Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) / Transport Layer Security (TLS)

Brad Karp
UCL Computer Science

CS GZ03 / M030
28\textsuperscript{th} November 2011
What Problems Do SSL/TLS Solve?

• Two parties, client and server, not previously known to one another
  – i.e., haven’t been able to establish a shared secret in a secure room

• Want to authenticate one another
  – in today’s lecture, focus on client authenticating server; e.g., “am I talking to the real amazon.com server?”

• Want secrecy and integrity of communications in both directions
Problem: Man in the Middle Attacks

- Recall: public-key cryptography alone not enough to give robust authentication
  - Client can ask server to prove identity by signing data
  - But how does client know he has real server’s public key?

- Attacker may impersonate server
  - Gives client his own public key, claiming to be server
  - Client may send sensitive data to attacker
  - Attacker may send incorrect data back to client
Problem: Man in the Middle Attacks

- Recall: public-key cryptography alone not enough to give robust authentication
  - Client can ask server to prove identity by signing data
  - But how does client know he has real server’s public key?

- Attacker may impersonate server
  - Gives client his own public key, claiming to be server
  - Client may send sensitive data to attacker
  - Attacker may send incorrect data back to client
Man in the Middle Attacks (2)

- Attacker may not appear like server
  - e.g., might not have same content as real web server’s page
- Solution: attacker acts as **man in the middle**
  - Emulates server when talking to client
  - Emulates client when talking to server
  - Passes through most messages as-is
  - Substitutes own public key for client’s and server’s
  - Records secret data, or modifies data to cause damage
Challenge: Key Management

- Publish public keys in a well-known broadcast medium
  - e.g., in the telephone directory, or in the pages of the New York Times
  - How do you know you have the real phone directory, or New York Times?
  - How can software use these media?
- Exchange keys with people in person
- "Web of trust": accept keys for others via friends you trust (used by PGP)
Approach to Key Management: Offline Certification Authorities (CAs)

- Idea: use digital signatures to indicate endorsement of binding between principal and public key
  - i.e., if I sign \{amazon.com, pubkey\}, I am stating, “I attest that amazon.com’s public key is pubkey.”

- Certification Authority (CA): third-party organization trusted by parties that wish to mutually authenticate

- Each CA has public/private key pair: $K_{CA}$, $K_{CA}^{-1}$

- CA creates certificate $C_S$ for server S containing, e.g.,:
  - info = \{“www.amazon.com”, “Amazon, Inc.”, www.amazon.com’s public key, expiration date, CA’s name\}
  - sig = \{H(info)\}$_{K_{CA}}^{-1}$

- Server S can present $C_S$ to browser

- If browser knows $K_{CA}$, can validate that CA attests that S’s public key is $K_S$
Approach to Key Management: Offline Certification Authorities (CAs)

- Idea: use digital signatures to indicate endorsement of binding between principal and public key – i.e., if I sign \{amazon.com, pubkey\}, I am stating, “I attest that amazon.com’s public key is pubkey.”

- Certification Authority (CA): third-party organization trusted by parties that wish to mutually authenticate

- Each CA has public/private key pair: \(K_{CA}\), \(K_{CA}^{-1}\)

- CA creates certificate \(C_S\) for server S containing, e.g.,:
  - info = \{“www.amazon.com”, “Amazon, Inc.”, www.amazon.com’s public key, expiration date, CA’s name\}
  - \(\text{sig} = \{H(\text{info})\}_{K_{CA}^{-1}}\)

- Server S can present \(C_S\) to browser
- If browser knows \(K_{CA}\), can validate that CA attests that S’s public key is \(K_S\)

Key benefit: CA need not be reachable by C or S at time C wishes to authenticate S!

CAs and certificates are the heart of SSL’s authentication mechanism
Offline Certification Authorities (2)

• Key benefit: CA need not be reachable by C or S at time C wishes to authenticate S!
  – Hence offline certification authority

• SSL/TLS model for browsers authenticating web servers:
  – Everybody trusts CA
  – Everybody knows CA’s public key (i.e., pre-configured into web browser)
SSL 3.0 Handshake Overview

**Client**

- **ClientHello**: client_version, client_random, client_cipher_list
- **ServerHello**: server_version, server_random, server_cipher_list
- **ServerCertificate**: server_certificate_list
- **ClientKeyExchange**: \{pre_master_secret\}K
- **ChangeCipherSpec**: client_cipher
- **Finished**: MAC<master_secret, all messages>

**Server**

- **ServerCertificate**: server_certificate_list
- **ClientKeyExchange**: \{pre_master_secret\}K
- **ChangeCipherSpec**: server_cipher
- **Finished**: MAC<master_secret, all messages>

