

Introduction To IoT Reverse Engineering with an example on a home router

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What we will talk about ...



- Introduction
- Information gathering
- Emulation environment using QEMU
- Analyze how the device works
- Modify the firmware



What is "engineering"? "the science of making things"

- Define "product requirements"
- Design the product
- Build or manufacture the product



Design Blueprint







What is "reverse engineering"?

• It is the "engineering" process done in reverse order and, usually, with limited scope

What is this example project "*limited scope*"?

• Understand how to modify the router firmware to add features and additional programs

Product



Design Blueprint





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Information Gathering



- Who makes the device?
- Is there an ODM (*Original Design Manufacturer*)?
- Open the case
- Identify main device components
- Locate UART and possibly JTAG Interfaces
- Get the firmware and the root file system

D-Link DVA 5592 example home router



Mainboard Top





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Mainboard Bottom





 $\circ \bullet \circ \circ \circ$ - Information Gathering

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Locate the UART interface

- Search on Internet
- Identify potential serial headers candidates
- Sometimes marked in the PCB's silkscreen
- Usually 4 pins: Vcc, Gnd, Tx, Rx
- Use a multimeter to find potential candidates
- Locate pins on SOC and follow PCB traces
- Use tools like Jtagulator
- Oscilloscope or Logic Analyzer to locate Tx (a little overkill)

UART on various boards







The JTAG interface



- JTAG is an industry standard for testing printed circuit boards after manufacture
- Allows access to read/write flash memory contents and can be used as a primary means for an in-circuit emulator
- Multiple devices are daisy-chained together
- Pins:

TCK test clock TDI test data in TDO test data out TMS test mode sel. TRST test reset (opt.)



Locate the JTAG interface

- No standard pinout, but few popular pinouts: <u>http://www.jtagtest.com/pinouts/</u>
- Search on Internet
- Look for headers labeled TCK, TDI, TDO, TMS
- Look for 1x5/6, 2x5, 2x7, 2x10 pin headers
 - Look for GND and VCC with a multimeter and compare to popular pinouts
 - Often there are pullups (1-100k) for TMS, TDI and TRST, TRST can also be pulled low
 - TDO should be high impedance
- Locate pins on SOC and follow PCB traces
- Use tools like Jtagulator

TDO TMS





VREF

🔲 nSRST

GND

nTRST



Repopulate the interfaces











Connect the serial cable



$0 \bullet 0 0 0$ - Information Gathering

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Why repopulate the interfaces?



- UART (Serial Interface)
 - Watch what is printed on the serial console during the boot cycle and find bootloader and OS version
 - Watch the firmware upgrade cycle
 - Use a USB TTL serial adapter and a terminal emulator on the PC
- JTAG
 - Be able to read the firmware out of the flash eeprom
 - Be able to break into the boot cycle and use JTAG as a means to do "in circuit debugging"
 - Attach an interface board, like Bus Pirate, to the JTAG interface
 - Use software, as OpenOCD, to dump flash eeprom and to do "in circuit debugging"

Getting the firmware file



- Follow the easiest path first
- If the supplier has a website with firmware updates go and download the firmware file
- If the firmware update can be downloaded directly only by the device, sniff the communication with *wireshark* and get the firmware file
- If the above steps are not available, download the eeprom image through the JTAG connector using Bus Pirate and OpenOCD

Get info from the firmware



• Get basic info from the firmware file

\$ file DVA-5592_A1_WI_20180405.sig DVA-5592_A1_WI_20180405.sig: data

\$ binwalk DVA-5592_A1_WI_20180405.sig DECIMAL HEXADECIMAL DESCRIPTION

512 0x200 **JFFS2 filesystem**, little endian 24379992 0x1740258 gzip compressed data, from Unix, last modified: 2018-04-11 10:40:16

