylib will also run at that elevated level. This can be used by adversaries as a privilege escalation technique.

## DETECTION

Objective-See's Dylib Hijacking Scanner can be used to detect potential cases of dylib hijacking. Monitor file systems for moving, renaming, replacing, or modifying dylibs. Changes in the set of dylibs that are loaded by a process (compared to past behavior) that do not correlate with known software, patches, etc., are suspicious. Check the system for multiple dylibs with the same name and monitor which versions have historically been loaded into a process.

## MITIGATION

Prevent users from being able to write files to the search paths for applications, both in the folders where applications are run from and the standard dylib folders. If users can't write to these directories, then they can't intercept the search path.

## REFERENCES

### Malware Persistence on OS X:

[https://www.rsaconference.com/writable/presentations/file\\_upload/ht-r03-malware-persistence-on-os-x-yosemite\\_final.pdf](https://www.rsaconference.com/writable/presentations/file_upload/ht-r03-malware-persistence-on-os-x-yosemite_final.pdf)

### Writing Bad Malware for OS X:

<https://www.blackhat.com/docs/us-15/materials/us-15-Wardle-Writing-Bad-A-Malware-For-OS-X.pdf>

### Mitre-attack:

<https://attack.mitre.org/techniques/T1157>

# MITRE Att&ck Framework: Possible Improvements

## Exact match

attack_id	attack_name	attack_description
attack-pattern--03f4a766-7a21-4b5e-9ccf-e0cf422ab983	Acquire or compromise 3rd party signing certificates	Code signing is the process of digitally signing executables and scripts to confirm the software author and guarantee that the code has not been altered or corrupted. Users may trust a signed piece of code more than an signed piece of code even if they don't know who issued the certificate or who the author is. (Citation: DiginotarCompromise)
attack-pattern--e5164428-03ca-4336-a9a7-4d9ea1417e59	Acquire or compromise 3rd party signing certificates	Code signing is the process of digitally signing executables or scripts to confirm the software author and guarantee that the code has not been altered or corrupted. Users may trust a signed piece of code more than an signed piece of code even if they don't know who issued the certificate or who the author is. (Citation: Adobe Code Signing Cert)

## Similar meaning

attack_id	attack_name	attack_description
attack-pattern--784ff1bc-1483-41fe-a172-4cd9ae25c06b	Acquire OSINT data sets and information	Open source intelligence (OSINT) is intelligence gathered from publicly available sources. This can include both information gathered on-line, such as from search engines, as well as in the physical world. (Citation: RSA-APTRecon)
attack-pattern--2b9a666e-bd59-4f67-9031-ed41b428e04a	Acquire OSINT data sets and information	Open source intelligence (OSINT) provides free, readily available information about a target while providing the target no indication they are of interest. Such information can assist an adversary in crafting a successful approach for compromise. (Citation: RSA-APTRecon)

# Organizational Prioritization

## Dylib Hijacking

macOS and OS X use a common method to look for required dynamic libraries (dylib) to load into a program based on search paths. Adversaries can take advantage of ambiguous paths to plant dylibs to gain privilege escalation or persistence. A common method is to see what dylibs an application uses, then plant a malicious version with the same name higher up in the search path. This typically results in the dylib being in the same folder as the application itself. If the program is configured to run at a higher privilege level than the current user, then when the dylib is loaded into the application, the dylib will also run at that elevated level. This can be used by adversaries as a privilege escalation technique.

## CVE-2017-5161

An issue was discovered in Sielco Sistemi Winlog Lite SCADA Software. An uncontrolled search path element (DLL Hijacking) vulnerability has been identified. Exploitation of this vulnerability could give an attacker access to the system with the same level of privilege as the application that utilizes the malicious DLL.

✗ Sielco Sistemi Winlog Lite SCADA

✗ Fuji Electric Energy Savings Estimator v1.0.0

✗ BLF-Tech LLC VisualView HMI v9.9.14.0

✗ SIMPlight SCADA Software version 4.3.0.27

✗ Moxa SoftNVR-IA Live Viewer v3.30.3122





# Improvement Strategies

- Heuristics used

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**Unexpected (but cool) outcomes**



# Evaluation

Human evaluation

- On CVE similarity
- On technique relationship

# Vulnerability Data: NIST NVD

"A weakness in the computational logic (e.g., code) found in software and hardware components that, when exploited, results in a negative impact to confidentiality, integrity, or availability. Mitigation of the vulnerabilities in this context typically involves coding changes, but could also include specification changes or even specification deprecations (e.g., removal of affected protocols or functionality in their entirety)."

