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- Published: date not stated
- Original: <http://ha.ckers.org/blog/20070604/passing-malicious-php-through-getimagesize/>
- Preserved from: http://ha.ckers.org/blog/20070604/passing-malicious-php-through-getimagesize/ (stored) on 2026-08-09
- Capture timestamp: 20070823102554
- Licence: unknown

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Passing Malicious PHP Through getimagesize()

I traded emails this afternoon with Michael Schramm who brought up an interesting issue where you can inject PHP through image functions that attempt to insure that images are safe by using the getimagesize() function. I'm not sure how often that is used alone, but I'm sure it happens. Here's a snippet from the emails (edited only for readability and to re-link the images):

> Yesterday, I've found out that it's possible to include PHP-code in GIF-files which will still be recognized as a valid image by the PHP-function getimagesize().

If getimagesize() gives a positive Integer for the width, height, and type of the passed file, they just save it on their server with its original filename. Some webmasters are additionally checking the Content-Type of the file given in the HTTP-Header of the upload-request - but everybody knows that this is fakeable.

My basic file was a 8 by 8 pixels GIF-image (renamed to: something.php) which looks like this in a hex-editor: basicgif.jpg If you now insert some php-code into the payload of the image and call getimagesize('something.php'); it will give a valid result - but if you call something.php with a

browser it will say something like “php error: illegal characters in input file” (I think this is because of the null-chars in the header of the image).

So I tried to insert /* in the GIF before the illegal chars to make php ignoring all chars behind this point. After a while I’ve got this file working: finalgif.jpg

This file passes the getimagesize()-function and executes the phpinfo() if called in a browser.

Sure, this issue is only dangerous if an image is only checked by getimagesize() and is saved with its original filename then, but there are many fools out there which do so!

Indeed! I’ve seen a lot of really strange ideas on how to secure uploads, and this is no doubt used in some places. Even still sometimes being able to get PHP into a system, even if it’s not named .php may provide some value if the attacker can execute local files but can’t include them remotely. This is an interesting follow on to yesterday’s post. I bet there is a lot of issues left to uncover with uploads.

This entry was posted on Monday, June 4th, 2007 at 3:08 pm and is filed under Webappsec. You can follow any responses to this entry through the RSS 2.0 feed. You can leave a response, or track back from your own site.