Extract content from firmware

- Install Jefferson to extract files from JFFS2 file system
- Use binwalk to extract content from firmware

```
$ binwalk - DVA-5592 A1 WI 20180405.sig
$ ls -lh DVA-5592 A1 WI 20180405.sig.extracted
-rw-rw-r-- 1 val val 30K ott 21 13:28 1740258
-rw-rw-r-- 1 val val 24M ott 21 13:27 200.jffs2
drwxrwxr-x 5 val val 4,0K ott 21 13:28 jffs2-root
$ file 1740258
1740258: POSIX tar archive (GNU)
$ tar -tvf 1740258
drwxr-xr-x l.fornalczyk/adb <u>boards/</u>
drwxr-xr-x l.fornalczyk/adb boards/963138 VD5....ipk
```

Looking at the extracted files

• Looking at the extracted files

\$ ls jffs2-root/ fs 1 fs 2 fs 3

 It seems we have 3 file systems here: "/boot" and "/" splitted in two parts



- cferam.000 is the boot loader image based on Broadcom CFE (Common Firmware Environment)
- vmlinux.lz is the kernel, in an unusual CFE compressed format

Looking at other files



• /sbin/init is missing (but it's not true), busybox is there

```
$ ls -lh fs 2/bin/busybox
-rwsr-sr-x 1 val val 382K fs 2/bin/busybox
$ strings fs 2/bin/busybox
BusyBox v1.17.3 (2018-04-11 12:29:54 CEST)
• • •
 arm-linux-readelf -a fs 2/bin/busybox
Ş
... program interpreter: /lib/ld-uClibc.so.0]
$ ls -lh fs 2/lib/ld-uClibc*
-rwxr-xr-x Id-uClibc-0.9.33.2.so
lrwxrwxrwx ld-uClibc.so.0 -> ld-uClibc-0.9.33.2.so
$ ls -l fs 3/lib/libgcrypt.so.11*
lrwxrwxrwx libgcrypt.so.11 -> libgcrypt.so.11.5.3
-rwxr-xr-x libgcrypt.so.11.5.3
```

Boot output on serial console



• Output on serial console during boot

```
CFE version 1.0.38-118.3-S for BCM963138 (32bit,SP,LE)
generic
Chip ID: BCM63136B0, ARM Cortex A9 Dual Core: 1000MHz
Total Memory: 268435456 bytes (256MB)
NAND ECC BCH-4, page size 0x800 bytes, spare size 64 bytes
NAND flash device: , id 0xc2da block 128KB size 262144KB
Linux version 3.4.11-rt19 (l.fornalczyk@quelo) (qcc version
4.5.4 20120306 (prerelease) (Linaro GCC 4.5-2012.03) )
CPU: ARMv7 Processor [414fc091] revision 1 (ARMv7)
jffs2: version 2.2 (NAND) (SUMMARY) (ZLIB) (LZMA) (RTIME)
```

Boot output on serial console



• Output on serial console during boot (part 2)



Boot output on serial console

Output on serial console during boot (part 3)

CM TR-181 ready

CM TR-98 ready

Epicentro Software Version: DVA-5592_A1_WI_20180405 Epicentro Platform Version: 6.0.0.0028

Starting /etc/rc.d/S13acsd.sh ... Starting /etc/rc.d/S20voip.sh ... Starting /etc/rc.d/S60ipsec.sh ... Starting /etc/rc.d/S70vpn.sh ... Starting /etc/rc.d/S94printkd.sh ...

> Searching «Epicentro Software» on Internet gives the ODM (Original Design Manufacturer): ADB www.adbglobal.com



- Processor ARMv7 Cortex-A9 Multicore
- 256Mb NAND Flash
- Linux version 3.4.11-rt19 (September 2012)
- uClibc version 0.9.33.2 (May 2012)
- BusyBox version 1.17.3 (October 2010)
- Libgcrypt version 1.4.5 (December 2009)
- Epicentro software by ADB (adbglobal.com)

QEMU Emulation



• Choosing Board and CPU emulation in QEMU

\$ qemu-system-arm -M help|egrep Cortex-A9 realview-pbx-a9 ARM RealView Platform for Cortex-A9 vexpress-a9 ARM Versatile Express for Cortex-A9 xilinx-zynq-a9 Xilinx Zynq Platform for Cortex-A9

