Technical Report on Encrypted File Management System

# Abstract

This project presents a File Management System (FMS) that securely manages files and folders on a local machine. The system allows users to create, delete, edit, and organize files and directories. To ensure confidentiality, all text files are encrypted using the Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) in hexadecimal format, making unauthorized access difficult. By integrating essential file operations with encryption, this FMS ensures both functionality and data security.

# 1. Introduction

In today’s digital era, secure data management is a critical requirement for both individuals and organizations. Traditional file systems provide minimal security, leaving sensitive information vulnerable to unauthorized access. This project aims to bridge that gap by implementing a File Management System with integrated AES encryption, ensuring that stored data remains confidential even if unauthorized access is attempted.

# 2. Objectives

The primary objectives of this project are:

* To develop a local File Management System with basic file operations.
* To incorporate AES encryption for all text files, stored in a dedicated "files" folder, ensuring secure data storage.
* To enforce an access control mechanism that only permits file access via a password known to the file owner.

# 3. Literature Review

This project builds upon concepts from various studies in secure data management and encryption:

* **File System Encryption**: Studies indicate that file system encryption provides an additional security layer by converting data into a secure format. Techniques such as AES encryption are commonly used due to their strong cryptographic properties.
* **Access Control Mechanisms**: Research on access control reveals that adding password protection to encrypted files reduces the likelihood of unauthorized access, thereby enhancing data security.
* **Cryptographic Standards**: Literature on AES encryption underscores its robustness and effectiveness in preventing unauthorized decryption, thus making it suitable for securing sensitive data in file management systems.

# 4. System Design

## 4.1 Architecture Overview

The system consists of the following components:

* **File Management Module**: Provides functionality to create, delete, edit, and list files and folders.
* **Encryption Module**: Uses the cryptography library in Python to encrypt and decrypt text files using AES encryption. Encrypted files are stored in hexadecimal format in a secure folder.
* **Access Control Module**: Ensures file access is password-protected. Only users with the correct password can decrypt and view the file contents.

## 4.2 Workflow

1. **File Creation**: Users can create files in the system. Text files are automatically encrypted and stored in a secure folder.
2. **File Encryption**: Each text file is encrypted with AES encryption and stored in hexadecimal format. The encryption key is based on a user-provided password.
3. **File Decryption**: When accessing an encrypted file, the user must enter the correct password. The system decrypts the file for viewing and editing.
4. **File Deletion**: Files and folders can be deleted from the system, removing both the encrypted data and the associated metadata.

# 5. Implementation

The File Management System is implemented in Python, utilizing the following key modules:

* **os**: For file and directory management.
* **shutil**: For high-level file operations, including folder deletion.
* **subprocess**: For running external processes, such as executing Python scripts or cloning Git repositories.
* **cryptography.fernet**: To handle AES encryption and decryption for file security.

## 5.1 Code Structure

The system is composed of several functions:

* create\_folder(): Creates a new folder.
* create\_file(): Creates a new text file, encrypts it, and stores it in the secure folder.
* delete\_file\_or\_folder(): Deletes specified files or folders.
* clone\_git\_repo(): Clones a Git repository.
* encrypt\_file(): Encrypts a given file using AES encryption and stores it in hexadecimal format.
* decrypt\_file(): Decrypts an encrypted file using the owner’s password.
* run\_python\_files(): Executes Python files in the system.

## 6. Results

The File Management System successfully performs the following:

* Encrypts all text files using AES encryption and stores them in hexadecimal format, ensuring data confidentiality.
* Allows users to manage files and directories with basic file operations, including creation, deletion, and viewing.
* Restricts access to encrypted files, only permitting decryption with the correct password.

## 7. Security Analysis

The security of this system is built on AES encryption, which is widely recognized for its strength and efficiency. By storing encrypted files in hexadecimal format, the system ensures that the file contents are not readable through conventional means. The access control mechanism adds an extra layer of security by requiring the owner’s password for decryption, thus preventing unauthorized access.

## 8. Future Enhancements

* **Multi-User Access**: Implement user accounts with specific file permissions, allowing for shared access and collaboration.
* **Enhanced Encryption Options**: Offer additional encryption algorithms to enhance security.
* **Cloud Integration**: Enable secure backup and retrieval of files from cloud storage.
* **Detailed Logging**: Include logging for all file operations, aiding in audit trails and security monitoring.

## 9. Conclusion

This project demonstrates an effective approach to secure file management using AES encryption within a local File Management System. The system’s ability to encrypt files and restrict access with a password ensures data security and confidentiality. This project has potential applications in secure data storage systems and personal file management.

## References

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