Advanced Fuzzing Techniques Toward Large-Scale Vulnerability Discovery

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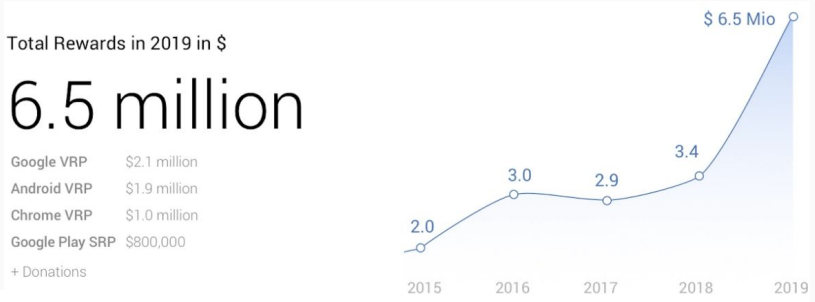
Context (1) More softwares, More bugs

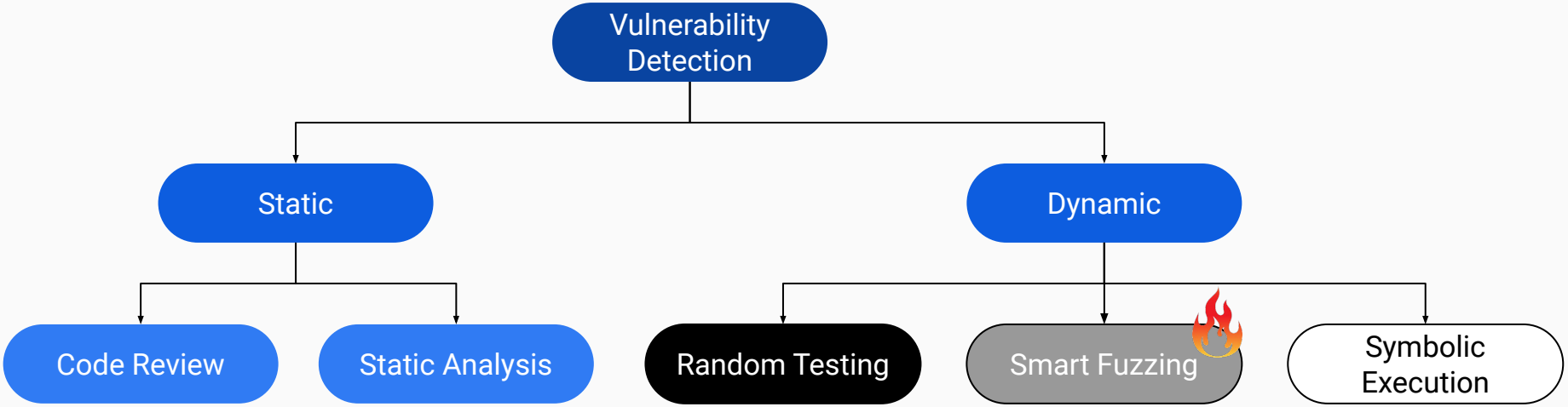
Google has paid security researchers over $21 million for bug bounties, $6.5 million in 2019 alone



Microsoft Paid $13.7M in Bug Bounty Rewards in 2019-2020

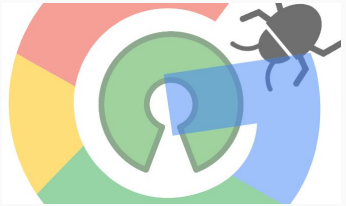
The 2019-2020 program year awarded 327 security researchers through 15 bounty programs, with a largest reward of $200,000.