\$ qemu-system-arm -M vexpress-a9 -cpu help

cortex-a9

• • •

Choosing a Build System



• The Yocto Project

very powerful, builds a root file system and create a custom Linux distribution. It's main drawback is that it has a steep learning curve

Buildroot

builds the root file system and the kernel, easy and fast to learn, very good user manual

Openwrt/LEDE Build System

tailored to build a replacement router firmware, documentation scattered in the web site, requires more time to learn compared to Buildroot

Choosing a Buildroot version

UINUX LAB BUILDING SMARTER DEVICES

- Based on uClibc 0.9.33.2
- Gnu libgcrypt crypto library compatible with version 1.5 (with library file: libgcrypt.so.11)
- With custom kernel version 3.4.1-rt19
- Other libraries with compatible versions
- The version to use is: buildroot-2014.02
- This version doesn't run on Ubuntu 16.04 or Ubuntu 18.04
- Use Debian Wheezy (released in 2013) in a docker Container

The Dockerfile



• The Dockerfile builds a minimal Debian Wheezy container to run Buildroot

FROM debian:wheezy

```
...
RUN apt-get update
RUN apt-get upgrade
RUN apt-get install -y -q \
    bash \
...
RUN mkdir -p /src/misc
ADD startup.sh /src/misc/startup.sh
RUN chmod a+x /src/misc/startup.sh
ENTRYPOINT cd /src/misc ; ./startup.sh
```

• Available at: https://github.com/digiampietro/buildroot-armv7

The Docker run command



 The Docker run maps user and user's home directory in the Docker Container

docker	run	-h BRHOST	
		rm \	
		-v /tmp/.X11-unix:/tmp/.X11-unix 🕔	
		-v \$HOME:\$HOME	
		-e DISPLAY=\$GDISPLAY	
		-e GUSERNAME=\$GUSERNAME	
		-e GUID=\$GUID	
		-e GGROUP=\$GGROUP	
		-e GGID=\$GGID	
		-e GHOME=\$GHOME	
		-e GSHELL=\$SHELL \	
		-e GRUNXTERM=\$GRUNXTERM	
		-e GPWD=\$GPWD	
		-it digiampietro/buildroot-armv7	

Docker run in action



```
valerio@ubuntu-hp:~$ ls -ld br
drwxrwxr-x 6 valerio valerio 4096 ott 26 22:30 br
valerio@ubuntu-hp:~$ grep VERSION /etc/os-release
VERSION="18.04.1 LTS (Bionic Beaver)"
VERSION_ID="18.04"
VERSION_ID="18.04"
VERSION_CODENAME=bionic
valerio@ubuntu-hp:~$ br/..../docker/dockrun.sh
```

valerio@BRHOST:~\$ ls -ld br drwxrwxr-x 6 valerio valerio 4096 Oct 26 20:30 br

valerio@BRHOST:~\$ grep VERSION /etc/os-release
VERSION ID="7"

```
VERSION="7 (wheezy)"
```

Buildroot configuration



- Based on "*qemu_arm_vexpress_defconfig*"
- With the following main modifications
 - Build packages and libraries with debugging symbols, don't strip binaries, no gcc optimization
 - Build gdb, gdbserver, ltrace, strace and cross gdb for the host
 - Include mtd and jffs2 file system and tools also for the host
 - Include main libraries used in the router
 (libgcrypt, expat, roxml, libxml2, Mini-XML)

Linux kernel configuration



- With the following additional settings
 - Versatile Express platform type with Device Tree support
 - Preemptible Kernel
 - NAND Device Support and Support for NAND
 Flash Simulator
 - JFFS2 file system with LZMA compression

uClibc configuration

- **LINUX LAB** BUILDING SMARTER DEVICES
- Minor modifications to be compatible with the router's binaries (like native POSIX threading etc.)
- To include debugging symbols, uClibc don't obey to the general option included in the Buildroot configuration, has his own flag for this purpose; the problem is that enabling his own flag the compilation gives impossible to fix errors
- in Compiler Warnings add the string "-ggdb", this is the work around to compile the uClibc with debugging symbols



