國立交通大學

資訊科學與工程研究所

碩士論 文



Enhancing Location Privacy in WLAN using Relative Positioning

System

研究生:邱青波

指導教授:謝續平 教授

中華民國九十六年六月

利用相對定位系統來增進無線區域網路之位置隱私

研究生: 邱青波

指導教授:謝續平 博士

國立交通大學資訊科學與工程研究所碩士班

摘 要

目前使用者的位置隱私在不同的環境中都有遭受威脅的可能。在無線 區域網路的環境中,攻擊者可以透過使用者不會改變的網路卡實體位 置來達到追蹤的目的。雖然目前有很多相關的研究被提出來克服這個 問題,由於這些相關研究並未把附近移動裝置的移動行為列入考量, 因此這些目前的解決方案會錯過許多可以改善使用者位置隱私的理 想時機,也就是這些現行方案對於找到理想的網卡位置更新時機是有 困難的;此外,這些現行方案會有頻繁的無用網卡位置更新動作發生。 因此,在這篇論文中,我們提出一個以相對定位技術為基礎的方案, 透過分析每位使用者的移動行為來提高位置隱私。我們的方案藉由讓 每個移動裝置去蒐集彼此的訊號強度,並週期地將這些資訊送到特定 的伺服器作移動行為分析並決定哪些移動裝置需要更新網卡實體位 置。由實驗結果,我們的方案確實有效地減少使用者被追蹤的時間。

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Enhancing Location Privsacy in WLAN using Relative Positioning System

Student : Ching-Po Chiu

Advisor : Dr. Shiuhpyng Shieh

Department of Computer Science National Chiao Tung University

Abstract

A user's location privacy can be threatened in many different environments. In WLAN, an adversary can track a user through his/her unchanged MAC address. Although previous schemes were proposed to combat this issue, they do not take the mobile behavior of neighboring nodes into account. Therefore, these schemes may miss the opportune moment to update MAC address, i.e. they have difficulty determining the ideal time to change MAC addresses. Furthermore, they suffer from unnecessary MAC address updates. In this thesis, we propose a relative-positioning based scheme to enhance user's location privacy by analyzing the mobile behavior of each user. This scheme requires the mobile station associated with the same access point to collect the signal strength of others, and then periodically send to a centralized server for determining the stations to update MAC addresses. The experiment results showed that our scheme effectively reduces the duration of time that a user can be tracked in comparison to prior works.

Keywords

location privacy, WLAN, relative positioning system, mobile behavior

誌 謝

會有這篇論文的誕生,真的必須要感謝、感恩身邊許多人的協助, 沒有你們, 可~我應該會無法寫出這個自己生平的第一篇論文, 由衷 地感謝你們, 真的! 如果在誌謝中, 沒看到名字的朋友, 並不是因為 你們不重要或是礙於篇幅, 而是我已經把我對你們的感謝放在心中 了。

首先,對於指導教授 謝續平博士,誠摯地感謝這兩年來的指導, 一直扮演亦師亦友的角色,不管是生活上的協助,亦或研究上的指導 都讓我深感這兩年生活著實地豐富,謝謝!再來,對於一進到實驗室 時當時的碩二學長們:Jelly、厚坤、阿力、野狗、渥人,你們總是 在我無助時適時地伸出援手,讓我再再地感受到人情味實驗室的溫暖; 另外,對於博班學長也著實地感謝你們在論文最後衝刺階段的協助, 讓我可以撑了過來,特別感謝子逸學長,每次在我遇到瓶頸時都挺身 而出地給我一些想法,讓我可以再次看見曙光。對於實驗室可愛的學 弟妹們,也要謝謝你們有意沒意地打氣,哈~與你們在實驗室的這一 年,很開心!嗯~DSNS Lab, I love you all!

最後,我要感謝我的家人,在我求學路上一直默默地支持著我, 讓我可以無掛慮地完成學業;另外,也要感謝我的最愛,迪皮還有妳, 沒有你們我無法度過每個艱難、無助的時刻! Ya~ 我畢業了!

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1. Introduction

In this thesis, we focus on mitigating the problem of location privacy in wireless local area network (WLAN) and the problem was caused at the link/physical layer, i.e. the adversary tracks a particular user through the clues of MAC address and signal strength. The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows. First, in Section 1.1 we will give the background of location privacy according to current related researches. Finally, we introduce our motivation in Section 1.2.

1.1 Background

Today, the rapid development of wireless communication makes our life more convenient. For example, you can receive and send e-mail anywhere without the wired restriction, or find the nearest restaurant through the location based service (LBS). However, the broadcast nature of wireless medium makes a malicious adversary has the ability to track a user through an unchanged value. Hence, most wireless networks suffer from the threat of location privacy, such as RFID, Bluetooth, GSM, WLAN [11, 12, 15]. Basically, the location-privacy issue mainly focuses on how to prevent other malicious parties from learning one's current or past location information [13]. But perfect privacy is nearly impossible as long as communication occurs. Therefore, the research of location privacy is toward minimizing the information disclosed [14].