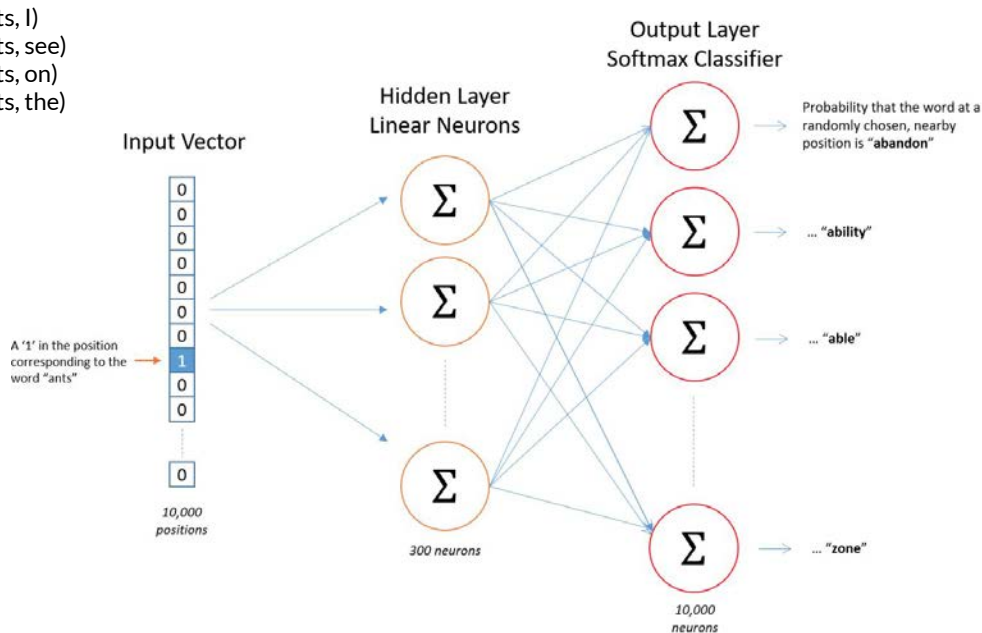
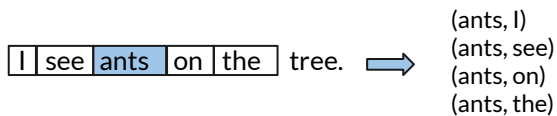


# Speaking of NLP

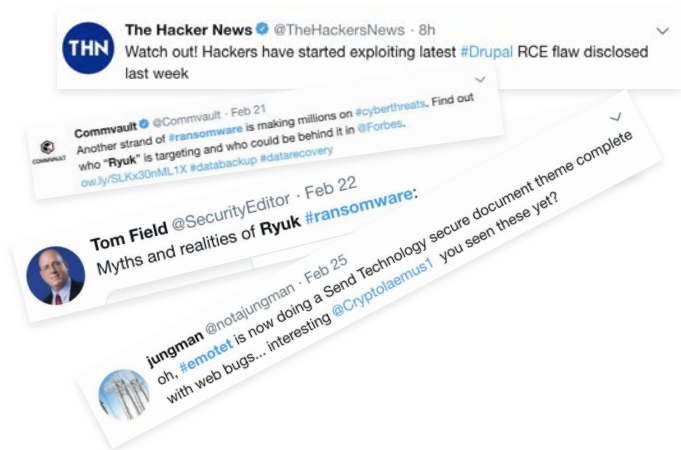




# Word2Vec



# Word2Vec: Malware Example



## Entity Extraction



**Tom Field** @SecurityEditor · Feb 22  
Myths and realities of **Ryuk** #ransomware:

## Related Trends



Trends related to “**Ryuk**”

- Emotet
- Trickbot





# MITRE Att&ck Framework: Possible Improvements

Clustering shows:

- Overlapping ATT&CK techniques
  - Exact matches
  - Conveying the same meaning
- Overarching categories for some techniques

attack_id	technique_name	description
attack-pattern--2b9a666e-bd59-4f67-9031-ed41b428e04a	Acquire OSINT data sets and information	Open source intelligence (OSINT) provides free, readily available information about a target while providing the target no indication they are of interest. Such information can assist an adversary in crafting a successful approach for compromise. (Citation: RSA-APTRecon)
attack-pattern--028ad431-84c5-4eb7-a364-2b797c234f88	Acquire OSINT data sets and information	Data sets can be anything from Security Exchange Commission (SEC) filings to public phone numbers. Many datasets are now either publicly available for free or can be purchased from a variety of data vendors. Open source intelligence (OSINT) is intelligence gathered from publicly available sources. This can include both information gathered on-line as well as in the physical world. (Citation: SANSThreatProfile) (Citation: Infosec-osint) (Citation: isight-osint)

# Method to the madness?

