

Creation and implementation of the Intruders module for security improvement from logs files generated in systems developed in Yii2 Framework

Jonathan De La Cruz Álvarez, José Ángel Jesús Magaña, José Manuel Gómez Zea,
José Ney Garrido Vázquez, José Alejandro Hernández Cadena

National Technological Institute of Mexico / Technological Institute of Villahermosa. Systems and Computing Department. Highway Villahermosa - Frontera Km. 3,5 Ciudad Industrial Villahermosa, Tabasco, Mexico. C.P. 86010.

Abstract

Each time computer attackers are looking for how to get hold of the valuable information that companies' web systems have; Today, this has become a laborious task for administrators. Due to the above, it is necessary that these systems not only prevent attacks, but also have mechanisms for identifying and stopping intruders.

In this article, we will have the opportunity to learn about the "Intruders" module, created based on the data obtained from the use of logging in systems developed in Yii2 Framework, the information generated by this framework is a primary source in the error analysis and stopping processes, as well as user behavior.

Keywords: Logs, Yii, Logging, Vulnerabilities.

1. INTRODUCTION

“The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for more security in the digital world. People have increased their online presence to maintain personal and professional relationships, while cybercriminals have taken advantage of this situation...” (ENISA)

Faced with such a situation, all systems are under constant attack by intruders, locally or remotely; Therefore, their security not only lies in prevention but also in identification, the less time has passed since the intrusion identification, the less damage will be; To achieve this, it is important to constantly monitor the system.

“Web systems are in the focus of cybercriminals. For the detection of these attacks, log file analysis is often preferred, as anomalies in user requests and related server responses could be clearly identified. Two main reasons for this preference are that log files are readily available, and there is no need for expensive hardware for analysis, although server log files are an alternative source of identification for website attacks that are not being exploited.” (Chinguel-Tineo, Arcila-Diaz, Tuesta-Monteza, & Mejia-Cabrera, 2018)

There are several types of log files that have different functions, among the main ones are:

- Help solve errors.
- Early stopping of system abuses.
- Show us the traceability of the records (What? Who? When? Through what means?).

This article proposes the use of the "Intruders" module, which uses the information generated by the logging in systems developed with Yii2 Framework, to identify and stop intruders, as well as to view user income statistics.

2. RECORD OF ANNOTATIONS

Yii2 Framework, according to the official website of the framework tells us that “Yii is a generic web programming framework, which means that it can be used to develop all kinds of web applications in PHP. Due to its component-based architecture and sophisticated cache support, it is especially suitable for the development of large applications, such as web pages, forums, content management systems (CMS), e-commerce projects, compatible web services. REST architecture and many more. ” (yiiframework)

Yii2 is a framework, which includes among its main characteristics the use of the MVC architecture pattern, from this pattern we can highlight:

- a) “Allow substitution of user interfaces.
- b) Generate components of the interfaces.
- c) Design simultaneous views of the same model.
- d) Easily apply changes to the interfaces.” (Camarena Sagredo, Trueba Espinosa, Martínez Reyes, & López García, 2012)

“Yii2 provides us with a powerful framework dedicated to logging that is highly customizable and extensible. Using this framework, you can easily save annotations (logs) of various types of messages, filter them, and unify them in different destinations that can be files, databases or emails. ” (yiiframework)

The information obtained from the log is processed in 2 ways:

- Insertion of the main data collected in a MySQL table.
- Creation of the logs files, which are physical files, saved in the / runtime / logs folder, in our project.

“A log file (commonly known as Log file) arises from the need, on the part of the administrator, to maintain control over the system and can be defined as a file in which all the activity carried out by a system during a specific period of time. Therefore, it allows us to know information about What? - Who? - When? - Where? - How? - Why?” of a certain event. ” (Mateos Mohino, 2017)

The log files generated by the log file have the following format:

```
2014-10-04 18:10:15 [::1][-][trace][yii\base\Module::getModule] Loading module: debug
Timestamp [IP address][User ID][Session ID][Severity Level][Category] Message Text
```

Figure 1. Yiiframework, 2020, Message Formatting [Image]. Recover from <https://www.yiiframework.com/doc/guide/2.0/en/runtime-logging>

The "Intruders" module takes as a base the information processed from the log; It is divided into three sub-modules that are responsible for identifying:

- i. The number of users who successfully log in.
- ii. The IPs that are trying to look for some type of computer vulnerability or security hole typical of web applications.
- iii. Isolated errors that can be corrected in a timely manner.