In WLAN, if we want to protect user's location privacy, we should first know the disclosed level of location information in each layer of OSI model. From Table 1-1 [16], we can know that the most accurate location information is either included at the application layer or can be estimated through triangulation at the link/physical layer.

| Layer | Location determination Method | Accuracy |
|-------------|-------------------------------|----------|
| Application | GPS | 10 m |
| Network | IP address / Domain name | 50 km+ |
| Link | WLAN Proximity | 50-100 m |
| Physical | WLAN Triangulation | 1-10 m |

Table 1-1 the accuracy of different location determination methods

It is unnecessary to doubt that the more accurately a user can be positioned, the higher threats the user might suffer. Therefore, many schemes were proposed for mitigating this problem. As far as the application layer is concerned, while a user needs LBS, he must tell the LBS provider his current location to achieve this goal. Therefore, the user's location information is explicitly included in the frame. If the user takes location privacy as his first priority, he can simply provide the ambiguous location information for the LBS provider [17]. Basically, this might be a tradeoff between location privacy and the correctness of LBS, and the user can actively prevent third parties from knowing his exact location. However, the broadcast nature of the link/physical layers allow an adversary can track a user through eavesdropping user's signal strength and MAC address. Hence, compared the application layer with the link/physical layer, the later is in a passive position for resisting adversary's tracking.

Next, we point out why WLAN suffers from serious threats of location privacy, and list the following reasons to describe respectively:

• The proliferation of hotspot

Due to the cost of deploying WLAN infrastructure is relative lower than GSM network, and the complexity of deployment is also relative simple. Hence, a

malicious network operator can easily deploy many access points to cover the area which an adversary is interested in. So the adversary can track a particular user in his deploying area. In other words, the user might be tracked as long as his communication occurs no matter whether the user connects to the adversary's WLAN infrastructure or not.

Insecure 802.11 frame header

Basically, the 802.11 encryption algorithms only encrypt the frame body but the frame header is kept in plaintext format. However, the frame header includes the fields of the sender's and receiver's MAC address. Therefore, if an adversary knows the relation between user identity and MAC address, the user can be tracked through the known MAC address.

Pervasive computing is entering our life

With a rapid increase in mobile devices integrated with WLAN interfaces and the proliferation of many emerging techniques (VoWLAN, LBS, etc.) that take advantage of this architecture, more and more people will likely carry a mobile device anywhere he goes. Therefore, when an adversary can track a mobile device, it indicates the adversary can track the person through the mobile device.

Accurate positioning system

Due to the radio properties of WLAN is short-range transmission. Hence, you can roughly estimate the sender's position as long as you can receive the sender's frame. In other words, the distance between you and the sender is small than transmission range (about 100 meters). If more accurate positioning system is adopted, the accuracy can be raised to 1~10 meters [6, 18]. Certainly, the more accurately a user can be positioned, the higher threat of location privacy the user will suffer from.

1.2 Motivation

As mentioned previous, the WLAN environment suffers from the threat of location privacy, and it results in the adversary can track a user through his/her unchanged MAC address. Therefore, many schemes were proposed to mitigate this problem [1, 2, 3, 5]. All the schemes allow mobile stations to update their MAC address to avoid the attacker's tracking. However, the approach in [1] enables mobile stations to update their MAC addresses only at specific time instances (e.g. before associating with access points) and the paper [2] mitigates the correlations between old and new MAC address through adding a silent period during MAC address update. Basically, the mobile stations can not transmit during the silent period. And the work [3] mainly focuses on mitigating the network overheads resulted from adopting these works [1, 2]. Finally, the approach in [4] enables a mobile station to update only when changing his velocity or direction.

Although previous schemes mitigate the adversary's tracking possibility, they do not take into account the mobile behavior of neighboring nodes. Thus, these schemes have difficulty determining the ideal time to change MAC addresses and may miss the opportune time to update. Furthermore, they suffer from unnecessary MAC address updates. Because these useless updates occur, it results in timewastage including re-association time and interface update time. Therefore, we propose a scheme to enhance a user's location privacy by analyzing the mobile behavior of its neighbors.

In order to understand our motivation more clearly, we illustrate the situation which previous works do not take into account in Figure 1-1. In Figure 1-1 we consider the scenario: two mobile stations (A and B) are tracked by an adversary. The two nodes protect their location privacy by updating their MAC address periodically.

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In this case, node A will change to new MAC address A' and node B will change to MAC address B'. Besides, in order to mitigating the possibility that the adversary link the new MAC address to old one, we assume the two nodes will not transmit any frame during silent period. And the attacker will estimate possible reachable area for each node according to the previous velocity of each node. We use the dashed circle to represent the estimated reachable area. Therefore, in Figure 1-1 (a) we discover this update is useless for both A and B. This is because there is not any overlap between A's reachable area and B's. So this update will not make the adversary confused. Nevertheless, if the two nodes update their MAC address at an opportune time (e.g. Figure 1-1 (b)), the update will make the adversary confused. Because we cannot limit the mobile behavior, what we can do is finding out the opportune time



---> node is updating MAC address and not transmitting

Figure 1-1 illustrate the different confused levels at different update time

Therefore, the motivation of this thesis is to design a scheme for protecting user's location privacy from being disclosed to the attacker with tracking ability. In addition, the goal of our study is toward reducing both the number of useless update and the opportunities for location tracking.

The rest of the thesis is organized as follows. In Chapter 2, we briefly introduce the previous works which focus on mitigating the location tracking at the link/physical layer. Next, we detail our proposed scheme in Chapter 3 by describing the consideration of design first, giving the overview of our scheme and detailing each phase. In addition, we analyze the improvement of adopting our scheme and also compare with the previous works in Chapter 4. Finally, we give a conclusion of our work.



2. Related Work

In this Chapter, we introduce the current research of location privacy, and focus on these works which provide the protection of location privacy at the physical/link layer. Due to previous works possess the inherited property, i.e. most of the later works will take the previous works as necessary components. Thus, in section 2.1 we briefly introduce the details of each work by proposed time-order. Finally, we will compare these works in section 2.2.

2.1 Overview

According to the main feature of previous works, we classify them into four classes: Dynamic-based scheme, Unlinkable scheme, Mitigating network overhead scheme and User-Centric scheme. In addition, we introduce them in proposed time-order.

