Sigmajoin: Outsourceable Zerojoin

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Abstract. We present Sigmajoin, a privacy protocol for UTXO-based blockchains. Sigmajoin is an enhancement of Zerojoin, which is also a privacy protocol. Like Zerojoin, our protocol is non-interactive in the sense that Alice does not need to be online when Bob mixes their coins. However, Zerojoin requires a party to be online for remixing. Sigmajoin is even more non-interactive than Zerojoin because once parties add their coins to the pool, they don't need to be online for remixing, which can be carried out by a trustless service. Thus, while our protocol retains all the features of Zerojoin, it additionally provides *outsourceability*. Similar to Zerojoin, our protocol also uses proofs of knowledge of Diffie-Hellman tuples, where we prove equivalence of exponents in two pairs of group elements. The privacy of our protocol also depends on the hardness of the Decisional-Diffie-Hellman (DDH) problem. Like Zerojoin, our protocol can also be implemented using ErgoScript.

1 Introduction

Privacy enhancing techniques in UTXO-based blockchains generally fall into two categories. The first is obscuring the input-output relationships such as in Zerocoin [1], Composite Signatures (CS) [2], CoinJoin [3] and Zerojoin [4]. The second is hiding the amounts being transferred, such as in Confidential Transactions [5]. Some solutions such as Zcash [6,7], Quisquis [8] and MimbleWimble (MW) [9] combine both approaches.

In this work, we describe Sigmajoin, yet another privacy enhancing protocol based on the former approach of obscuring input-output relationships. Our protocol is motivated from Zerojoin [4] to overcome some of its limitations:

1. *Mix more than 2 boxes*: In Zerojoin, we can mix only two boxes at a time and it will be good to have a solution that works for more than 2 boxes
2. *Make it outsourceable*: In Zerojoin, Bob can mix a box of Alice without interaction. However, to remix a full-mix box, one must be online. Requiring participants to be continuously online makes the protocol *non-outsourceable*, and thereby less usable. This is also a problem with CoinJoin [3]. It is preferable to remix a box without the owner's intervention.
3. *Do away with half-mix boxes*: In Zerojoin, we need to create a half-mix box when playing Alice's role for remixing, while Bob's role can be played directly using the full-mix box. Thus, half-mix boxes are 'bloat' [4] and it will be better to directly work with full-mix boxes.

2 Background

2.1 Notation

Let G be a cyclic group of prime order q where the Decisional-Diffie-Hellman (DDH) problem is hard and let g, h, u, v be generators of G. In the following, *proveDlog*(g, u) refers to a zero-knowledge proof of knowledge of discrete logarithm of u to base g and *proveDHTuple*(g, h, u, v) refers to a zero-knowledge proof of equality of the following two discrete logarithms: u to base g and v to base h. The proofs are described in Appendices A and B respectively, and are implemented using *Sigma protocols* [4,10]. For any two sigma protocols σ_1 and σ_2, the symbol σ_2 OR σ_2 refers to the zero-knowledge OR described in Appendix C, that is, a proof of knowledge of one of them without revealing which [10].

2.2 Basic idea

The following describes the high level idea for mixing two boxes at a time. The same idea can be trivially extended to mix three, four, etc boxes.

Zerojoin [4] consists of two types of boxes: a *half-mix* box protected by a script of type *proveDlog*$(*, *)$ and a *full-mix* box having a script of type *proveDlog*$(*, *)$ OR *proveDHTuple*$(*, *, *, *)$. This makes the two boxes incompatible and we cannot remix as Alice without creating a half-mix box first. Note that we can still remix as Bob directly, but that is only possible if there are half-mix boxes available. Additionally, the half-mix box is a kind of "bloat" and it is preferable to operate with full-mix boxes only (called just "mix" boxes).