3. LOG PROCESSING

The module was created and saved as a repository available online for any user, downloadable through the package manager for PHP Composer (Figure 2).

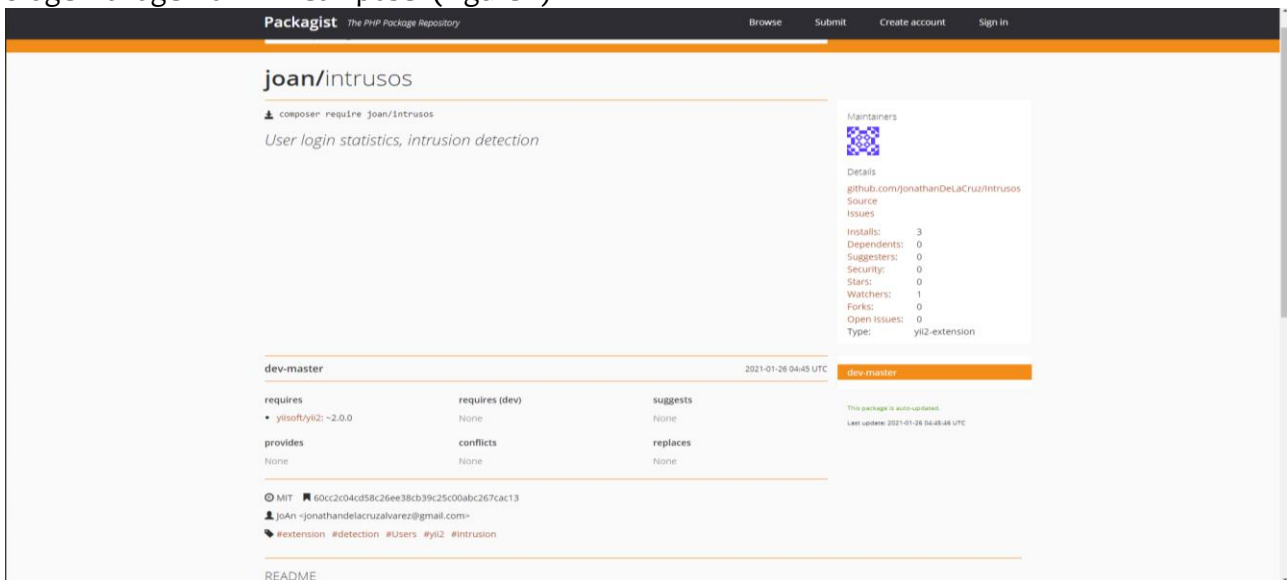


Figure 2. Packagist, 2020, joan/intruders [Image]. Recover from <https://packagist.org/packages/joan/intrusos>

The "Intruders" module processes the log files in real time. By obtaining the data provided by the log records, the security of the system is controlled and improved in a positive and efficient way. For the commissioning of the module, the following stages were required:

- 1.- The framework configurations are made in the /config/web.php file (figure 3), which allow the saving of the most important and necessary information to identify the IPs that are trying to search for vulnerabilities; Through the record destination we save the data in the structure of a MySQL table, see figure 4.






```
return [
    // el componente log tiene que cargarse durante el proceso de bootstrapping
    'bootstrap' => ['log'],

    'components' => [
        'log' => [
            'targets' => [
                [
                    'class' => 'yii\log\DbTarget',
                    'levels' => ['error', 'warning'],
                ],
                [
                    'class' => 'yii\log\EmailTarget',
                    'levels' => ['error'],
                    'categories' => ['yii\db*'],
                    'message' => [
                        'from' => ['log@example.com'],
                        'to' => ['admin@example.com', 'developer@example.com'],
                        'subject' => 'Database errors at example.com',
                    ],
                ],
            ],
        ],
    ],
];
```

Figure 3. yiiframework, 2020, Log Targets [Image]. Recover from <https://www.yiiframework.com/doc/guide/2.0/en/runtime-logging>

Name	Type	Length	Dec	Not	
fai_id	int	11	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1
fai_ip	varchar	15	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
fai_info	text	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	
fai_query	text	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
fai_fecha	datetime	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
fai_status	smallint	2	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
fai_mx	tinyint	1	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Figure 4. Own elaboration, 2020, Description of MySQL table [Image].

