Project Evaluation Report

Brodie Herrick

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Accomplished

In a short time, I managed to cobble together an effective Taunet implementation that seems to work perfectly for me. The server/receiver and client/sender programs are both relatively efficient. The interface is prehistoric, but it works. The execution is simple enough that anyone who is comfortable enough to use the terminal can utilize the program.

Effectiveness

The client was certainly the more challenging of the two services to implement, due to it having the do the heavy lifting in the process (not just the sending of message, but the majority of the interfacing with the user as well). Once the two pieces could send/receive plaintext (which didn't take long at all), 80% of the work was done. However, that last 20% seemed to take 80% of the time spent programming. It was certainly more challenging that I had initially assumed it would be. Impressively (at least to me), my client was able to send a 2735 character message (not counting whitespace), so I would be comfortable stating that it had a 2500 character limit.

Learned

Taunet was certainly a valuable learning experience that taught me a new language (Python), how to effectively use network communication (Sockets), how to implement encryption (RC4), and made me a better programmer overall. My initial estimate of the amount of time to implement the program was a huge underestimation and the completion of my final product came down to the wire. Even if it is something that happens all the time, I continue to learn that I should begin working earlier than I initially think I should.

Druthers

If I had more time, I would refine the interface, add more exception handling, maybe update the encryption to a more modern equivalent (ciphersaber is at least 10 years old now, and probably isn't as secure as it once was). I would like to eventually combine the sender/receiver into one executable, but keeping them separate is much easier at this time.

Concerns

In all of my testing, my program works on all of my machines, both on the local network and off. However, while it will connect with everyone else's nodes, it doesn't seem to interact with their data properly, which leads me to believe that something I implemented isn't matching up with the rest of the class. However, being this close to the deadline, it's going to have to ship and be a little bit, eh… unique?