The idea of Sigmajoin is to start with two boxes having a script of type *proveDlog*$(*, *)$ and have the mix also generate two boxes of type *proveDlog*$(*, *)$. In particular, a mix box has two registers a, b containing elements of G and the owner has to prove the statement: *proveDlog*(a, b). Since we have only one type of box in Sigmajoin, we will have only one type of participant, called Alice.

3 Sigmajoin Protocol

Privacy in Sigmajoin is provided via a pool of coins (boxes). People add coins to the pool and later withdraw them in a manner that hides the links between the entry and exit boxes. A box in the pool, called a *mix-box*, is defined as follows:

- It has two registers labeled a, b containing elements of G.
- It is protected by the *mix-script* given in Section 3.3. One part of the script allows spending the box freely by proving the statement: *proveDlog*(a, b). The other part allows anyone to spend the box only in a restricted manner, that is, if it is used in mixing as per Section 3.2.

The protocol, illustrated in Figure 1, consists of three operations:

1. *Deposit*: Anyone can deposit coins in *fixed* denominations to the pool.

2. *Withdraw*: This allows anyone to withdraw their coins from the pool.
3. *Mix*: Anyone (the "mixer") can spend any two coins from the pool, thereby "mixing" them, and then add them back as two indistinguishable coins that preserve the original owners. The mixer need not be the owner of one of the inputs. A box is mixed several times before it is finally withdrawn.

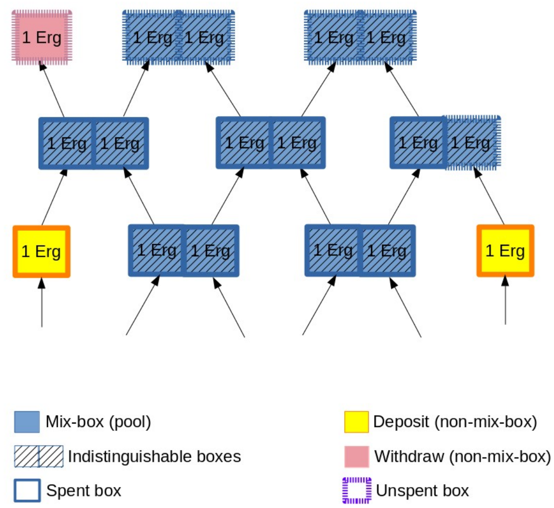

Fig. 1: Sigmajoin protocol

3.1 Deposit and Withdraw

Let g be a fixed generator of G. To deposit a box to the pool, Alice selects secret $x \xleftarrow{R} \mathbb{Z}_q$ and creates a box protected by the mix-script with registers (a, b) containing (g, g^x). Alice can withdraw her box at any time using the secret x.

3.2 Mix

A mix is done by selecting two mix-boxes from the pool and spending them in a transaction that generates two identical-looking mix-boxes. An output is generated by applying the following transformation each input.

1. Generate secret $y \xleftarrow{R} \mathbb{Z}_q$ and apply the transformation $(a, b) \leftarrow (a^y, b^y)$. In other words, register a (resp. b) of the new box is computed by raising register a (resp. b) of the old box to power y. The transformation preserves the secret exponent relationship between a and b, ensuring the owner's ability to spend the box anytime. This is called *re-randomising* the public key.

2. To ensure that the mix is done correctly, that is, both registers are raised to the same power, the mixer must additionally prove the following statement. Let (a_0, b_0) and (a_1, b_1) be the registers of the first and second output respectively. Then the mixer must prove:

$$\mathit{proveDHTuple}(a, b, a_0, b_0)\ \mathsf{OR}\ \mathit{proveDHTuple}(a, b, a_1, b_1)$$

3. We additionally need to ensure that $y \neq 0$, which can be done by requiring that $a_0 \neq b_0$ and $a_1 \neq b_1$.