2.1.1 Dynamic-based Schemes [2003, 2006]

According to the pool size of MAC address, the dynamic-based schemes can be further divided into two subclasses as follows.

• Disposable approach [1]

The scheme enhances the location privacy through shorted-lived, disposable MAC addresses and the disposable address is generated by a MD5 hash chain on a random seed. In other words, the new MAC address is randomly chosen from the pool of 2⁴⁸ MAC addresses. And this scheme enables mobile stations to update their MAC addresses only at specific time instances (e.g. before associating with access points). Besides, they assume that an attacker has already compromised some

access points, and tracks a user's movement only through the association log of each access point. Thus, the threat-level of location privacy is only within the coverage of some access point. If an attacker tracks a user through RSSI/TOA-based tracking methods, the scheme will not resist the attack effectively. However, we should take into account such more accurate tracking method.

• SWAP approach [5]

The SWAP approach enables the nodes to exchange their MAC addresses. Thus, the pool size of SWAP approach is far smaller than Disposable approach. SWAP approach has the following advantages. First, the approach does not need all the nodes to update their MAC addresses at the same time. Compared with Disposable approach, the SWAP approach could achieve the same ambiguous effect with fewer nodes participated in this update. Finally, the SWAP approach does not need any MAC address collision detection, but the approach takes many efforts for the communication of exchange identity.

2.1.2 Unlinkable Scheme [2005]

Basically, the unlinkable scheme utilizes Silent Period to decrease the opportunities that an adversary links the new MAC address to old one [2]. The Silent Period is a variable length transition period in which a user is not allowed to disclose either the old pseudonym or the new one. Due to the adoption of silent period, the possibility of both the spatial and temporal correlation attack can be reduced. Because the unlinkable scheme makes the attacker eavesdrop nothing during silent period, the attacker has no idea about the exact movement of target. Basically, the temporal attack occurs, while an adversary links the new MAC address to old one through observing the average duration of update-time. For example, if an attacker is tracking two nodes (A and B). In addition, the average durations of update-time are 2 seconds and 3 seconds for node A and B respectively. Assume that the two nodes update their MAC address at the same time, and then the adversary can break this update through the difference A's average duration of update-time and B's (i.e. 1 second). The spatial correlation attack occurs, while an adversary link the new MAC address to old one through analyzing the past velocity and direction. Although this scheme provides more protection than disposable scheme, it also makes the user unable to access the WLAN for longer time. Therefore, it is the tradeoff between location privacy and performance.

2.1.3 Mitigating Network-Overhead Scheme [2006]

The mitigating network-overhead scheme [3] attempts to minimize the network disruption as a result of adopting disposable MAC addresses. Defrawy et al. claim that the re-association process with the AP may take up to 2.5 seconds, and this process degrades the user's throughput. Therefore, the scheme takes the advantage of features derived from Mobile IP and utilizes a trusted centralized server to mapping the incoming and outgoing packets to the mobile station by the NAT-like approach. Through the cooperation between the centralized server and mobile stations, these mobile stations can effectively mitigate the overhead of re-association process for each MAC address update. However, the tracking attack which the scheme can resist is the same as Disposal scheme, i.e. both of them cannot effectively resist the RSSI/TOA-based tracking methods.

2.1.4 User-Centric Scheme [2006]

Mingyan et al. claim that each user may need privacy at different locations and times [5]. Therefore, the user-centric scheme was proposed to enable the nodes to

independently determine where/when to update their identifiers. The scheme assumes that each mobile station has GPS capability and can self-determine its location when needed on pre-loaded digital geographic maps, and is also capable of predicting any change in its velocity. So each station updates its MAC address only when its velocity or direction changes. However, the assumption mentioned above heightens the threshold of improving location privacy because of requiring additional hardware cost, i.e. GPS. In addition, it might be not so reasonable and convenient to request a pedestrian to input the destination for each move.

2.2 Comparison

In this section, we use Table 2-1 to summarize the previous works briefly. Basically, all the previous schemes assume the access point is semi-trusted, i.e. forward packes as expected but can disclose information to an adversary. In addition, Both the Disposal Scheme and Mitigating Network-Overhead Scheme only resist such attack with single observing node. In other word, they can not effectively resist triangulation-based tracking. However, the Unlikable Scheme and User-Centric Scheme can effectively resist location tracking with triangulation-based techniques.

| Scheme | Assumption | Resistible Attack | Note |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| Disposable Scheme | Semi-trusted AP | Single observing node | |
| Unlinkable Scheme | Semi-trusted AP | Triangulation | |
| Mitigating Network- | Semi-trusted AP, | Single observing node | |
| Overhead Scheme | Trusted Server | | |
| User-Centric Scheme | Semi-trusted AP | Triangulation | needs GPS |

Table 2-1 summarizes the previous works

3. Proposed Scheme

In this chapter, we propose a relative-positioning based scheme which enhances user's location privacy through analyzing the mobile behavior of user's neighboring nodes. Basically, the goal of our work is to design a system for protecting user's location privacy from being tracked through triangulation technique in WLAN. In order to achieve this goal, there are several design details we must consider. Hence, the remainder of this section is organized as follows. First, Section 3.1 presents the design challenges we must overcome, and give some ideas used to overcome these challenges. Next, Section 3.2 gives the topology of our system. Then, we will talk about the architecture of our system in Section 3.3. Finally, Section 3.4 discusses the details of each phase in our system.

3.1 The Consideration of Design

Our proposed scheme considered the following design issues, and the first one is a main goal for each scheme with dynamic MAC address. In addition, the others are our additional considerations for providing more efficient protection.

