Story of a weird vulnerability I found on Facebook

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Content

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[[image: Amine Aboud]](https://medium.com/@amineaboud?source=post_page-----fc0875eb5125----------------------)

Amine Aboud

Sep 30 · 4 min read

Hello world!

I have always been interested in the challenge of testing the security of a company like Facebook. With over 2.7 billion monthly active users, it is the biggest social network in the world.

That being said, here's a quick write up on a distinct vulnerability I found and reported recently to Facebook.

[image: Image for post]

The Story

While doing some subdomains enumeration, I found a subdomain which instantly raised my interest : *https://legal.tapprd.thefacebook.com/*

The reason being that servers used for "legal needs" usually contain important data.

I started googling afterwards and found the following endpoint indexed on the search results *https://legal.tapprd.thefacebook.com/tapprd/auth/identity/logout*

& so the hunt began.

[image: Image for post]

While doing some directories enumeration, a strange server behavior caught my attention. I noticed that when I tried to request some specific directories, the server's response was delayed by a few seconds before returning the error : "**403 Forbidden : Access is Denied.**"

[image: Image for post]

The « think outside the box » move

I decided to send 200 http requests (without any payload) targeting *http:// legal.tapprd.thefacebook.com/tapprd/* to stress the server up a little and watch its reaction.

Without expectation, I sent requests with Blurp Intruder using the following options :

Number of threats: 6

Numbers of retries on network failure: 4

Pause before retry (milliseconds): 3000

and... i left my computer for a cold beer.

Little did i know that 30 minutes later i'd be impressed by the results!

By sending multiple simultaneous HTTP requests to */tapprd/*, some requests managed to bypass the 403 permission denied error and got a full directory listing.

After digging further and doing some additional tests, I came with the following conclusion: sending simultaneous HTTP requests to a specific directory can lead to the server leaking its content.

I sent HTTP requests via Blurp (again) and at the same time I opened http://legal.tapprd.thefacebook.com/tapprd/ with Firefox. The 403 error disappeared and I got a beautiful open directory listing:

[image: Image for post]

Watching this open directory listing was for me better than enjoying a beautiful sunset on the beach...

I started navigating through the folders with Firefox and I found an upload directory with some strange XLSX files:

[image: Image for post]

I clicked to check few samples and... BOOM! These documents were uploaded by the legal Facebook team and were containing a lot of internal confidential business and personal informations. I decided to stop my research, prepared a POC video and sent a detailed vulnerability report to Facebook.

Timeline:

July 27, 2020 at 3:43 PM : The vulnerability has been reported and just one hour later, the report was triaged by the Facebook Security Team **July 31, 2020:** The vulnerability has been fixed by the Facebook product team and I confirmed the patch. **August 12, 2020: **Facebook raised a**

conflict with the Responsible Disclosure Policy — I sent more clarifications and details. **August 27, 2020: Got a reply « We have received your comments and will get back to you on this matter once we have finished discussing the case. » **September 21, 2020:** Finally: « Upon further review of your report, we've decided to issue you a bounty award. We appreciate your patience as we worked through the triage process. » **September 28, 2020:** Bounty awarded.

[image: Image for post]

5 Advices to remember:

- Be attentive to small details
- Think outside the box
- A beer is always a great idea
- Once you discover a vulnerability, control your emotions and steps. Make sure to always carefully respect the Disclosure Policy of the Bug Bounty Program you are participating to.
- Even if it's hard and frustrating, be patient... This report took 2 months before getting completely resolved.

[image: Image for post]

*These 2 cocktails have been paid by the Facebook bounty award received * *With love, from Mauritius.*

I hope you enjoyed this article. Stay safe and healthy!

Cheers! Amine Aboud

Twitter: https://twitter.com/amineaboud