3.3 Smart Contract

The contract of a mix box is given below in ErgoScript, the scripting language of the Ergo blockchain [11,12]. We use Ergo because it has the *proveDHTuple* protocol built-in, is UTXO based and supports advanced scripts at context level C3 [13]. ErgoScript is a strict subset of the Scala language. It allows accessing the inputs and outputs of the transaction and specifying arbitrary constraints on them. Data in Ergo boxes is stored in up to 10 registers labeled R0 to R9, out of which R0 to R3 are reserved by the protocol and the remaining are for user-defined values [12]. We use the following mapping: $a \to$ R4 and $b \to$ R5.

ErgoScript overloads the $\|$ operator to refer to both the logical OR and the zero-knowledge OR described in Appendix C. For clarity, we use `OR` to refer to the zero-knowledge OR. Also ErgoScript has a restricted form of $\mathit{proveDlog}(*, *)$, namely $\mathit{proveDlog}(g, *)$, where g is fixed. We can overcome this limitation using the rule $\mathit{proveDlog}(a, b) = \mathit{proveDHTuple}(a, a, b, b)$.

```
val a = SELF.R4[GroupElement].get      // current base for dLog
val b = SELF.R5[GroupElement].get
val owner = proveDHTuple(a, a, b, b)  // = proveDlog(a, b)
val mix = {
  val out0 = OUTPUTS(0)   // first output
  val out1 = OUTPUTS(1)   // second output
  val a0 = out0.R4[GroupElement].get  // register a of first output
  val a1 = out1.R4[GroupElement].get  // register a of second output
  val b0 = out0.R5[GroupElement].get  // register b of first output
  val b1 = out1.R5[GroupElement].get  // register b of second output
  val validOuts = out0.propositionBytes == SELF.propositionBytes &&
                  out1.propositionBytes == SELF.propositionBytes &&
                  out0.value == SELF.value &&
                  out1.value == SELF.value &&
                  a0 != b0 && // rule out point at infinity
                  a1 != b1    // rule out point at infinity

  // at least one of the outputs has the right relationship between R4, R5
  val validAB = proveDHTuple(a, b, a0, b0) OR proveDHTuple(a, b, a1, b1)

  validAB && validOuts
}

mix || owner
```

Contract 1: Mix-script

3.4 Analysis

With regards to security, no one should be able to spend Alice's box other than for mixing (*theft-prevention*) and Alice should always be able to spend her box (*spendability*). Both are guaranteed by ensuring the exponent relationship between a, b of at least one of the box in the mix, and additionally requiring a, b to be not O (the point at infinity). With regards to privacy, no outsider should be able to guess with an advantage, which output corresponds to which input. For $i \in \{0, 1\}$, the transformation of (a_i, b_i) from inputs to outputs using secret y_i can be written as: $(a_i, b_i) \leftarrow ({a_i}^{y_i}, {b_i}^{y_i})$. If the DDH problem is hard then the output distributions $(a_0, b_0), (a_1, b_1)$ are indistinguishable.

4 Extensions

Here we discuss various enhancements to the basic protocol presented above.

4.1 Outsourceability

Unlike Zerojoin, an interesting possibility with Sigmajoin is that of *outsourcing* the mix process, where the mixing is done in a trustless manner by third parties called mixers. In this approach, shown in Figure 2, multiple mixers operate on the same pool. The mixers are *non-custodial* in the sense that while they have the ability to deanonymize users, they don't have the ability to steal funds.