2.- With the data stored in the table, the first sub-module is built, dedicated to preventing malicious attacks from unknown users. An algorithm dedicated to identifying users who tried to enter different suspicious routes was developed and, with more interest, when the IP is not from the interior of Mexico, said IP is blocked and thus access to the system is denied (figure 5). The system provides the administration of the detected IPs, the administrator can review the detailed location information and other data that an IP can provide us. Among the allowed options:  Delete,  give an opportunity in case we notice that it was not the intention of the user,  block,  give recursive opportunities to test parts of the system and  hide the registry.

Mostrando 1-3 de 3 elementos.

IP	Información	Query	Fecha	Status
167.172.78.207	Dirección IP 167.172.78.207 CURP Sin CURP Nombre Sin Nombre Instituto No existe Organización DigitalOcean, LLC Ciudad Singapore Región Singapore Pais Singapore Localización Latitud: 1.32123 Longitud: 103.695	q=/vendor/phpunit/phpunit/src/Util/PHP/eval-stub.php	2020-11-02 13:57:15	Bloqueado
37.242.2.36	Dirección IP 37.242.2.36 CURP Sin CURP Nombre Sin Nombre Instituto No existe Organización Ciudad Riyadh Región Riyadh Region Pais Saudi Arabia Localización Latitud: 24.6877 Longitud: 46.7219	q=/tmul/login.jsp/ /tmul/localib/workspace/fileRead.jsp&fileName=/etc/passwd	2020-11-02 13:20:01	Bloqueado
45.156.26.228	Dirección IP 45.156.26.228 CURP Sin CURP Nombre Sin Nombre Instituto No existe Organización Ciudad Moscow Región Moscow Pais Russia Localización Latitud: 55.6526 Longitud: 37.5276	q=/api/somvs/invoke	2020-11-02 06:44:38	Bloqueado

Figure 5. Own elaboration, 2020, Intruder administration submodule [Image].

3.- By default, the logs files include the values of the following PHP global variables: \$_GET, \$_POST, \$_FILES, \$_COOKIE, \$_SESSION and \$_SERVER, this information is of great importance. Many of these variables provide data that helps us detect attacks. The log file viewer submodule, which displays the files generated by the log records on the screen, is configured to highlight the following important variables:

```

65 2020-12-05 17:29:06 [xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx][-][-][error][yii\web\HttpException:404] yii\base\InvalidRouteException: Unable to resolve
the request "dns-query". in /srv/www/site/public_html/site/vendor/yiisoft/yii2/base/Module.php:537
66 Stack trace:
66 #0 /srv/www/site/public_html/site/vendor/yiisoft/yii2/web/Application.php(183): yii\base\Module->runAction('dns-query', Array)
67 #1 /srv/www/site/public_html/site/vendor/yiisoft/yii2/base/Application.php(386): yii\web\Application->handleRequest(Object(yii\web\Request))
68 #2 /srv/www/site/public_html/site/web/index.php(71): yii\base\Application->run()
69 #3 {main}
70
71 Next yii\web\NotFoundHttpException: Page not found. in /srv/www/site/public_html/site/vendor/yiisoft/yii2/web/Application.php:115
72 Stack trace:
72 #0 /srv/www/site/public_html/site/vendor/yiisoft/yii2/base/Application.php(386): yii\web\Application->handleRequest(Object(yii\web\Request))
73 #1 /srv/www/site/public_html/site/web/index.php(71): yii\base\Application->run()
74 #2 {main}
75 #3 {main}
76
77 2020-12-05 17:29:06 [xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx][-][-][info][application] $_GET = [
78   'q' => '/dns-query'
79 ]
80
81 $_SERVER = [
81   'USER' => 'nginx'
82   'HOME' => '/var/lib/nginx'
83   'HTTP_CONNECTION' => 'close'
84   'HTTP_CONTENT_TYPE' => 'application/dns-message'
85   'HTTP_ACCEPT' => 'application/dns-message'
86   'HTTP_USER_AGENT' => 'Python-urllib/3.7'
87   'HTTP_HOST' => 'site.com'
88   'HTTP_CONTENT_LENGTH' => '35'
89   'HTTP_ACCEPT_ENCODING' => 'identity'
90   'SCRIPT_FILENAME' => '/srv/www/site/public_html/site/web/index.php'
91   'REDIRECT_STATUS' => '200'
92   'SERVER_NAME' => 'site.com'
93   'SERVER_PORT' => '443'
94   'SERVER_ADDR' => 'xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx'
95   'REMOTE_PORT' => '46117'
96   'REMOTE_ADDR' => 'xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx'
97   'SERVER_SOFTWARE' => 'nginx/1.16.1'
98   'GATEWAY_INTERFACE' => 'CGI/1.1'
99   'HTTPS' => 'on'
100  'REQUEST_SCHEME' => 'https'
101  'SERVER_PROTOCOL' => 'HTTP/1.1'
102  'DOCUMENT_ROOT' => '/srv/www/site/public_html/site/web'
103  'DOCUMENT_URI' => '/index.php'
104  'REQUEST_URI' => '/dns-query'
105  'SCRIPT_NAME' => '/index.php'
106  'CONTENT_LENGTH' => '35'
107  'CONTENT_TYPE' => 'application/dns-message'
108  'REQUEST_METHOD' => 'POST'
109  'QUERY_STRING' => 'q=/dns-query'
110  'FCGI_ROLE' => 'RESPONDER'
111  'PHP_SELF' => '/index.php'
112  'REQUEST_TIME_FLOAT' => 1607218946.5943
113  'REQUEST_TIME' => 1607218946
114 ]
66 2020-12-05 17:29:06 [xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx][-][-][error][yii\web\HttpException:404] yii\base\InvalidRouteException: Unable to resolve
the request "dns-query". in /srv/www/site/public_html/site/vendor/yiisoft/yii2/base/Module.php:537
    
```