Unlinkable MAC Address

In order to prevent attacker's tracking through an unchanged MAC Address, we must adopt dynamic-based MAC Address scheme [1, 5] as a part of our system. In addition, we also combine the silent period [2] with our scheme to make the MAC Address unlinkable. Basically, silent period is defined as a transition period between using new and old MAC address in which a station is not allowed to disclose either the old or the new MAC address. Finally, if we can take our view

similar to the adversary's as possible as we could, the station can update its MAC address at opportune time. Therefore, we refer to relative positioning system [4] for helping us update MAC address at opportune time.

• Decrease Useless Update

Because every update of MAC Address will be an overhead, decreasing useless updates will improve performance for any dynamic-based MAC Address scheme. Once we can know the moving behavior of neighboring station, decreasing useless update will become possible. Compared with current works [1, 2, 3, 5] that not take the moving behavior of neighboring station into account, we believe that our system could decrease useless update to a certain extent.

Low Cost



Due to the deployment of Access point always take maximal coverage into account with minimal number of AP for low-cost purpose. Consequently, if we adopt absolute positioning system to help us take our view similar to the adversary's, it needs at least three fixed observing nodes to achieve this goal for one BSS (Basic Service Set). Furthermore, if we use additional hardware, such as GPS, to help us know the moving behavior, it's actually an additional cost. Whether absolute positioning system or GPS, both of them heighten the threshold of improving location privacy, and this is one of the reasons why we adopt the relative positioning system rather than absolute positioning system.

• Location Privacy

In general, the amount of location privacy disclosure depends on whether the third party is trustworthy or not. For an untrustworthy third party, we must prevent when possible or minimize a user's location privacy from being disclosed to an untrustworthy third party. For a trusted third party, we should control the level of a user's location privacy disclosure; therefore, we can reduce the damage to the user in the event that the trusted third party is compromised. In addition, the US Federal Communications Commission has mandated that, by December 2005, all cellular carriers be able to identify the location of emergency callers using mobile phones to within 50 to 100 meters [20]. Hence, if we adopt the same requirement in WLAN, the trusted network operator should know the access point which a mobile user currently associates with. The reason is that the WLAN proximity is about 100 meters. Therefore, this is another reason why we adopt relative positioning system rather than absolute positioning system.

In such considerations mentioned above, we proposed a cooperative scheme to enhance user's location privacy and achieve the foregoing considerations. In our scheme, we let the stations which associate with the same access point to collect the signal strength of others, and then periodically send the information to the centralized server for determining which nodes have to update.



Figure 3-1 Topology of Proposed Scheme

3.2 System Topology

Our system contains three different kinds of node (Figure 3-1), and we respectively introduce their function as follows:

• Privacy Coordinator (PC) :

A trusted centralized server for computing relative coordinates of each station and making a decision of changing MAC Address. In WLAN environment, It generally needs an AAA server for security of enterprise-level. Therefore, we can combine the *PC* into an AAA server for cost concern. But for WLAN without AAA server, it is the only additional cost. Compared with absolute positioning system and GPS, such cost is relative low. Basically we only need one *PC* to serve many BSS.

• Access Point (AP):

Its functionality is nothing different from general AP. Basically, it's responsible for forwarding frames between mobile stations and wired network. Therefore, we assume such AP is semitrusted, i.e. operate as expected but can disclose information to an adversary. In Addition, we define a special type of AP, called *Ref AP*, which is used for mobile station to determine itself whether mobile or not. If a mobile station associate with a specific AP, *Ref APs* are those APs whose packets can be received by the station in the same channel. *Ref APs* might be depolyed by the same network operator or different one.

Mobile Station (MS) :

All the MSes have to do is collecting signal strength of each MS associated with the same AP and send the information to the *PC* periodically. Besides collecting signal strength of each MS, we also let each MS to record signal strength of APs which includes *Ref APs* (if they exsits) and the AP associated by the MS. Therefore, the *PC* will know the mobile behavior of MS by through these signal information, and has the ability to do some judgements. Further, find better timing to update MAC address.

| E _k (m) S _k (m) PC AP _i RefAP _i UID _i G _i | The encryption with key k of message m. The signature with key k of message m. Privacy Coordinator. <i>i</i> -th Access Point. <i>i</i> -th mobility-reference Access Point. <i>i</i> -th user of mobile station. User-Identity of <i>i</i> -th user $G_i = \{u_1,,u_n\}$, it means a group of user $u_1,,u_n$ registered With the same access point AP. |
|---|---|
| PK | Public key of PC |
| SK | Public Key OF PC. Private key of PC |
| PK _{ui} | liser u's nublic key |
| SK _{ui} | User ui's private key. |
| GK _{Gi} | Group key of G_i . |
| TS | Timestamp |
| MAC _i | The MAC address of user u _i |
| MAC _{Gi} | The MAC address of AP _i of G _i |
| MAC_{RefAPi} | The MAC address of <i>i</i> -th mobility-reference Access Point. |
| $MAC_{Gi-\{uj\}}$ | The set of MAC address of G_i -{ u_j } |
| R _i | $R_i = \{ MAC_{RefAP1},, MAC_{RefAPn} \}$, it's the set of MAC_{RefAP} of G_i . |
| MJi | Mobile judgment of user u _i |
| SS _i | The Signal Strength of MAC |
| SS_{Gi} | The Signal Strength of AP_i of G_i |
| SS _{RefAPi} | The Signal Strength of <i>i</i> -th mobility-reference Access Point. |
| SS _{Gi-{uj}} | $SS_{Gi-{uj}} = \{(MAC_1, SS_1),, (MAC_n, SS_n)\} - \{(MAC_j, SS_j)\}, G_j = n.$ |
| t _{PC} | A constant period which PC sends Signal-Req to each user. |
| τ _{sp} | Union operation of set |
| \cup | Subtraction operation of set |
| - | Subtraction operation of set |

3.3 System Architecture

In the section, we will give an overview of our proposed scheme (Figure 3-2). Introduce how the performing process of our system is, and detail complicated parts in section 3.4. Before starting to describe our system, we define some notations in Table 3-1 to help describe clearly. On the whole, the main idea of our proposed scheme is letting the MS (u_j) which associates with AP_i to collect the signal strength of others ($\{AP_i\} \cup G_i - \{u_j\}$), and then periodically send to PC for determining which stations need to update their MAC address.