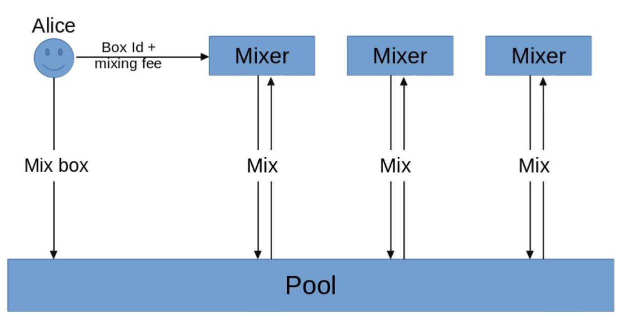

Fig. 2: Outsourced fee

Alice adds her mix-box to the pool and sends the box id (a globally unique identifier) to a mixer along with some *mixing fee*. This interaction will usually happen off-chain but can also be done on-chain. The mixer then proceeds to mix Alice's box several times as determined by the mixing fee. One problem with this approach is that the mixer may lose track of Alice's box if someone else mixes her box in between. In order to prevent this, we can put a time-lock that prevents anyone else but the mixer from spending the box before a certain time. The modified contract is given below:

```
val a = SELF.R4[GroupElement].get  // current base for dLog
val b = SELF.R5[GroupElement].get
val m = SELF.R6[GroupElement].get  // public key of the mixer or dummy value
val h = SELF.R7[Int].get // height at which box was created
val lockTime = 5 // number of blocks for which box is time-locked
val owner = proveDHTuple(a, a, b, b)  // = proveDlog(a, b)
val mixer = proveDlog(m)              // = proveDlog(g, m), g is fixed
val timeOut = HEIGHT > h + lockTime
val mix = {
  val out0 = OUTPUTS(0)   // first output
  val out1 = OUTPUTS(1)   // second output
  val a0 = out0.R4[GroupElement].get  // register a of first output
  val a1 = out1.R4[GroupElement].get  // register a of second output
  val b0 = out0.R5[GroupElement].get  // register b of first output
  val b1 = out1.R5[GroupElement].get  // register b of second output
  val m0 = out0.R6[GroupElement].get  // just access group element
  val m1 = out1.R6[GroupElement].get  // just access group element
  val h0 = out0.R7[Int].get  // height at which first output is created
  val h1 = out1.R7[Int].get  // height at which second output is created
  val validOuts = out0.propositionBytes == SELF.propositionBytes &&
                  out1.propositionBytes == SELF.propositionBytes &&
                  out0.value == SELF.value &&
                  out1.value == SELF.value &&
                  a0 != b0 && // rule out point at infinity
                  a1 != b1 && // rule out point at infinity
                  h0 <= HEIGHT && // ensure that h0 is not too high
                  h1 <= HEIGHT    // ensure that h1 is not too high

  // at least one output has the right relationship between R4, R5
  val validAB = proveDHTuple(a, b, a0, b0) OR proveDHTuple(a, b, a1, b1)

  validAB && validOuts && (mixer || timeOut)
}

owner || mix
```

Contract 2: Mix-script with Outsourceability

To determine the mixing fee, assume that Alice wants to mix her box n times (example $n = 10$). At each mix, there is onex extra box created. In order to ensure that Alice's box is not identified by outsiders, the mixer must process every such extra box as if it were Alice's box. Thus, about 2^{n+1} mix transactions must be generated by the mixer, and in the worst case, the mixing fee should cover as many transactions. In reality, the mixer would combine Alice's and other's mixes, and so not all mixes will be just for Alice.

4.2 Stealth Transfers

A mix box can either be used for (re)mixing or be withdrawn. When a mix box is reused in mixing, there is no *transfer of value* as the box owner remains the same. On the other hand, a withdraw is necessary for changing ownership, that is, for transfer of value. We can modify the original protocol to allow such transfers of value within the system itself. In such a case, it should be infeasible for an outsider to determine if a given transaction changes the owner of a box or is an ordinary mix transaction. This can be done by replacing the `validAB` condition in contract from `proveDHTuple(a, b, a0, b0) OR proveDHTuple(a, b, a1, b1)` to `proveDHTuple(a, b, a0, b0) OR proveDHTuple(a, b, a1, b1) OR owner`.

This allows the owner to create a transaction that resembles a mix transaction but does not require ownership to be preserved. A transfer of value using this technique is a *stealth transfer* since it cannot be distinguished from a mix transaction. Using the idea of stealth transfers, we don't ever have to withdraw from the pool; all transactions happen within the pool, thereby increasing the privacy further. Note that while a mix is outsourceable, a stealth transfer is not.