Figure 6. Own elaboration, 2020, Sub-module reading logs files [Image].

- The query string that is sent by the GET method to the system.
- The source IP address from which the user is viewing the system ('REMOTE_ADDR').
- Address of the source page (if any) used by the user agent for system query ('HTTP_REFERER').
- The string that indicates the user agent used to access the system ('HTTP_USER_AGENT').
- If it exists, the system query string ('QUERY_STRING').

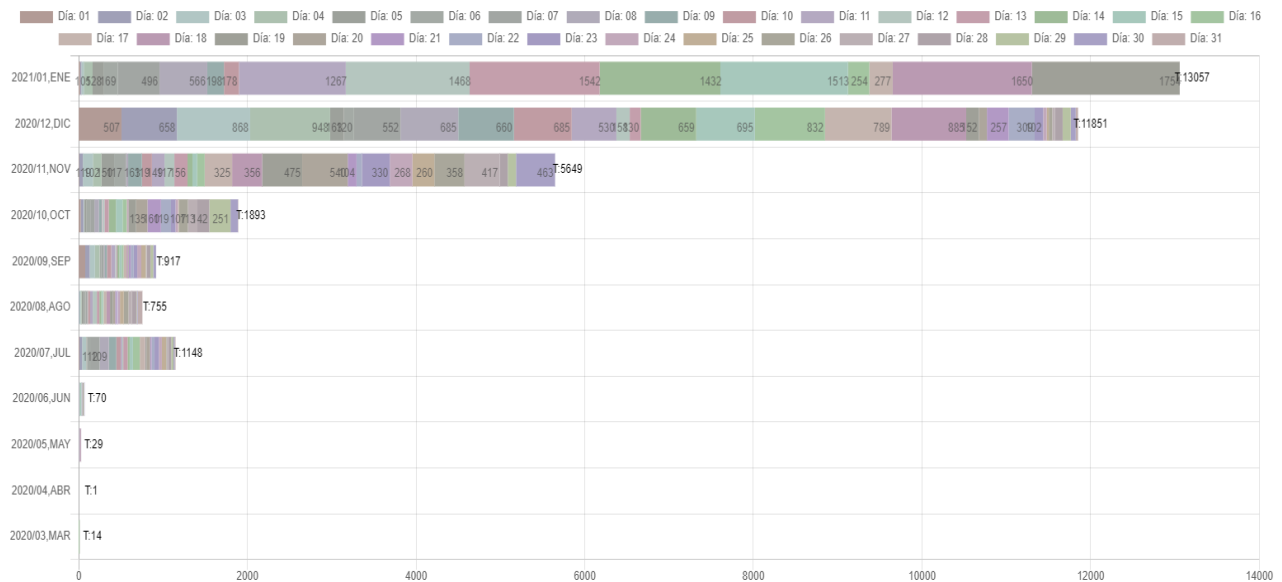


Figure 7. Own elaboration, 2021, Successful visits per month [Image].