The upgrade process



• Analyzing the upgrade process on the UART output (2 of 2)

```
Installing packages...
```

```
opkg ... -f /tmp/new_rootfs/etc/opkg.conf -o
/tmp/new_rootfs install ...
Umount /tmp/new_rootfs
...
Writing first block of cferam...
dd if=/tmp/upgrade/fw.bin bs=256 skip=2 count=512 |
/usr/sbin/nandwrite /dev/mtd8 -
```

```
···
rebooting...
```

The upgrade process - summary

- The upgrade script to analyze is /usr/sbin/upgrade.sh
- The firmware is signed, signature is checked with sig_verify \$file 2> /dev/null
- Boot and root file systems are written in a single nandwrite operation
- A JFFS2 partition splitter proprietary kernel module is used to create the two partitions on the fly
- A JFFS2 end marker open source kernel module is used to delimit the end of the root file system partition
- Some additional packages are added, based on board type
- The cferam boot loader is written with another nandwrite operation

Reverse engineering sig_verify



sig_verify is a stripped binary, but calls library functions. We put breakpoints on these calls in the emulation environment

\$ arm-linux-readelfsym -D sig_verify									
Symbol table for image:									
Num	Buc:	Value Si	ze	Туре	Bind	Vis	Ndx	Name	
16	0:	00008928	0	FUNC	GLOBAL	DEFAULT	UND	fseek	
29	1:	00008994	0	FUNC	GLOBAL	DEFAULT	UND	strcmp	
40	3:	000089dc	0	FUNC	GLOBAL	DEFAULT	UND	gcry_md_	_ctl
38	11:	000089d0	0	FUNC	GLOBAL	DEFAULT	UND	fputs	
23	14:	00008964	0	FUNC	GLOBAL	DEFAULT	UND	fread	
1	15:	00008898	0	FUNC	GLOBAL	DEFAULT	UND	printf	
44	16:	00008a0c	0	FUNC	GLOBAL	DEFAULT	UND	gcry_md_	_get_algo
41	16:	000089e8	0	FUNC	GLOBAL	DEFAULT	UND	close	
9	17:	000088e0	0	FUNC	GLOBAL	DEFAULT	UND	lseek	
7	19:	000088c8	0	FUNC	GLOBAL	DEFAULT	UND	gcry_md_	open
6	19:	000088bc	0	FUNC	GLOBAL	DEFAULT	UND	gcry_md_	write
3	20:	000088a4	0	FUNC	GLOBAL	DEFAULT	UND	gcry_che	eck_version
• • •									

Running sig_verify in GDB



Start gdb server in the emulation environment

gdbserver :9000 sig_verify --readonly \
 DVA-5592_A1_WI_20180405.sig

Start gdb in the host machine

\$ arm-linux-gdb --ex="target remote :9000" \
 --ex="set sysroot \$SYSROOT"\
 --ex="directory \$MYDIR" \
 --ex="directory \$TOOLBIN" \
 -x sv.gdb

Running sig_verify in GDB



- Reads the last 256 bytes from the file (signature)
- Calls gcry_md_open,gcry_md_write, gcry_md_ctl to calculate SHA1 checksum
- Calls gcry_sexp_build 3 times to build the 3 s-expressions and then gcry_pk_verify to verify the signature with the following parameters
 - SHA1 message digest
 - Signature (the firmware file last 256 bytes)
 - The public key (embedded in the file)

Running sig_verify in GDB



- The public key (MPI modulus and exponent) can be dumped from memory to recover the public key in the standard .pem format
- Unfortunately the private key remains unknown, it is not included in router's certificates files in the folder /etc/certs

Restricted shell



- Firmware modification through the upgrade process seems impossible
- The router allows telnet/ssh but present a Cisco-like restricted shell

```
$ telnet 192.168.1.1
Connected to 192.168.1.1.
Escape character is '^]'.
Login: admin
Password:
                * * * * * * * * * * *
                 D-Link
*
                                          *
      WARNING: Authorised Access Only
*
            Welcome
DLINK#
```