Observe that in the last line `owner || mix`, even if the owner tries to spend it using the `mix` path due to the modification above, the prover implementation may use the `owner` path which leaks knowledge. In order to prevent this, we can add a `nonMix` clause that requires the first output to be not a mix box, and then add that clause to the `owner` side. The modified contract is below.

```
val a = SELF.R4[GroupElement].get  // current base for dLog
val b = SELF.R5[GroupElement].get
val m = SELF.R6[GroupElement].get  // public key of the mixer or dummy value
val h = SELF.R7[Int].get // height at which box was created
val lockTime = 5 // number of blocks for which box is time-locked
val owner = proveDHTuple(a, a, b, b)  // = proveDlog(a, b)
val mixer = proveDlog(m)              // = proveDlog(g, m), g is fixed
val timeOut = HEIGHT > h + lockTime
val mix = {
  val out0 = OUTPUTS(0)   // first output
  val out1 = OUTPUTS(1)   // second output
  val a0 = out0.R4[GroupElement].get  // register a of first output
  val a1 = out1.R4[GroupElement].get  // register a of second output
  val b0 = out0.R5[GroupElement].get  // register b of first output
  val b1 = out1.R5[GroupElement].get  // register b of second output
  val m0 = out0.R6[GroupElement].get  // just access group element
  val m1 = out1.R6[GroupElement].get  // just access group element
  val h0 = out0.R7[Int].get  // height at which first output is created
  val h1 = out1.R7[Int].get  // height at which second output is created
  val validOuts = out0.propositionBytes == SELF.propositionBytes &&
                  out1.propositionBytes == SELF.propositionBytes &&
                  out0.value == SELF.value &&
                  out1.value == SELF.value &&
                  a0 != b0 && // rule out point at infinity
                  a1 != b1 && // rule out point at infinity
                  h0 <= HEIGHT && // ensure that h0 is not too high
                  h1 <= HEIGHT    // ensure that h1 is not too high

  // one output has correct relationship between (R4, R5) or owner spends
  val validAB = proveDHTuple(a, b, a0, b0) OR proveDHTuple(a, b, a1, b1) OR
                owner

  validAB && validOuts && (mixer || timeOut)
}

val nonMix = OUTPUTS(0).propositionBytes != SELF.propositionBytes

(owner && nonMix) || mix
```

Contract 3: Mix-script with Stealth Transfers

5 Mining Fee

One of the challenging problems in mix protocols is that of mining fee. Since the fee has to be paid in a manner that does not reveal the source of funds, the parties cannot pay it using arbitrary boxes owned by them. Additionally, since the mix has to preserve the value, the fee cannot be paid using the tokens being mixed. There are two approaches to handling mining fee in such scenarios.

1. *Embedded fee*: The fee must be embedded in the mix boxes themselves. This is the primary approach is followed in ErgoMix [4] via *mixing tokens*.
2. *External fee*: The fee is paid by a third party who has no relationship with the participants. An example is the *altruistic fee* approach described in [4],

While the embedded fee approaches of [4] will also work with Sigmajoin, outsourceability allows us to design a much simpler external approach where the fee is paid by the mixer. Referring to Figure 2, each mixer maintains its own set of unspent boxes for covering mining fee, which we call *funding boxes*. These boxes should have a script `proveDlog(*)` with different secrets and should contain the exact amount (i.e., should not generate change). In order to handle fee in stealth transfers, which cannot be outsourced, the simplest solution is for the owner to privately purchase the private key of a funding box from a mixer.

6 Future Work

The above idea is for two boxes at a time, but this number can be increased to three (and any fixed value) simply by adding the same constraints for the third output along with an additional *proveDHTuple* clause.

