6 Cryptographic Techniques – A Brief Introduction

6.1 Introduction to Cryptography

6.2 Symmetric Encryption

6.3 Asymmetric (Public-Key) Encryption

6.4 Digital Signatures

6.5 Public Key Infrastructures

Literature:


Purpose of Cryptographic Techniques

• To protect the content of communication between two parties
  – Protection against various kinds of attacks
  – Preserving confidentiality and integrity of a message
  – Computer-equivalent to packaging and sealing

• To establish the identity of communication partners (authentication)
  – Computer-equivalent to hand-written signature
  – Nonrepudiation (Zureichenbarkeit):
    Avoiding false denial of the fact that someone has sent a message

• Applications for networked multimedia:
  – Encrypted content in DRM, decryption only for authorized users
  – Packaging keys and right specifications in DRM
  – Identifying business partners for payment procedures
  – Protecting electronic forms of money
  – Protecting important personal data
Encryption and Decryption

A sender (often called Alice) wants to send a message to a receiver (often called Bob), in a way that an eavesdropper (often called Eve) cannot read the message.

- Plaintext message (binary data) \( M \)
- Ciphertext \( C \)

- Encryption \( E \):
  \[ E(M) = C \]

- Decryption \( D \):
  \[ D(C) = M \]
  such that \( D(E(M)) = M \)

- Encryption/Decryption should not rely on keeping the algorithms secret.
  - Kerckhoffs principle
Encryption and Decryption Keys

- Encryption $E$:
  $E(K_1, M) = C$
- Decryption $D$:
  $D(K_2, C) = M$
  such that $D(K_2, E(K_1, M)) = M$
- Special case:
  Identical keys for encryption and decryption
Attack Terminology

• Ciphertext-only attack
  – Recover the plaintext or the keys based only on the ciphertext

• Known-plaintext attack:
  – Deduce the keys from given plaintext and corresponding ciphertext

• Chosen-plaintext attack:
  – Attacker (cryptanalyst) can obtain the encoding result on an arbitrary plaintext

• Chosen-ciphertext attack:
  – Attacker (cryptanalyst) can obtain the decoding result on an arbitrary ciphertext

• Brute-force attack
  – Trying out all possible keys
  – Breakability depends on available computing power
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Symmetric Cryptographic Algorithms

• Encryption and decryption using the same key
  – Alternatively: One key can be computed from the other

• Stream algorithms or *stream ciphers*:
  – Operate bit-by-bit (or byte-by-byte)

• Block algorithms or *block ciphers*:
  – Operate on larger groups of bits (blocks)
  – Block size should not be too large - typical 64 bits
Data Encryption Standard DES

- Symmetric block cipher (64 bit blocks)
- Adopted by U.S. government in 1977, based on IBM's *Lucifer* algorithm
  - Designed for hardware realization
- Key length: 56 bits
- Each of the 16 “rounds”:
  - 64 bit input
  - Initial permutation
  - Round 1
  - ... 
  - Round 16
  - 32-bit swap
  - Final permutation
  - 64 bit output

Encoding and decoding algorithms identical

- $f$ does a number of permutations and substitutions
DES – Example for an Aging Standard

• Brute force attack to DES: $2^{56}$ permutations to be tried
  – 56 bit keys considered unbreakable in 1977

• Specialized hardware can test DES keys very fast
  – Rumours persist that the NSA (US National Security Agency) can break 56-bit DES in a few minutes time
  – 1997: DES Challenge
    » After 4 months, a DES-encrypted message could be decrypted
  – 2000: DES Challenge III won by “distributed.net” in 22 hours
    » Specialized supercomputer + CPU time from 100.000 PCs in the Internet
    » Key test rate 240 billion keys/second

• Practical workaround: “Triple DES”

• Obstacle for unbreakable codes:
  – U.S. government apparently wants to be able to break the standard encryptions

• Strong cryptographic products are considered weapon technology by the U.S. government!
  – Export restrictions
IDEA