Figure 3-2 the overview of scheme

We assume that the PC has a public/private key pair (PK_{PC} , SK_{PC}), and each user (u_j) also has a public/private key pair (PK_{uj} , SK_{uj}). Therefore, when u_j who associated with AP_i wants his location privacy to be protected by the PC, u_j will send a Register-Request message to PC as follows.

Register-Req [E_{PKPc} (UID_j | |MAC_j | |MAC_{Gi} | |TS | |S_{SKuj}(UID_j | |MAC_j | | MAC_{Gi} | | TS))]

Register-Request message mainly contains user identity of u_j, the MAC address of u_j, and the MAC address of AP which u_j currently associates with. When the PC receives the message, it will verify the signature and timestamp. If both of them are valid, the PC will add u_j into G_i in Register Table. Basically, Register table is used to manage group information. The group information contains group name (i.e. MAC_{Gi}), all user's identities in the group, the current MAC address of user and the set of RefAP MAC address (R_i).

Next, the PC sends the Register-Response message to u_j and it also sends Table-Update message to all the other users in G_i . We list the two kinds of message as follows.

ALL DE LE

 $\begin{aligned} & \text{Register-Resp} \left[\left[E_{\mathsf{P}\mathsf{K}\mathsf{u}\mathsf{j}} \left(\mathsf{MAC}_{\mathsf{Gi} \{\mathsf{u}\mathsf{j}\}} \right) | \mathsf{R}_{\mathsf{i}} \right] | \mathsf{G}\mathsf{K}_{\mathsf{Gi}} | | \mathsf{TS} \right] \left[\mathsf{S}_{\mathsf{S}\mathsf{K}\mathsf{P}\mathsf{c}} \left(\mathsf{MAC}_{\mathsf{Gi} \{\mathsf{u}\mathsf{j}\}} \right) | \mathsf{R}_{\mathsf{i}} \right] | \mathsf{G}\mathsf{K}_{\mathsf{Gi}} | | \mathsf{TS} \right) \right] \\ & \text{Table-Update} \left[E_{\mathsf{G}\mathsf{K}\mathsf{G}\mathsf{i}} \left(\mathsf{add} \right) | \mathsf{MAC}_{\mathsf{j}} | | \mathsf{TS} \right] \left[\mathsf{S}_{\mathsf{S}\mathsf{K}\mathsf{P}\mathsf{c}} \left(\mathsf{add} \right) | \mathsf{MAC}_{\mathsf{j}} | | \mathsf{TS} \right) \right] \end{aligned}$

\$ 1896

Therefore, u_j will collect the signal strength of the nodes including G_i - {u_j}, MAC_{Gi} and R_i (if they exists). In other words, u_j enters the Signal-Collection Phase (discuss in section 3.4.1). Each user continues collecting the signal strength in Signal-Collection Phase until receiving the Signal-Request message. In every constant period t_{PC}, the PC sends Signal- Request to each user of G_i. After receiving the Signal-Request message, each user u_j sends the Signal-Response message to the PC. Basically, the Signal-Response message includes the mobile judgment of u_j (MJ_j), the signal strength of MAC_{Gi} and the signal strength of MAC_{Gi}-{u_j}.

Signal-Req $[E_{GK_{Gi}}(MAC_{Gi}||TS|| S_{SK_{PC}}(MAC_{Gi}||TS))]$

 $Signal-Resp \left[\ E_{PK^{pc}} \left(MJ_{j} \ | \ | \left(MAC_{Gi}, SS_{Gi} \right) | \ | SS_{Gi}_{(uj)} | \ | TS | \right) \right]$

S_{SKuj} (MJ_j | | (MAC_{Gi},SS_{Gi}) | |SS_{Gi-{uj}} | |TS))]

After receiving the Signal-Response message, the PC will enter Update-Judgment Phase (discuss in section 3.4.2) to determine those users who need to update their MAC address. After completing Update-Judgment Phase, the PC sends MAC-Update message to those users who need to update.

MAC-Update [E_{PKuj} (new MAC_j||TS||S_{SKPC} (new MAC_j||TS))]

Then, those users will send ACK to the PC, update their MAC address, and stop sending frames for silent period t_{sp} . Next, each user u_j enters Signal-Collection Phase to start another cycle again until leaving G_i . In addition, there are two methods to know whether u_j leaves G_i . One is u_j actively send Leave message to the PC. Another is the PC doesn't receive the Signal- Response from u_j . No matter which one, the PC will send the following Table-Update message to the remainder ($G_i - {u_j}$), and update their group key to new one (GK'_{Gi}). Leave [E_{PKec} (MAC_j] | MAC_{Gi} | | TS | S_{SKec} (MAC_j | | MAC_{Gi} | | TS))] Table-Update [E_{GKei} (delete | $|MAC_j$] | GK'_{Gi} | TS | S_{SKec} (delete | $|MAC_j$ | $|GK'_{Gi}$ | TS))]

3.4 Detailing the Complicated Phase

In this section, we will describe the details of Signal Collection Phase (section 3.4.1) and Update Judgment Phase (section 3.4.2).