4.- The third sub-module in charge of visualizing the successful entry of users, so that we can see how the system is being visited and used more frequently since its launch, generating graphs for hours, days, weeks, fortnights, months and years. See figure 7 and 9.

The “Intruders” module allows the system to carry out additional control over security, controlling unwanted visiting users and verifying the statistics of authorized use.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the information that the Yii2 framework annotations record offers us is very useful for early stopping of attack attempts and thus reducing them, correcting errors and displaying successful logins to the system.

The intruder module provides us with three sub-modules:

- Intruder management: In charge of verifying if users are really attackers, since many times they are errors caused by wrong typing, access tests from other systems, etc., thus allowing the ease of unlocking, deleting, giving another chance, hide or give recursion to user access.
- Log file viewer: Highlights the most important data in the log file, which is plain text; allows us to save the log file in a separate folder and, thanks to this, a new file is generated so as not to have all the information in just one; All of this helps to have quick non-physical access to the file, since many times only administrators are allowed access, thus allowing developers or support personnel to review the file and identify errors and / or security problems.
- Statistics: Provides access graphs in time periods (hours, days, weeks, fortnights, months and yearly).

Among the results obtained from the implementation of the "Intruders" module, we can visualize the following behaviors:

- 1.- 70% reduction in errors and attempts to search for vulnerabilities in the system.

Y	IP	Información	Query	Fecha	Status
1	202.100.161.110	Dirección IP: 202.100.161.110 CURIP: Sin CURIP Nombre: Sin Nombre Instituto: No existe Organización: No existe Ciudad: Bandung Región: West Java País: Indonesia Localización: Latitud: -6.9217 Longitud: 107.6071	ip=curipsetting.htm	2020-11-09 23:00:33	Bloqueado
2	191.106.6.62	Dirección IP: 191.106.6.62 CURIP: Sin CURIP Nombre: Sin Nombre Instituto: No existe Organización: Sarnish Kumar Sahu Ciudad: Strasbourg Región: Grand Est País: France Localización: Latitud: 48.6026 Longitud: 7.7644	ip=curip	2020-11-09 22:50:52	Bloqueado
3	61.8.24.6	Dirección IP: 61.8.24.6 CURIP: Sin CURIP Nombre: Sin Nombre Instituto: No existe Organización: No existe Ciudad: Depok Región: West Java País: Indonesia Localización: Latitud: -6.3487 Longitud: 106.5011	ip=curipsetting.htm	2020-11-09 20:40:12	Bloqueado
4	14.101.40.0	Dirección IP: 14.101.40.0 CURIP: Sin CURIP Nombre: Sin Nombre Instituto: No existe Organización: Vietnam Post and Telecom Corporation Ciudad: Ho Chi Minh City Región: Vietnam País: Vietnam Localización: Latitud: 10.8142 Longitud: 106.6488	ip=curipsetting.htm	2020-11-09 20:07:35	Bloqueado
5	192.241.220.144	Dirección IP: 192.241.220.144 CURIP: Sin CURIP Nombre: Sin Nombre Instituto: No existe Organización: Digital Ocean Ciudad: San Francisco Región: California País: United States Localización: Latitud: 37.7353 Longitud: -122.3732	ip=www.cloudflare.com/ips/192.241.220.144	2020-11-09 17:13:28	Bloqueado
6	94.46.16.22	Dirección IP: 94.46.16.22 CURIP: Sin CURIP Nombre: Sin Nombre Instituto: No existe Organización: Anuncias Ciudad: Porto Región: Portugal País: Portugal Localización: Latitud: 41.1578 Longitud: -8.62911	ip=curip	2020-11-09 14:58:15	Bloqueado

Figure 8a. Author's elaboration, 2021, Intruders 2020-11-09 [Image].

