

Windows Citadel Breach: Artifact Alchemy Tests Global Forensic Response in CEH Compete October Challenge

TAMPA, FL, UNITED STATES, November 7, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- EC-Council, inventor of the world-renowned [Certified Ethical Hacker \(CEH\)](#) certification, has announced the conclusion of the October 2025 [CEH Compete](#) challenge, Windows Citadel Breach: Artifact Alchemy. The month's competition placed ethical hackers worldwide into a simulated [forensic investigation](#) that reflected the realities of modern cyber incidents. □

The October challenge began with a user reporting suspicious workstation activity following the opening of an email attachment. While automated defenses detected indicators of malware, the simulation required participants to go further, conducting a comprehensive forensic analysis. Objectives included identifying the initial infection vector, reconstructing the full attack timeline, uncovering persistence mechanisms, and exposing Command-and-Control (C2) communications. □

This month's exercise highlighted the limitations of automated alerts in enterprise defense. Competitors were expected to examine log files, inspect binary artifacts, analyze volatile memory, and reverse engineer malicious code. Success required the ability to transform fragmented data into a coherent picture of the adversary's tactics, techniques, and procedures. □

EC-Council

Building A Culture Of Security



WINDOWS CITADEL BREACH: ARTIFACT ALCHEMY

USERNAME	TRAINING CENTER	RANK
 Pavel Krejci	EC-Council	1
 Mircea Gaitan	EC-Council	2
 Ying Klat Pang	Wissen International	3
 Andre Lanzarini	Alapti	4
 Michael Gleißner	EC-Council	5
 Christiaan Richter	EC-Council	6
 Ahmed Belaih	EC-Council	7
 Naman Kumar	EC-Council	8
 Muhammad Haiqal Huzaini	Wissen International	9
 Denny Wuelknitz	New Horizons Hamburg GmbH	10

www.eccouncil.org/ceh

Leaderboard of the October 2025 CEH Compete Challenge

Persistence analysis was a defining element of the October mission. Participants were required to detect footholds hidden within registries and startup configurations, demonstrating how attackers sustain access despite restarts and monitoring. By dismantling these mechanisms, the challenge underscored the critical importance of persistence detection in real-world incident response.

The Windows Citadel Breach simulation reinforced the continuing threat of phishing as one of the most exploited enterprise vulnerabilities. A single attachment initiated a chain of compromise that expanded into multi-stage intrusion activity. Competitors who progressed through the mission reconstructed the attacker's operations in detail, providing remediation recommendations that reflected professional standards of incident response.

The October CEH Compete challenge concluded with the successful mapping of the infection chain and identification of C2 infrastructure. Participants who completed the mission demonstrated advanced forensic and analytical skills essential for modern defenders.

EC-Council extends sincere congratulations to its Accredited Training Centers: Wissen International in Singapore, Alapti in Brazil and New Horizons Hamburg GmbH in Germany. These centers have consistently delivered exceptional C|EH training, guiding their students to excel and secure positions within the top ten ranks on the esteemed C|EH Global Challenge Leaderboard.

For more information about CEH Compete and future opportunities, visit <https://www.eccouncil.org/train-certify/certified-ethical-hacker-ceh-compete/>

About EC-Council

EC-Council is the creator of the Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH) program and a leader in cybersecurity education. Founded in 2001, EC-Council's mission is to provide highquality training and certifications for cybersecurity professionals to keep organizations safe from cyber threats. EC-Council offers over 200 certifications and degrees in various cybersecurity domains, including forensics, security analysis, threat intelligence, and information security.

An ISO/IEC 17024 accredited organization, EC-Council has certified over 350,000 professionals worldwide, with clients ranging from government agencies to Fortune 100 companies. EC-Council is the gold standard in cybersecurity certification, trusted by the U.S. Department of Defense, the Army, Navy, Air Force, and leading global corporations.

For more information, visit: www.eccouncil.org

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