

# **ABLS**

## An Attribute-Based Logging System for the Cloud

User Manual

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## **Abstract**

User-based non-repudiation is an increasingly important property of cloud-based applications. It provides irrefutable evidence that ties system behavior to specific users, which in turn enables the strict enforcement of organizational security policies. System logs, which can be used to construct audit trails, are typically used as the basis for this property. Thus, the effectiveness of system audits based on log files reduces to the problem of maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of log files. This manual covers the usage of ABLS, an attribute-based logging system for the cloud. It covers everything from system deployment strategies, bootstrapping, and user-defined audit schemes. For more technical information about this project, please see the ABLS research paper.

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# Chapter 1

## Bootstrapping

ABLS comes packaged with a set of configuration scripts and SQL files that initialize the database to a clean state. These files are included in the DatabaseModule directory that comes packaged with ABLs, as shown below:

```
ABLS
├── main - main executable
├── LoggerModule
├── PolicyEngineModule
├── AuditModule
├── Common
├── TestModule
└── DatabaseModule
    ├── bootstrap - bash script
    └── bootstrap SQL files
```

In order to configure a new ABLs instance to be run on a server in development mode, one must run the following commands from the root ABLs directory.

```
$> ./DatabaseModule/bootstrap
$> python main.py -c
```

The first bootstrap script will wipe the database files and configure them for use with an ABLs instance. This is the script that should be modified if the user wants to change the physical location of each database server. The second command will tell the main ABLs executable script to “configure” the database with some fake data for testing purposes. As such, this should only be used when configuring ABLs for development tasks.

Once complete, the user should then run the following command from the root ABLs directory to start an ABLs instance on the local host.

```
$> python main.py -s
```

If one wants to deploy an ABLS instance in production mode, they should only run the main executable with the “-s” flag, not the “-c” flag. Also, for convenience, these two flags can be combined during the bootstrapping process, as shown below.

```
$> ./DatabaseModule/bootstrap  
$> python main.py -c -s
```