

Hackers Earn Over \$1 Million at Pwn2Own Exploit Contest

Security researchers participating in this year's Pwn2Own software exploitation contest banked more than \$1 million in prizes over three days, organizers announced over the weekend.

The highest reward on the first day of the contest was earned for a TOCTOU (time-of-check to time-of-use) race condition exploit used to take full control of a Tesla vehicle. Researchers at French offensive security firm Synacktiv pocketed a \$100,000 cash prize and ownership of a Tesla Model 3 car.

On the same day, a two-bug chain against Microsoft SharePoint was awarded a \$100,000 prize and a six-bug logic chain targeting Adobe Reader earned hackers a \$50,000 prize.

Vulnerabilities in Oracle VirtualBox (\$40,000), Apple macOS (\$40,000), Windows 11 (\$30,000), and Ubuntu (two bugs, two \$30,000 prizes) were also rewarded.

The first day of the contest ended with 12 zero-days being disclosed and \$375,000 in cash and a car awarded in prizes.

The highest prize of the second day (\$150,000) was once again earned for a Tesla hack, once again by the Synacktiv team. The exploit qualified for a Tier 2 award and the team earned \$250,000.

Synacktiv emerged as the winner of Pwn2Own Vancouver 2023, earning a total of \$530,000 and a car over the course of the three-day event.

VirtualBox was hacked twice on the second day of the

competition, for \$80,000 and \$40,000 prizes, respectively. Microsoft Teams (\$75,000) and Ubuntu (\$30,000) were also hacked.

The second day ended with \$475,000 awarded for 10 unique zero-days.

The STAR Labs team earned the highest prizes on the third day of the competition, one for a VMware Workstation exploit (\$80,000) and another for a Microsoft Teams exploit (\$75,000).

On the same day, three prizes of \$30,000 were earned for Ubuntu hacks and another one for a Windows 11 exploit.

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