**Session Keys**

- Session keys computed by both sides.
Establishing Session Keys

- Client randomly generates pre-master secret, sends to server encrypted with server’s public key
- Server also contributes randomness in server_random
- Using both pre-master secret and server_random, server and client independently compute symmetric session keys:
  - Client MAC key
  - Server MAC key
  - Client Write key
  - Server Write key
  - Client IV
  - Server IV
Establishing Session Keys (2)

Client random -> Pre-master secret -> Server random

Master secret

Key block

Client MAC key
Server MAC key
Client write key
Server write key
Client IV
Server IV

[SSL and TLS, Eric Rescorla]
Using Session Keys to Send Data

- Data encrypted by client and server using each’s own write key
- Data MAC’ed by client and server using each’s own MAC key
- Each SSL record (block) includes a sequence number for that sender, and a MAC over:
  - Sequence number
  - Data plaintext
  - Data length
Why MAC Data Length?

- Plaintext **padded to fit symmetric cipher block length**
- Length of data (without padding) must be sent to receiver
- SSL 2.0 didn’t MAC data length; only MAC’ed padded data itself
  - Active adversary could change plaintext data length field
  - MAC over data would still verify
  - **Attacker could truncate plaintext as desired!**
Why MAC Data Length?

- Plaintext padded to fit symmetric cipher

**Lesson:**
Always MAC “what you mean,” including all context used to interpret message at receiver

- SSL 2.0 didn’t MAC data length; only MAC’ed padded data itself
  - Active adversary could change plaintext data length field
  - MAC over data would still verify
  - **Attacker could truncate plaintext as desired!**
Properties Provided by SSL (1)

• Secrecy: passive eavesdropper can’t decrypt data; pre-master secret encrypted with server’s public key, and server’s private key secret

• Authentication of server by client: can trust each data record came from server that holds private key matching public key in certificate

• Authentication of client by server? Not without client certificates...or client can send username/password over encrypted SSL channel

• Key exchange can’t be replayed; new random nonce from each side each time
Properties Provided by SSL (2)

• Data from earlier in session can’t be replayed
  – Caught by MAC

• Fake server can’t impersonate real one using real certificate and public key
  – Doesn’t know real server’s private key, so can’t decrypt pre-master secret from client

• Fake server obtains own certificate for own domain name from valid CA, supplies to client
  – If domain name differs from one in https:// URL, client detects mismatch when validating certificate
Forward Secrecy

• Suppose attacker records entire communication between client and server
• At later time, attacker obtains server’s private key
• If attacker cannot decrypt data from recorded session, scheme provides forward secrecy
• Does SSL 3.0 provide forward secrecy?
  – No.
Cipher Roll-Back

• SSL supports various ciphers of various key lengths and strengths
• Suppose attacker modifies cipher selection messages, to force client and server into using weak ciphers
• Each direction of handshake ends with MAC of all messages
• Can attacker adjust this MAC so it verifies?
  – No. Doesn’t know master_secret!
What Is CA Actually Certifying?

- That a public key belongs to someone authorized to represent a hostname?
- That a public key belongs to someone who is associated in some way with a hostname?
- That a public key belongs to someone who has many paper trails associated with a company related to a hostname?
- That the CA has no liability?
- >100-page Certification Practice Statement (CPS)!
How to Get a VeriSign Certificate

- Pay VeriSign ($300)
- Get DBA license from city hall ($20)
  - No on-line check for name conflicts; can I do business as Microsoft?
- Letterhead from company (free)
- Notarize document (need driver’s license) (free)
- Easy to get fraudulent certificate
  - Maybe hard to avoid being prosecuted afterwards...
- But this is just VeriSign’s policy
  - many other CAs...
In mid-March 2001, VeriSign, Inc., advised Microsoft that on January 29 and 30, 2001, it issued two fraudulent certificates. ... The common name assigned to both certificates is “Microsoft Corporation.”

VeriSign has revoked the certificates. ... However, it is not possible for any browser’s CRL-checking mechanism to locate and use the VeriSign CRL.

– Microsoft Security Bulletin MS01-017
In 2011, it was reported that DigiNotar, a Dutch CA, had its servers compromised
  – Believed DigiNotar unaware of compromise for weeks

Intruders generated over 500 forged SSL certificates, including for google.com

Between 27 July 2011 and 29 August 2011, over 300K IP addresses accessed web sites presenting this forged SSL certificate for google.com
  – 99% of IP addresses in Iran
  – Assumption by press: forged certificate used to monitor Iranian Gmail users’ email
In 2011, it was reported that DigiNotar, a Dutch CA, had its servers compromised – Believed DigiNotar unaware of compromise for weeks

Intruders generated over 500 forged SSL certificates, including for google.com

Between 27 July 2011 and 29 August 2011, over 300K IP addresses accessed web sites presenting this forged SSL certificate for google.com
– 99% of IP addresses in Iran
– Assumption by press: forged certificate used to monitor Iranian Gmail users’ email

Lesson:
The weakest CA your browser trusts by default may be very weak indeed