Subject: Timed demos
Posted by [mdelfede](#) on Wed, 25 Aug 2010 07:20:56 GMT
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Hi,

I need to deploy a demo of my app with a time limit.
There's an easy (and portable) way to check for it and, of course, to check if user puts it clock back ?

Ciao

Max

Subject: Re: Timed demos
Posted by [koldo](#) on Wed, 25 Aug 2010 09:12:49 GMT
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Hello Massimo

The simple way I use is to have an encrypted configuration file (a .xml file from Xmlize coded with AESStream) with install date/time and last use date/time.

If the program is opened after passing license date or before last use date ( ), it will ask for a new license.

Subject: Re: Timed demos
Posted by [mdelfede](#) on Wed, 25 Aug 2010 10:44:55 GMT
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koldo wrote on Wed, 25 August 2010 11:12Hello Massimo

The simple way I use is to have an encrypted configuration file (a .xml file from Xmlize coded with AESStream) with install date/time and last use date/time.

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Mhhhhh.... and what if user erases the config file and starts again with a fresh one ?

I mean.... I can't encrypt data files, they're xml on purpose, user should be able to look/correct/recover them.
The config files could be encrypted, but then user can erase them with no problem....

Max

Subject: Re: Timed demos
Posted by tojocky on Wed, 25 Aug 2010 11:26:10 GMT
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mdelfede wrote on Wed, 25 August 2010 13:44koldo wrote on Wed, 25 August 2010 11:12Hello Massimo

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Max

You can provide the config file with the program. initial the file will contain a start evaluation date and an unique ID for verification.

Subject: Re: Timed demos
Posted by mdelfede on Wed, 25 Aug 2010 12:06:58 GMT
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Mhhhhh.... nope, again.
If the user erases the config file, put timer back and redo the config file from the original one, it's ok for him.
Yep, quite uncomfortable, but would defeat the purpose.

The only cheap way I see is to put in data files a small encrypted part containing last saving date and CRC of whole datafile.
BUT, then the user could not recover or modify by hand the datafile, ever, ad that's not what I need.

I think that what we need is a way to detect the changing of PC time in a reliable and portable way.

Thinking about it.... a partial solution would be to insert an encrypted date in datafiles, with CRC *ONLY* on it.
So user could edit the data by hand, but not touch at the encrypted part.... But again, if he's smart enough he could copy just the encrypted part and insert it on other files.

No more hints ?

Max

Edit : I should explain better what I want do to :

1) Put the app free to download, but limited in funcionality.
Just compiled with some missing part, impossible to crack, of course.

2) Offer the app for a monthy trial to registered users; the app gets username and expiring date hard-coded.
It's crackable, but limited to registered users.

3) Send the full-functional app without any protecton, just the user's data hard-coded on it, upon purchase.
I don't want to limit user to run it on many computers nor to have some dongle around.... Just want that who pay can use it and copy it, just have it's name on all printouts.

So, points 1 and 3 are easy, I just need a reliable way for point 2.

Max

Subject: Re: Timed demos
Posted by koldo on Wed, 25 Aug 2010 12:44:43 GMT
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Hello Massimo

I understand you. An imperfect way to solve this would be to include a encrypted file with install date and last run end somewhere hidden in the computer. With this the user would have to be careful to set the computer time a second after last run end .

Subject: Re: Timed demos
Posted by mdelfede on Wed, 25 Aug 2010 13:12:41 GMT
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koldo wrote on Wed, 25 August 2010 14:44Hello Massimo

I understand you. An imperfect way to solve this would be to include a encrypted file with install date and last run end somewhere hidden in the computer. With this the user would have to be careful to set the computer time a second after last run end .

Eh... by experience, an hidden file is the easiest stuff to find
For windows there's the registry, you can hide quite many things there, but for linux ?

Mhhhh... maybe I've got a nicer idea, which could be combined with the rest.
Access to a time server could do the job. It could be triggered randomly, and accept some failures, if the user isn't connected to the net.

Max

Subject: Re: Timed demos
Posted by nlneilson on Mon, 08 Nov 2010 21:45:09 GMT
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Hi Max

What did you end up using?

I use just a time limit for the trial, that works OK without problems.

My thoughts, intent:
Registering the commercial apps (several small ones) to the computer ID. If there is a time limit just don't worry about it. For a user for a few $$ it would be easier and more cost effective than changing the computer time.

Neil