IP	Información	Query	Fecha	Status
192.241.194.180	Dirección IP: 192.241.194.180 CUIP: Sin CUIP Nombre: Sin Nombre Instituto: No existe Organización: Digital Ocean Ciudad: San Francisco Región: California País: United States Localización: Latitud: 37.7593 Longitud: -122.3732	2021-01-01 14:00:45 [ip:192.241.194.180]	2021-01-01 14:00:45	Bloqueado
54.178.188.51	Dirección IP: 54.178.188.51 CUIP: Sin CUIP Nombre: Sin Nombre Instituto: No existe Organización: AWS EC2 (us-west-1) Ciudad: San Jose Región: California País: United States Localización: Latitud: 37.3394 Longitud: -121.895	2021-01-01 10:51:12 [ip:54.178.188.51]	2021-01-01 10:51:13	Bloqueado

Figure 8b. Author's elaboration, 2021, Intruders 2021-01-01 [Image].

2.- Positive increase in the use of the system, showing on which days of the week it is most used.

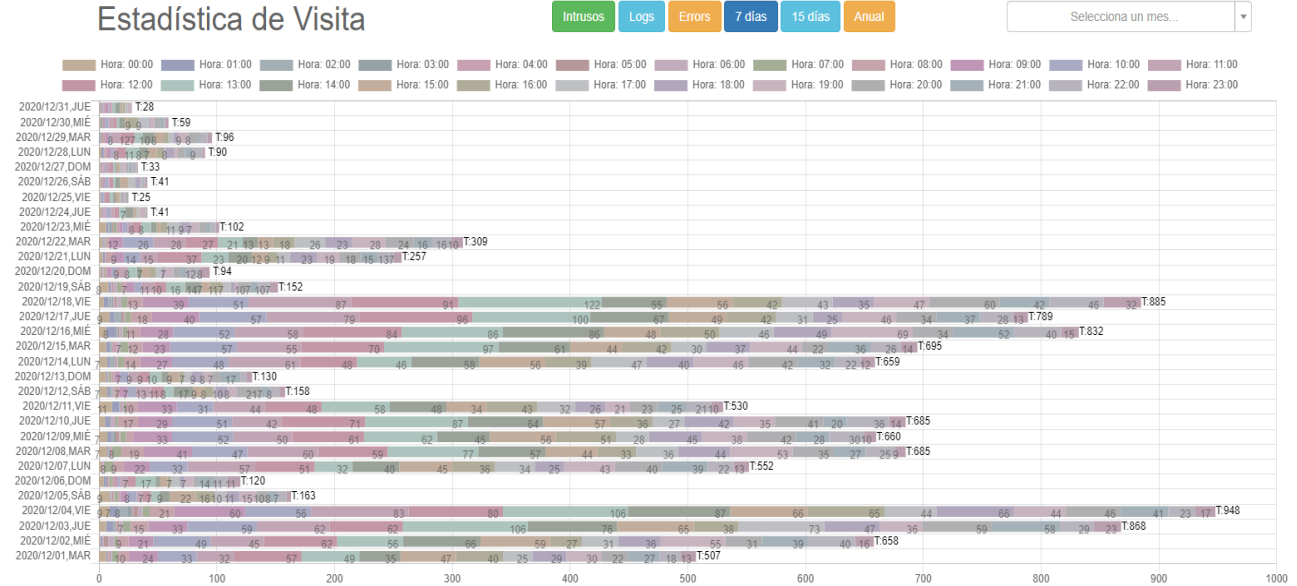


Figure 9a. Author's elaboration, 2021, Successful visits by days of the month of December 2020 [Image].