3.4.1 Signal Collection Phase

In Signal Collection Phase, each user (u_j) belongs to G_i has to complete two things. One is collecting the signal strength of the nodes including G_i - $\{u_j\}$, MAC_{Gi} and R_i (if they exists) .In our scheme, we let u_j to maintain a table, called Signal-Table, to record the recent N numbers of signal strength information for each node. Therefore, when u_j receives the Signal-Req request, it will calculate the mean of signal strength for G_i -{ u_j } and MAC_{Gi}. Then, u_j will package the signal strength in the following format, (MAC address, Signal Strength), for later transmission of Signal-Resp message.

Another is judging u_j itself whether mobile or not in the period t_{PC} between receiving previous and current Signal-Req message. In our scheme, we use a number of RefAPs (Ri) to help us achieve this judgment. The main idea of mobile judgment is derived from pattern-based WLAN localization technique [6]. The pattern-based WLAN localization technique utilizes station at different locations to sample the signal strength of different AP. By this sample data, a mobile station can estimate its location. Therefore, we use similar idea to determine whether u_j doesn't move in the period t_{PC} . We define a threshold, S, for RefAP. In addition, SS_Mean_ $t_{PC}'_{RefAP_i}$ represents the mean of signal strength of i-th RefAP at previous period t_{PC}' . When u_j gets new SS_{RefAPi}, the following operation will be done.

896 If | new SS_{RefAPi} - SS Mean t_{PC} ' RefAP_i | > S MJ_i <- Movable

In other words, Mj_j will be set to Immobile only when every result of "| new SS_{RefAPi} - $SS_Mean_{t_{PC}}$ '_RefAP_i | " is small or equal to S in current period t_{PC} .

After completing this phase, u_j will tell the PC about the Mobile Judgment and the MAC address/Signal Strength pair of G_i -{ u_j } and MAC_{Gi} by sending the Signal-Resp message.

3.4.1 Update Judgment Phase

In Update Judgment Phase, the PC will determine which stations have to update

their MAC address through the following two steps: calculation of relative coordinate (section 3.4.2-1), judgment of mobile behavior (section 3.4.2-2).

3.4.2-1 Calculation of Relative Coordinate

Before calculating the relative coordinate for each node, the PC has to translate the signal strength into distance. For different environment concerns, many distance-dependent path loss models have been proposed [7, 8]. Therefore, we omit this part, and detail the method of relative positioning directly.

We define d_{ij} to represent the estimated distance between u_i and u_j , and d_{iG} represents the estimated distance between u_i and associated AP. After the PC receives the Signal-Resp message, the distance of each node can be estimated, i.e. we can get the following Distance Matrix (DM) with size n x (n+1).



Next, we use the relative positioning algorithm similar to Capkun's [4], and describe the algorithm briefly. Consider the scenario in which a group of n users $G_i = \{u_1, u_2, ..., u_n\}$ registered with the same AP_i cooperate with the PC. In Addition, we use Figure 3-3 to help realize the algorithm as follows.



Figure 3-3 An example for illustrating the relative positioning algorithm

The first step of our relative positioning algorithm is setting the coordinate of the AP_i to origin (0, 0). Then we choose two nodes u_i , $u_j \in G_i$ such that d_{ij} larger than zero. Next, we place the coordinate of u_i on the positive x-axis through referring to the Distance Matrix, so the coordinate of u_i is (d_{iG} , 0). In addition, calculate the angel α and the coordinate of u_j by the following operation:

$$(x_{uj},y_{uj})=(d_{iG}\cos\alpha$$
 , $d_{iG}\sin\alpha)~$, where $~\alpha=~cos^{-1}\frac{d_{jG}^2+d_{iG}^2-d_{ij}^2}{2d_{jG}d_{iG}}$

Thus, we have already known three different coordinates, and then we will use the three known coordinates to determine the coordinate (x_{uk}, y_{uk}) of u_k , where $u_k \neq u_i$, u_j . Next, we use the following operation to calculate the coordinate of u_k :

$$\begin{split} x_{uk} &= \ d_{kG} \ cos \, \beta_k \\ & \text{if } (\gamma_k = |\beta_k - \alpha|) \ \text{then} \ y_{uk} = \ d_{kG} \ sin \, \beta_k \\ & \text{else} \ y_{uk} = \ -d_{kG} \ sin \, \beta_k \\ & \text{where,} \ \beta_k = \ cos^{-1} \frac{d_{kG}^2 + d_{iG}^2 - d_{ik}^2}{2d_{kG} \, d_{iG}} \ \text{and} \ \gamma_k = \ cos^{-1} \frac{d_{jG}^2 + d_{kG}^2 - d_{jk}^2}{2d_{jG} \, d_{kG}}. \end{split}$$

Therefore, we can use the method mentioned above to calculate the remainder in G_i. After the steps of calculation of relative coordinate, we will utilize this information to judge the mobile behavior of each user and determine which users will change their MAC address.