Escaping the restricted shell



- /etc/shells suggests that the restricted shell is a Clish (or Klish), open source, shell
- /bin/clish is a script:

#!/bin/sh

• • •

exec /bin/clish.elf -l -x /tmp/clish

• In /etc/init.d/services.sh:

#in factory mode
ln -s /etc/clish/prod /tmp/clish
#in normal mode
ln -s /etc/clish /tmp/clash

 clish xml startup files are: /etc/clish/prod/startup.xml /etc/clish/startup.xml

Escaping the restricted shell



• In /etc/clish/startup.xml:

• "factory-mode" is an hidden, not auto-completed command: it is a command to try:

DLINK# factory DLINK(factory)# factory-mode DLINK(factory)# DLINK(factory)# Connection closed by foreign host.

Escaping the restricted shell



 Factory mode is special mode: no normal WiFi, no Internet connection, no DHCP server, but it allows a non privileged shell login:



 $000 \bullet 0$ - Analyze how the device works



• Looking for processes running with root privileges

/roo ⁻	t \$ ps -ef			
PID 1	JSER	VSZ S	STAT (COMMAND
1	0	1184	S	init
261	0	724	S <	/sbin/udevddaemon
274	1001	1328	S	/bin/clish.elf -l -x /tmp/clish
326	0	2332	S	CM
365	0	1800	S	logd
368	0	704	S	ec
2383	0	820	S	dns
2630	0	2480	S	cwmp
2631	0	1204	S	inetd -f
2633	0	736	S	yamp -c /tmp/yamp.conf -p /tmp/
2658	0	664	S	wpspbc
3089	0	2316	S	hostapd -B /tmp/wlan/config/ho…
3090	65534	3560	S	httpd -u nobody
3647	0	1068	S	chronyd -n -f /tmp/chrony.conf
4191	0	696	S	/sbin/rngd -r /dev/urandom -W 4000
4211	0	7136	S	voip
4404	1001	1176	S	/bin/ash

 $000 \bullet 0$ - Analyze how the device works

- **LINUX LAB** BUILDING SMARTER DEVICES
- Identify each process and executable version using "strings" and/or running the executable with parameters "-v -V -version -h -h -help"
- Identify open source executables
- Search the internet for known vulnerabilities for the specific executable version
- Check if the vulnerability is exploitable in the specific IoT device configuration



- If no exploitable vulnerability has found select a process candidate to reverse engineer to find vulnerabilities
- Operating system binaries with no known vulnerabilities are hard to crack
- Lower level binaries (dns, voip ...) are more difficult to crack
- Higher level executables with bigger configuration files are less difficult to crack

- **LINUX LAB** BUILDING SMARTER DEVICES
- The most interesting process is "cm": router configuration with root privileges is done by the "cm" process (add users, configure dhcp server, set ip address etc.)
- "cm" uses shell scripts to carry out his duties
- The "cmclient" command, running as normal user, is used by restricted shell and web interface to talk to the "cm" process to configure the router
- "cmclient" is used, in startup scripts, to configure the "cm" process



– In a startup script there is:

cmclient DOM Device /etc/cm/tr181/dom/

 This loads all the xml file in that directory to configure the cm process, including

/etc/cm/tr181/dom/Management.xml

That has the following snippet

```
<object name="Users.User.{i}."
    access="readOnly"
    minEntries="0"
    maxEntries="unbounded"
    numEntriesParameter="UserNumberOfEntries"
    enableParameter="Enable"
    set="Users.sh"
    add="Users.sh"
    del="Users.sh"
>
```



To trigger an execution of our script:

cmclient DOM Device /tmp/fakeManagement.xml

- It has the following snippet

```
<object name="Users.User.{i}."
    access="readOnly"
    minEntries="0"
    maxEntries="unbounded"
    numEntriesParameter="UserNumberOfEntries"
    enableParameter="Enable"
    set="../../tmp/fakeUsers.sh"
    add="../../tmp/fakeUsers.sh"
    del="../../tmp/fakeUsers.sh"</pre>
```