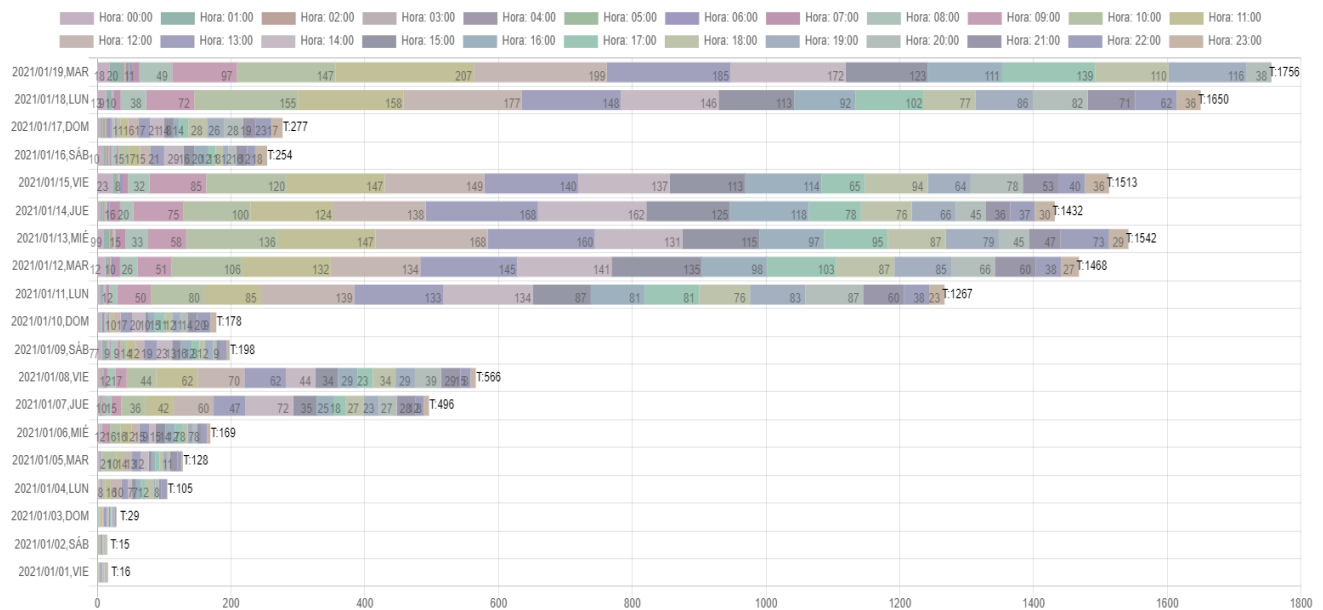


Figure 9b. Author's elaboration, 2021, Successful visits by days of the month of January 2021 [Image].