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Appendix

A Proof of Knowledge of Discrete Logarithm

Let G be a cyclic multiplicative group of prime order q where Decisional Diffie-Hellman (DDH) problem is hard and let u, g be any generators of G. The following is a zero-knowledge *proof of knowledge of discrete logarithm* that proves knowledge of x such that $u = g^x$.

1. The prover, $\mathcal{P}$, picks $r \stackrel{R}{\leftarrow} \mathbb{Z}_q$ and sends $t = g^r$ to the verifier, $\mathcal{V}$.
2. $\mathcal{V}$ picks $c \stackrel{R}{\leftarrow} \mathbb{Z}_q$ and sends c to $\mathcal{P}$.
3. $\mathcal{P}$ sends $z = r + cx$ to $\mathcal{V}$, who accepts iff $g^z = t \cdot u^c$.

We apply the Fiat-Shamir transform [14] where the role of the verifier is replaced by a hash function, i.e., $c = Hash(t)$. This is a variation of Schnorr signatures [15] and denoted by *proveDlog(g, u)*.

B Proof of Equivalence of Discrete Logarithms

Let $g, h, u, v \in G$. The following is a zero-knowledge *proof of equivalence of discrete logarithms* that proves knowledge of x such that $u = g^x$ *and* $v = h^x$. This is implemented using two parallel runs of *proveDlog(g, u)*:

1. $\mathcal{P}$ picks $r \xleftarrow{R} \mathbb{Z}_q$ and sends $(t_0, t_1) = (g^r, h^r)$ to $\mathcal{V}$.
2. $\mathcal{V}$ picks $c \xleftarrow{R} \mathbb{Z}_q$ and sends c to $\mathcal{P}$.
3. $\mathcal{P}$ sends $z = r + cx$ to $\mathcal{V}$ who accepts iff $g^z = t_0 \cdot u^c$ and $h^z = t_1 \cdot v^c$.

As before we set $c = Hash(t_0, t_1)$. The protocol is called *proveDHTuple*(g, h, u, v). Note that *proveDHTuple*$(g, g, u, u) =$ *proveDlog*(g, u).

C Sigma-Or

A protocol with this structure $(\mathcal{P} \xrightarrow{t} \mathcal{V}, \mathcal{P} \xleftarrow{c} \mathcal{V}, \mathcal{P} \xrightarrow{z} \mathcal{V})$ is called a sigma protocol if it satisfies *special soundness* and *honest-verifier zero-knowledge* [16].

The statement to be proved (example "I know the discrete logarithm of u to base g") is denoted by τ. Any sigma protocol can be made non-interactive via the Fiat-Shamir transform [14] by setting $c = H(t)$ where H is a hash function.

As shown in [10], any two sigma protocols for arbitrary statements τ_0, τ_1 can be efficiently composed to a single sigma protocol that proves knowledge of one of the witnesses without revealing which. Let $b \in \{0, 1\}$ be such that $\mathcal{P}$ knows the witness of τ_b but not τ_{1-b}. $\mathcal{P}$ simulates the proof of τ_{1-b} to get an accepting transcript $(t_{1-b}, c_{1-b}, z_{1-b})$ and generates t_b properly. $\mathcal{P}$ sends (t_0, t_1) to $\mathcal{V}$. On receiving c, $\mathcal{P}$ computes $c_b = c \oplus c_{1-b}$ and then uses t_b, c_b to compute the response z_b properly. Here $\oplus$ is the bit-wise XOR operation. Finally $\mathcal{P}$ sends (z_0, z_1, c_0, c_1) to $\mathcal{V}$, who accepts iff both (t_0, c_0, z_0) and (t_1, c_1, z_1) are accepting transcripts and $c = c_0 \oplus c_1$. We call such a construction τ_0 OR τ_1. The expression τ_0 OR τ_1 OR τ_2 is to be interpreted as $(\tau_0$ OR $\tau_1)$ OR τ_2.