Context (2) More bugs, More bug-finding tools



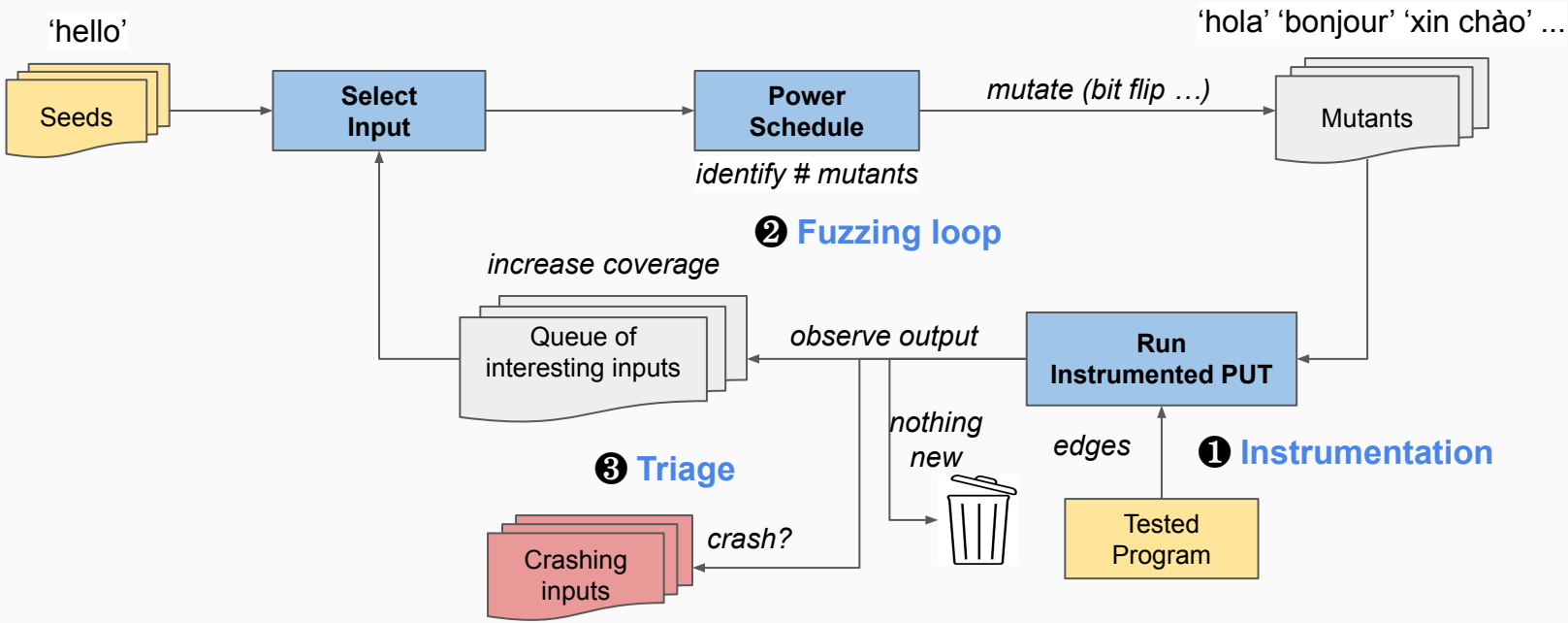
September 15, 2020

Microsoft announces new Project OneFuzz framework, an open source developer tool to find and fix bugs at scale



Fuzzing 101

- Fuzzing: randomly generate a ton of inputs
  - Feedback: code coverage (e.g., lines, branches)
  - Mutation operators: bitflip, insert/delete/overwrite bytes ...



PhD Topic Smart Fuzzing

Improve internal components

Hybrid fuzzing

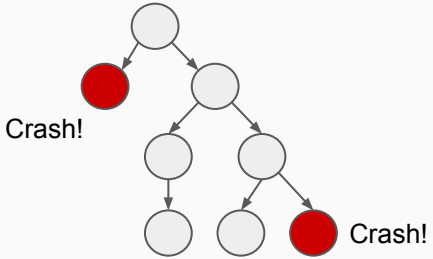
Directed fuzzing

Vulnerability-oriented fuzzing

Human-in-the-loop fuzzing

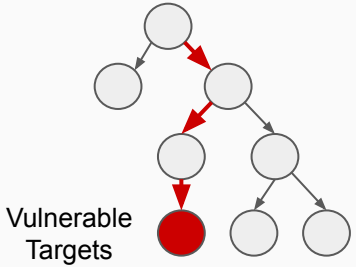
Develop an effective directed fuzzing technique to detect complex vulnerabilities (e.g., Use-After-Free) at binary level in diverse security applications.