3.4.2-2 Judgment of mobile behavior

In this step, we mainly utilize the information of previous step to find out which users may be ambiguous for the attacker. In other words, we want to take our view similar to the attacker's as possible as we could. Therefore, toward increasing the possibility of unlinkable MAC address and decreasing the possibility of useless update is our goal. Basically, we divide this step into three cases to analyze the mobile behavior of each user. One is Close-Enough case. Another is Mobile-Immobile case which analyzes two users with different mobile behavior, i.e. one is mobile, and another is immobile. The final case is Mobile-Mobile case which analyzes that two users are both in mobile status. In our scheme, if the PC can't provide any Ref AP for the users or the number of immobile users is smaller than two in current Signal-Resp message, we just have the ability to complete the Close-Enough case. Next, we define a variable, update_i, which is a MAC-address-update flag for u_i, and initialize it as false for each user before beginning the following cases. And we detail each case as follows.

i. Close-Enough case

In this case, we mainly analyze which users are close enough. Basically, the idea is derived from the possibility of error estimate for current positioning system. Therefore, we define a variable, called CET_i (Close Enough Threshold) for each group G_i, and the value of CET_i is determined by the accuracy of

triangulation which you want to resist. Therefore, we use the following simple operation to complete the analysis of Close-Enough Case.

| 1 | for j from 1 to n |
|---|--|
| 2 | for k from 1 to n |
| 3 | $\text{if} DM_{jk} \leq \ CET_i \ \text{and} \ j \ \neq \ k$ |
| 4 | then update _j <- true , update _k <- true |

After Close-Enough case, we have marked those users with a close enough neighbor. Next, the Mobile-Immobile and Mobile-Mobile case will be executed, only if the current Signal-Resp message includes at least two immobile users. The reason is judging a user's mobile direction and velocity in 2D-plane. We need at least three immobile points to refer. Because the AP_i is one of the three immobile nodes, we just need two immobile nodes more. In addition, our scheme will record the previous (x'_{uj}, y'_{uj}) and current coordinate (x_{uj}, y_{uj}) of each user u_j for the judgment of the user's mobile behavior. Finally, if the current Signal-Resp message includes at least two immobile users, there is a little bit different in our relative positioning algorithm. We will set the current coordinate of immobile users equal to previous coordinate. Then the PC utilizes these current coordinates of immobile nodes including AP_i to find out the coordinates of the remainder by similar way in section 3.4.2-1.

ii. Mobile-Immobile case

We utilize the previous (x'_{ui}, y'_{ui}) and current coordinate (x_{ui}, y_{ui}) of each user u_i to realize the mobile behavior about direction and velocity. Therefore, we will discuss the case, where one is mobile and the other is immobile. Basically, this case mainly analyzes whether there is an immobile user u_i close enough to a mobile user u_k 's future path (i.e. from (x_{uk}, y_{uk}) to (x_{uk}'', y_{uk}'')) in silent period t_{sp} . If this situation holds, it is an opportune time to make the attacker ambiguous. We use Figure 3-4 to help realize the analyzing process. Figure 3-4 (a) is an example for illustrating the previous mention, and Figure 3-4 (b) illustrates how to know whether the close-enough situation holds or not.



Figure 3-4 illustrating the Mobile-Immobile case

The gray node represents a mobile user u_k , and the blue node represents a immobile user u_j . We divide the group G_i into two set, i.e. a mobile set and an immobile set. For each user u_k who belongs to the mobile set will do the following operations for each user u_j who belongs to the immobile set.

Step 1: Calculate the straight-line equation of $\boldsymbol{\ell}_{uk}$ by previous coordinate $(x_{uk}^{'}, y_{uk}^{'})$ and current coordinate (x_{uk}, y_{uk}) of the mobile user u_k .

Step 2: Calculate the straight-line equation of ℓ_{uj} which is both orthogonal to

 $\boldsymbol{\ell}_{uk}$ and passes the coordinate of the immobile user uj (x_{uj}, y_{uj}) .

Step 3: Calculate the coordinate ($x_{uk}^{''}$, $y_{uk}^{''}$) by

$$(x_{uk}^{''}, y_{uk}^{''}) = (x_{uk}, y_{uk}) + \frac{V_{uk} \times t_{sp}}{V_{uk} \times t_{PC}} (x_{uk} - x_{uk}^{'}, y_{uk} - y_{uk}^{'})$$
, where $v_{uk} = \frac{\sqrt{(x_{uk} - x_{uk}^{'})^2 + (y_{uk} - y_{uk}^{'})^2}}{t_{PC}}$

Step 4: Calculate the coordinate (x_s, y_s) by solving the linear system of equation,

i.e. ℓ_{uk} and ℓ_{uj} .

- Step 5: if the following two situations both hold, we will set true for $update_j$ and $update_k$.
- Situation 1:

 (x_s, y_s) is an element of the set which contains the solution set of the line ℓ_{uk} between $(x_{uk}^{''}, y_{uk}^{''})$ and (x_{uk}, y_{uk}) .

Situation 2:

The distance d between (x_{uj}, y_{uj}) and the line ℓ_{uk} is small or equal to CET_i (Close Enough Threshold).

iii. Mobile-Mobile case

In the Mobile-Mobile case, we only discuss the case that both the two users are in mobile status. Basically, this case mainly analyzes whether two mobile users (u_j, u_k) will cross each other in the future path of silent period t_{sp} . If this situation holds, it is an opportune update-time to make the attacker ambiguous. We use Figure 3-5 to explain the analyzing process. Figure 3-5 (a) is an example for illustrating the previous mention, and Figure 3-5 (b) illustrates how to know whether the intersection-situation holds or not.



Figure 3-5 illustrating the Mobile-Mobile case

The gray node and blue node respectively represent the mobile user u_k and u_j . For each user u_k who belongs to the mobile set will do the following operations for each user u_j who belongs to the mobile set.



($x_{uk}^{'}$, $y_{uk}^{'}$) and current coordinate (x_{uk} , y_{uk}) of the mobile user u_k.