Trigger the execution of the «fakeUsers.sh» script with

cmclient ADD Device.Users.User



```
/root $ cat > /tmp/hack-script.sh
   do a copy and paste of the script
   press CTRL-D to terminate the copy
/root $ chmod a+x /tmp/hack-script.sh
/root $ /tmp/hack-script.sh
. . .
/root $ su -
BusyBox v1.17.3 (2018-04-11) built-in shell (ash)
Enter 'help' for a list of built-in commands.
r41358.07b1b3a7
yet another solution by Advanced Digital Broadcast SA
root@localhost:~# id
uid=0(root) gid=0(root)
groups=0(root),19(remoteaccess),20(localaccess)
```

Firmware Modification Kit - 1

 Based on firmware upgrade script analysis the firmware file has the following structure:



0000 ● - Create a Firmware Modification Kit

Firmware Modification Kit - 2

- Extract the root file system, modify it
- Create the new root file system image
- Pad the file system image to the same size as the original root file system image (the USB key will be used for additional software)
- Reassemble the firmware file putting together all the pieces, excluding the signature, using the "dd" command
- The unsigned firmware file is ready

Loading the unsigned firmware



- The upgrade script checks the firmware signature: sig_verify \$file 2> /dev/null ret_code=\$?
- As root copy the upgrade script in /tmp
- Modify it:

sig_verify \$file 2> /dev/null
ret_code=0

- Temporary replace it with mount: mount --bind /tmp/upgrade.sh \ /usr/sbin/upgrade.sh
- Do the upgrade through the web interface

○ ○ ○ ○ ● - Create a Firmware Modification Kit

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Summary



- Reverse engineering can be really challenging
- Clearly define the limited scope of your reverse engineering project
- Start gathering information following the easiest path first
- If some information is missing or difficult to get move forward, go back only if absolutely needed
- Search on Internet for known vulnerabilities
- Select to hack processes running as root and with a large attack surface

Useful Links & Documentation



GitHub repositories related to the Home Router Example

- Adbtools2, Tools for hacking ADB Epicentro routers, including firmware modification: <u>https://github.com/digiampietro/adbtools2</u>
- Buildroot-armv7: a set of scripts, configuration files and Buildroot external tree to setup a Qemu emulation environment to run and reverse engineer the Netgear DVA 5592 executables: <u>https://github.com/digiampietro/buildroot-</u> <u>armv7</u>

Reverse engineering and physical disassembly

 Introduction to reverse engineering, Mike Anderson, Embedded Linux Conference 2018, slides and videos:

<u>https://elinux.org/images/c/c5/IntroductionToReverseEngineering_Anderson.pdf</u> <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7v7UaMsgg_c</u>

Recommended Books

- Chris Simmonds Mastering Embedded Linux Programming Second Edition Packt Publishing 2017
- Norman Matloff, Peter Jay Salzman The Art of Debugging with GDB, DDD and Eclipse - NO STARCH PRESS 2008

Useful Links & Documentation



Hardware tools

- Bus Pirate: <u>http://dangerousprototypes.com/docs/Bus_Pirate</u>
- Jtagulator: <u>http://www.grandideastudio.com/jtagulator/</u>
- J-Link debug probes: <u>https://www.segger.com/products/debug-probes/j-link/</u>

JTAG and UART interfaces

Popular pinouts: <u>http://www.jtagtest.com/pinouts/</u>

Software

- Buildroot: https://buildroot.org/
- Putty terminal emulator: <u>https://www.putty.org/</u>
- OpenOCD (Open On-Chip Debugger) provides debugging, in-system programming and boundary-scan testing for embedded target devices: <u>http://openocd.org/</u>
- Wireshark, network protocol analyzer: <u>https://www.wireshark.org/</u>
- Binwalk, firmware analysis tool: <u>https://github.com/ReFirmLabs/binwalk</u>
- Jefferson, JFFS2 filesystem extraction tool: <u>https://github.com/sviehb/jefferson</u>

Question Time



Question Time

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The End



Thank You

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