Intuition of Directed Fuzzing



Coverage-guided Fuzzing (CGF)

- Increase code coverage (e.g., branches, basic blocks, paths …)
- Applications: testing in general
- Popular fuzzers: AFL, libFuzzer, ...



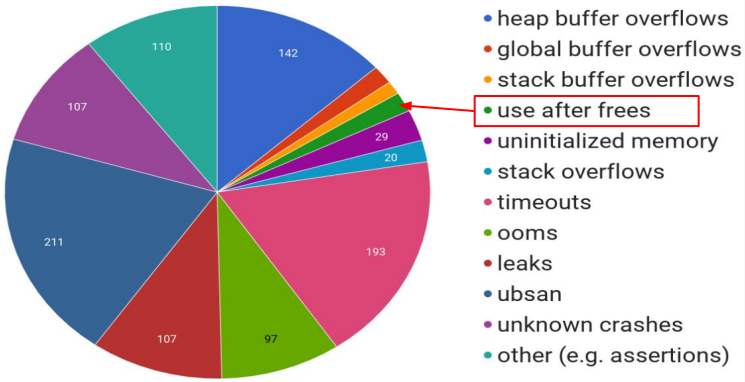
Directed Fuzzing (DGF)

- Reach predefined targets
- Multiple security applications
  - Developers/Testers: bug reproduction, newly-added code testing
  - Hackers/Testers: patch testing
- Popular fuzzers: AFLGo, Hawkeye, …
- New distance-based input metric
- Favor inputs that are "closer" to targets

Use-After-Free (UAF)

- Rarely found by fuzzers
  - *Complexity*: 3 events *in sequence* spanning multiple functions
  - *Temporal & Spatial constraints*: extremely difficult to meet in practice
  - *Silence*: no segmentation fault

```
1 char *buf = (char *) malloc(BUF_SIZE);
2 ...
3 free(buf); // pointer buf becomes dangling
4 ...
5 strncpy(buf, argv[1], BUF_SIZE-1); // Use-After-Free
```



*# UAF bugs found (**1%**) by OSS-Fuzz in 2017*

Memory Corruption

63% of 2019's exploited 0-day vulnerabilities fall under memory corruption, with half of those memory corruption bugs being use-after-free vulnerabilities. Memory corruption and use-after-free's being a common target is nothing new.

Key Insights of UAFuzz

Existing directed fuzzers	UAFuzz
Instrumentation	
• Slow at source level (hours)	• Fast at binary level (seconds)
Fuzzing loop	
• General • Metrics: no ordering • Seed selection: no prioritization	• UAF's characteristics • Metrics: dedicated to UAF at different levels (function, edge and basic block) • Seed selection: similarity and ordering
Triage	
• Sanitizer-based triage process • Triage all inputs → waste time	• Triage only potential inputs • Pre-filter for free

Contributions

- Design the first binary-level DGF technique tailored to UAF bugs
- Develop a toolchain UAFuzz built on top of BINSEC and AFL
  https://github.com/strongcourage/uafuzz
- Construct a fuzzing benchmark for UAF bugs
- Evaluations:
  - Bug Reproduction: outperform existing directed fuzzers
  - Patch Testing: find 30 unknown bugs (7 CVEs) in real-world programs
  - Generality: our directed techniques are still useful in reproducing different types of bugs, such as buffer overflow, NULL pointer dereference …
- Papers & Talks: RAID'20, BlackHat USA'20, RESSI'20 & AFADL'20

Thank You