

CS 1653: Applied Cryptography and Network Security

Term Project, Phase 3

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Introduction: Cryptographic Techniques

(an introductory paragraph or two that broadly surveys the types of cryptographic techniques that your group has decided to use to address threats T1-T4)

Threat 1: Unauthorized Token Issuance

Threat Description

Begin by describing the threat treated in this section. This may include describing examples of the threat being exploited by an adversary, a short discussion of why this threat is problematic and needs to be addressed, and/or diagrams showing how the threat might manifest in your groups current (insecure) implementation.

Mechanism Description

Next, provide a short description of the mechanism that you chose to implement to protect against this threat. For interactive protocols, it would be helpful to provide a diagram explaining the messages exchanged between participating principals. (See the notes from Lecture 10 for example diagrams.) Be sure to explain any cryptographic choices that your group makes: What types of algorithms, modes of operation, and/or key lengths did you chose? Why? If shared keys are needed, how are they exchanged?

Correctness and Security of Mechanism

Lastly, provide a short argument addressing why your proposed mechanism sufficiently addresses this particular threat. This argument should address the correctness of your approach, as well as its overall security. For example, if your mechanism involves a key agreement or key exchange protocol, you should argue that both parties agree on the same key (correctness) and that no other party can figure out the key (security).

Threat 2: Token Modification/Forgery

Threat Description

By modifying or forging tokens issued by the Group Server, a user may be able to gain access to files that would otherwise be forbidden. By changing the group information embedded in a token, a malicious user can access groups that they are not members of, which would grant unauthorized access to files belonging to those groups. Furthermore, if a malicious user assigns him or herself as the owner of a specific group, he or she will have the ability to add or delete group members, as well as freely modify files belonging to that group. This threat is a direct attack on the integrity of a secure group server.

Mechanism Description

In order to maintain the integrity of token issuance, we should verify that a token is valid every time an operation involving a token is invoked. The best way to verify would be to match the token in question with the one on the Group Server. To efficiently perform this mechanism, we take a hash of both tokens, create an authenticated and encrypted channel between the user's application and the Group Server, and compare the hashes. If the hashes match, then the user is using the same token that is on the Group Server and is thus valid.

Correctness and Security of Mechanism

As the hashing process does not necessarily require explanation, the security of the mechanism lies with the verification channel between the Group Server and the application requesting validation. If we can maintain the security of the channel and introduce a degree of randomness to foil replay attacks, then we should be able to eliminate token fraud.

Threat 3: Unauthorized File Servers

Threat Description

Mechanism Description

Correctness and Security of Mechanism

Threat 4: Information Leakage via Passive Monitoring

Threat Description

Suppose Eve can listen to an information exchange between Alice and Bob. Even without being able to interrupt or modify the exchange, Eve can still glean enough information to perform malicious acts. If insufficient security is in place, Eve may be able to gather enough data to

- know the contents of the exchanges;
- to impersonate Alice or Bob;
- use offline password guessing to discover passwords or other secret information.

Eve does not need to be an active participant in a conversation to illicitly benefit from it, and thus exchanges between Alice and Bob must be kept secure.

Mechanism Description

Shared key/session key to encrypt messages between Alice and Bob.

Correctness and Security of Mechanism

Summary and Errata

(conclude with a paragraph or two discussing the interplay between your proposed mechanisms, and commenting on the design process that your group followed. Did you discuss other ideas that didn't pan out before settling on the above-documented approach? Did you end up designing a really interesting protocol suite that addresses multiple threats at once? Use this space to show off your hard work!)