- Xuejia Lai/James Massey (ETH Zürich) 1990
  - Strengthened against “differential cryptoanalysis” in 1992
  - Partially patented by Ascom (Switzerland) until 2011
- Block cipher, working on 64 bit blocks
- Key length 128 bit
- Twice as fast as DES (in particular fast in software)
- Idea: “Mixing operations from different algebraic groups”
  - XOR
  - Addition modulo $2^{16}$
  - Multiplication modulo $2^{16}+1$

- Can be considered as quite safe according to current knowledge
Advanced Encryption Standard AES

• U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
  – 1997: Call for proposals for an unclassified, publicly disclosed symmetric encryption algorithm, key sizes 128, 192, and 256 bits
  – 15 submissions, 5 candidates selected (MARS, RC6, Rijndael, Serpent, Twofish)
  – 2000: Rijndael declared to be official AES

• Rijndael (Joan Daelen, Vincent Rijmen, Belgium):
  – Between 10 and 14 rounds, depending on key and block length
  – Operations in each round:
    » XOR
    » Byte substitution
    » Row shift (in a grid representation)
    » Mixing of columns based on polynomial (in a grid representation)

• Other common alternative symmetric algorithms: RC4, RC6
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Literature:

Asymmetric or Public Key Encryption

• Main problem of symmetric cryptography: How to obtain the shared, secret key?
  – Off-line transportation
  – Key distribution architectures, e.g. Kerberos
• Public-key cryptography: Whitfield Diffie, Martin Hellman 1976
  – Each person gets a private (secret) key and a public key

• Public-Key Cryptosystem:
  Encryption with public key: \( PK(M) = C \)
  Decryption with secret key: \( SK(C) = M \)
  such that \( SK(PK(M)) = M \)
  – By publicly revealing PK, user does not reveal an easy way to compute SK.
• Mathematical background: “Trapdoor one-way function”
  – e.g. prime factorization of large numbers
RSA: Mathematics

- Creating a public/secret key pair:
  - Choose two large primes $p$ and $q$ and compute the “modulus” $n = pq$
  - Randomly choose a number $e < n$, relatively prime to $\phi = (p-1)(q-1)$ (Euler's totient function)
    » $(n, e)$ is the public encryption key
  - Compute $d$ as inverse of $e$ (modulo $\phi$): i.e. such that $(ed \equiv 1) \mod \phi$
    » $(n, d)$ is the secret decryption key
- Encryption:
  $C = M^e \mod n$
- Decryption:
  $M = C^d \mod n$

For an example, see e.g. http://www.di-mgt.com.au/rsa_alg.html
RSA: Mathematics – Example

• Creating a public/secret key pair:
  – Choose two (large) primes $p$ and $q$ and compute the “modulus” $n = pq$
    » $p = 11$, $q = 13$, $n = 143$ (in practice much larger!)
  – Randomly choose a number $e < n$, relatively prime to $\phi = (p-1)(q-1) = 120$
    » E.g. $e = 23$ (in practice, Fermat primes are used, e.g. 3, 17 and 65537)
    » $(143, 23)$ is the public encryption key
  – Compute $d$ such that $(ed \equiv 1) \mod \phi$, i.e. $(ed-1) = k \phi$, i.e. $(23 d - 1) = k 120$
    » Apply extended Euclidian algorithm: $d = 47$, $k = 9$
    » $(143, 47)$ is the secret decryption key

• Encryption:
  $C = M^e \mod n$, e.g. $C = 7^{23} \mod 143 = 2$ (Modular arithmetic)

• Decryption:
  $M = C^d \mod n$, e.g. $M = 2^{47} \mod 143 = 7$
RSA: Pragmatics

- Key size is variable, typical 1024 bits
- RSA relies on exponentiation which is computing-intensive
  - DES is at least 100 times as fast as RSA in software and 1000 to 10000 times as fast in hardware
- Security of RSA is conjectured to rely on factorization of large numbers into primes
- Hybrid usage of symmetric and asymmetric cryptosystems (enveloping)
  - Choose a symmetric key (e.g. for AES)
  - Encode the symmetric key with an asymmetric cryptosystem (e.g. RSA) to transmit the shared (symmetric) key to the communication partner
  - Combination of advantages:
    » Use asymmetric system for keeping the secrets locally
    » Use symmetric system for mass-data encoding
- RSA is part of many Internet protocols for secure interaction, e.g. S/MIME, SSL, TLS, IPsec, ...
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Literature:

Digital Signature with Asymmetric Cryptosystems

• Message authentication (digital signature):
  – To establish trust that a message actually originates from a certain sender
  – Must involve full message body, i.e. similar to message encryption

• Some asymmetric cryptosystems allow to use “inverse encryption” for a digital signature, e.g. RSA
  – For such cryptosystems, the inverse equation holds: \( PK(SK(M)) = M \)
  – Encryption with own secret key
  – Verification possible by anybody knowing the public key

• Example: Suppose Alice wants to send a message \( M \) to Bob ensuring the message’s integrity and that it is from her
  
  \[ S = M^d \mod n \]

  \( (n, d) \) is Alice’s secret key
  Equivalent to decryption algorithm

  – Alice sends \( M \) and \( S \) to Bob

• Bob verifies:
  
  \[ M = S^e \mod n \]

  \( (n, e) \) is Alice’s public key
  Equivalent to encryption algorithm

• Other digital signature standards exist, e.g. DSS/DSA (Digital Signature Standard/Algorithm by NIST)
Message Digesting or Hashing

• Sometimes not encryption, but integrity of message is the goal
  – Simpler algorithms similar to symmetric encryption

• Hash (or digesting) function for messages
  – Computes short code from long message
  – Difficult to invert (i.e. to obtain message from code)
  – Collision-resistant (i.e. unlikely to find two messages with same hash code)

• Examples of message digesting algorithms:
  – MD5 (Ron Rivest) (128 bit code)
  – Secure Hash Algorithm SHA (NIST) (160 bit code)

• Combination of message digest and signing the digest:
  – Faster way of authenticating a message
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Literature:

Public Key Infrastructure

• Weak point in public-key cryptosystems
  – Bogus public key associated with a valid identity
  – Attacker can masquerade as another person

• Establishing trust in public keys:
  – Trusted Third Party (TTP)
    » e.g. governmental organisation, financial institution
  – TTP issues a message (certificate) that contains
    » User identity
    » Public key
    » Validity period
    » Issuer (TTP identity)
  – TTP “signs” certificate
    » This can be achieved by using the own public key
    » All participants know the signatures (public keys) of TTP, i.e. can trust
      that the certificates actually come from the issuing TTP
Certification Authorities

- A TTP issuing certificates is a *Certification Authority* (CA)
- CAs are organized in a hierarchy, signature of root CA universally known

The certificates for the public key can be transferred with the message (or put on a website etc.)
E.g. message from Alice to Bob:

```
CA1   PK_{CA1}    Sig_{Root}
CA1   PK_{Alice}  Sig_{CA1}
Alice

CA2   PK_{CA2}    Sig_{Root}
CA2   PK_{Bob}    Sig_{CA2}
Bob
```

Message...
Digital Signatures and PKI

• The “chain of trust” in a PKI can be reduced to the single fact
  – Everybody knows the public key $PK_{\text{Root}}$ of the Root CA
• Root CA signs CAx certificates using its secret key $SK_{\text{Root}}$
  – Everybody can verify the certificates using $PK_{\text{Root}}$
• CAx signs certificates using its secret key $SK_{\text{CAx}}$
  – Everybody can verify the certificate as soon as he has $PK_{\text{CAx}}$
  – ... which he can obtain from a Root-signed certificate

| CA1 | $PK_{\text{CA1}}$ | $\text{Sig}_{\text{Root}}$ | Alice | $PK_{\text{Alice}}$ | $\text{Sig}_{\text{CA1}}$ | Message... |
**X.509**

- **ITU-T X.500 recommendations series**
  - Global database representing objects (people and processes)
  - Tree structured
    - Top level = countries
  - Identity of an object is a pathname in the tree: *Distinguished Name (DN)*
    - E.g. “c=GB, o=Universal Exports, cn=James Bond”
      (o: organization, cn: common name)

- **ITU-T recommendation X.509**
  - Public key certificate data format
  - Linking a public key with an X.500 Distinguished Name (= Identity)
  - Further fields for validity etc.
Web of Trust

- No central certification authority; mutual certification
- Users can define individual level of trust in the owner of a key
- Well-known implementations: PGP and GPG