3.- Detention of 85% of failures in the algorithms of the system that, in a timely manner, solutions were provided. For example, see in figure 10, where the log warns us that an image is missing in a view that, although it is a failure that allows the process to continue, being able to interact with the file allowed us to solve it by placing the image in the correct path to its use.

```

2020-11-30 00:20:21 [xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx][-][-][error][yii\web\HttpException:404] yii\base\InvalidRouteException: Unable to resolve
the request "img/dashboard/logs.png". in /srv/www/site/public_html/site/vendor/yiisoft/yii2/base/Module.php:537

Stack trace:
#0 /srv/www/site/public_html/site/vendor/yiisoft/yii2/web/Application.php(183): yii\base\Module->runAction('img/dashboard/...', Array)
#1 /srv/www/site/public_html/site/vendor/yiisoft/yii2/base/Application.php(386): yii\web\Application->handleRequest(Object(yii\web\Request))
#2 /srv/www/site/public_html/site/web/index.php(71): yii\base\Application->run()
#3 {main}

Next yii\web\NotFoundHttpException: Page not found. in /srv/www/site/public_html/site/vendor/yiisoft/yii2/web/Application.php:115
Stack trace:
#0 /srv/www/site/public_html/site/vendor/yiisoft/yii2/base/Application.php(386): yii\web\Application->handleRequest(Object(yii\web\Request))
#1 /srv/www/site/public_html/site/web/index.php(71): yii\base\Application->run()
#2 {main}

2020-11-30 00:20:21 [xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx][-][-][info][application] $_GET = [
13
14 ]
15
16 $COOKIE = [
17   'gd' => 'Gd1.2.1068746635.1585712438'
18   'grid_page_size' => 'Fa734f982595dc0ce420d25cd040eccfbada19f180b341786e7dcacf0eb59fa2:1:0;s:15:{"grid_page_size":1;};s:2:"20";'
19   'csrf' => '2c4d19036a87ab208041273883205ae8c31829df0847df4526f484c55d461a:2:1:0;s:5:{"csrf":1;};s:32:{"VefpSurVw8kufgUR-6AcNSMduJg0w"};'
20   'PHPSESSID' => 'Fsa109rtalutmpb749krscin'
21 ]
22
23 $SERVER = [
24   'USER' => 'nginx'
25   'HOME' => '/var/lib/nginx'
26   'HTTP_COOKIE' => "gd=Gd1.2.1068746635.1585712438; grid_page_size=Fa734f982595dc0ce420d25cd040eccfbada19f180b341786e7dcacf0eb59fa2:1:0;s:15:{"grid_page_size":1;};s:2:"20";_csrf=2c4d19036a87ab208041273883205ae8c31829df0847df4526f484c55d461a:2:1:0;s:5:{"csrf":1;};s:32:{"VefpSurVw8kufgUR-6AcNSMduJg0w"}; PHPSESSID=Fsa109rtalutmpb749krscin"
27   'HTTP_ACCEPT_LANGUAGE' => 'es-ES,es;q=0.9'
28   'HTTP_ACCEPT_ENCODING' => 'gzip, deflate, br'
29   'HTTP_REFERER' => 'https://site.com/'
30   'HTTP_SEC_FETCH_DEST' => 'image'
31   'HTTP_SEC_FETCH_MODE' => 'no-cors'
32   'HTTP_SEC_FETCH_SITE' => 'same-origin'
33   'HTTP_ACCEPT' => 'image/svg+xml,application/javascript;q=0.8'
34   'HTTP_USER_AGENT' => 'Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; Win64; x64) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/87.0.4280.66 Safari/537.36'
35   'HTTP_SEC_CH-UA-MODEL' => '38'
36   'HTTP_SEC_CH-UA' => '"Google Chrome";v="87", "Not;A=Brand";v="99", "Chromium";v="87"'
37   'HTTP_HOST' => 'site.com'
38   'SCRIPT_FILENAME' => '/srv/www/site/public_html/site/web/index.php'
39   'REDIRECT_STATUS' => '200'
40   'SERVER_NAME' => 'site.com'
41   'SERVER_PORT' => '843'
42   'SERVER_ADDR' => 'xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx'
43   'REMOTE_PORT' => '43052'
44   'REMOTE_ADDR' => 'xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx'
45   'SERVER_SOFTWARE' => 'nginx/1.16.1'
46   'GATEWAY_INTERFACE' => 'CGI/1.1'
47   'HTTPS' => 'on'
48   'REQUEST_SCHEME' => 'https'
49   'SERVER_PROTOCOL' => 'HTTP/2.0'
50   'DOCUMENT_ROOT' => '/srv/www/site/public_html/site/web'
51   'DOCUMENT_URI' => '/index.php'
52   'REQUEST_URI' => '/img/dashboard/logs.png'
53   'SCRIPT_NAME' => '/index.php'
54   'CONTENT_LENGTH' => ''
55   'CONTENT_TYPE' => ''
56   'REQUEST_METHOD' => 'GET'
57   'QUERY_STRING' => 'q=/img/dashboard/logs.png'
58   'FCGI_ROLE' => 'RESPONDER'
59   'PHP_SELF' => '/index.php'
60   'REQUEST_TIME_FLOAT' => 1606717221.3078
61   'REQUEST_TIME' => 1606717221
62 ]
2020-11-30 00:20:21 [xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx][-][-][error][yii\web\HttpException:404] yii\base\InvalidRouteException: Unable to resolve
the request "img/dashboard/logs.png". in /srv/www/site/public_html/site/vendor/yiisoft/yii2/base/Module.php:537
    
```

Figure 10. Author's elaboration, 2020, Error detected [Image].

REFERENCIAS

- [1] Camarena Sagredo, J. G., Trueba Espinosa, A., Martínez Reyes, M., & López García, M. d. (2012). Automatización de la codificación del patrón modelo vista controlador (mvc) en proyectos orientados a la Web. Ciencia Ergo Sum, 239-250.
- [2] Chinguel-Tineo, S. F., Arcila-Díaz, J. C., Tuesta-Monteza, V. A., & Mejía-Cabrera, H. I. (2018). Evaluación de algoritmos SMO, BayesNet y J48 para la identificación de ataques a sitios web utilizando log de servidor. PERSPECTIV@S. Revista de Tecnología e Información, 88-91.
- [3] ENISA. (n.d.). enisa. Retrieved January 18, 2021, from <https://www.enisa.europa.eu/>
- [4] Mateos Mohino, J. C. (2017). LogsAnalyzer: Herramienta para la evaluación en tiempo real de registros log con tecnología Big Data. Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha: Escuela Superior de Informática.
- [5] yiiframework. (n.d.). Retrieved January 1, 2021, from <https://www.yiiframework.com/doc/guide/2.0/en/intro-yii>

Correo electrónico autor: jonathandelacruz Alvarez@gmail.com