Step 2: Calculate the straight-line equation of ℓ_{uj} by previous coordinate $(x_{uj}^{'}, y_{uj}^{'})$ and current coordinate (x_{uj}, y_{uj}) of the mobile user u_j .

Step 3: Calculate the coordinate $(x_{uk}^{^{\prime\prime}},y_{uk}^{^{\prime\prime}})$ by

$$(x_{uk}^{''}, y_{uk}^{''}) = (x_{uk}, y_{uk}) + \frac{V_{uk} \times t_{sp}}{V_{uk} \times t_{PC}} (x_{uk} - x_{uk}^{'}, y_{uk} - y_{uk}^{'})$$
, where $v_{uk} = \frac{\sqrt{(x_{uk} - x_{uk}^{'})^2 + (y_{uk} - y_{uk}^{'})^2}}{t_{PC}}$

Step 4: Calculate the coordinate $(x_{uj}^{''}, y_{uj}^{''})$ by the method similar to Step3.

Step 5: Calculate the coordinate (x_s, y_s) by solving the linear system of equation ℓ_{uk} and ℓ_{uj} .

Step 6: if either the following situation holds, we will set true for update $_j$ and update $_k$.

- Situation 1: (x_s, y_s) is an element of the set which contains the solution set of the line ℓ_{uk} between $(x_{uk}^{''}, y_{uk}^{''})$ and (x_{uk}, y_{uk}) and (x_s, y_s) is also an element of the set which contains the solution set of the line ℓ_{uj} between $(x_{ui}^{''}, y_{uj}^{''})$ and (x_{uj}, y_{uj}) .
- Situation 2: the distance d between $(x_{uk}^{''}, y_{uk}^{''})$ and $(x_{uj}^{''}, y_{uj}^{''})$ is small or equal to CET_i (Close Enough Threshold).

3.4.2 -3 Update MAC address

After completing the judgment of mobile behavior, we will choose a new MAC address for the user u_j whose update_j has been set to true. Then, we use a Spatio-Temporal Addressing [9] to generate a new MAC address for avoiding collision. Basically, the main idea of Spatio-Temporal Addressing is based on the fact that two objects cannot exist at the same location at the same time. Therefore, we can achieve this goal of avoiding collision through an injection function .Finally, we send MAC-Update message to those users who need to update MAC address.

4. Evaluation

In this chapter, we mainly point out the improvement of our scheme on the two factors, unlinkable MAC address and useless update. Therefore, we will compare our proposed scheme with the prior arts [1, 2], and the remainder of this section is organized as follows. We first describe our simulation setup in section 4.1, and analyze the simulation result in section 4.2.

4.1 Simulation Setup

Our simulation environment is a 60m*60m 2-dimentional grid-area, and all mobile users move within this area by random walking model. The random walking model defines the patterns of moving direction $[\leftarrow, \uparrow, \rightarrow, \downarrow]$, the probability of moving direction $[p_{\leftarrow}, p_{\uparrow}, p_{\rightarrow}, p_{\downarrow}]$, velocity range $[v_{min}, v_{max}]$ and the probability of changing velocity $[p_+, p_{no}, p_-]$ (i.e. [speed up, unchanged, slow down]). In our simulation, we set the parameters of random walking model as follows:

- **↓** $[p_{\leftarrow}, p_{\uparrow}, p_{\rightarrow}, p_{\downarrow}] = [0.15, 0.65, 0.15, 0.05]$
- $= [v_{\min}, v_{\max}] = [0, 3] \text{ with unit (m/s)}$
- [p+, pno, p]= [0.1,0.8,0.1] with unit (1 m/s)

The values of these parameters take the mobile behavior of pedestrian into account. In addition, in order to make our simulation analogous to real wireless propagation. We actually measure the relation between signal strength and distance (1-meter interval) for the wireless interface of the mobile station and AP in an obstacle-less environment. We also log the signal-strength/distance information for later use. Finally, we use a similar way [10] to obtain an empirical path loss model for both the mobile station and AP. Hence, when a node (u_i) wants to send a frame, all the other nodes can obtain the signal strength by the log information. In other words, all the other nodes will randomly choose a signal-strength value from the log information according to the distance between u_i and themselves. And then the PC translates the signal strength to distance by the empirical path loss model.

Next, we describe the tracking model used by attackers. First, the attackers will divide all the users into two type, target and disturber. Target is the user who the attackers are interested in, and Disturber is the user who will disturb the attackers to track target. In addition, the attackers utilize the same empirical path loss model to obtain the distance information, and track the targets by triangulation. Finally, when a target u_j update its MAC address and doesn't transmit any frame for a random period, the attackers will randomly pick an unobserved MAC address to track from the circle area,(i.e. the center of circle is the missing point of u_j , and the circle area is $t_{sp} \times v_{max}$). We use Figure 4-1 to illustrate this situation. So the adversary will randomly pick from these users including u_j , u_k and u_m .



 \rightarrow node can be tracked by the same MACaddress

node is updating MAC address and not transmitting

Figure 4-1 illustrating which users will be picked as target

4.2 Simulation Result and Analysis

Due to the prior works [1,2] analyzed the factor ,unlikable MAC address, through measuring how long a node can be tracked continuously. Therefore, we will use similar factor to evaluate the performance of our proposed scheme and realize the enhancement of "unlinkable MAC address".



Figure 4-2 CDF of tracking time

STATES .

We show the simulation result of unlikable MAC address in Figure 4-2, which is plotted as a cumulative distribution function. The curve indicates the percentage of nodes (y-axis) that can be tracked for no more than a specified duration (x-axis). The "Only Change MAC" curve indicates the system which only adopts disposable MAC address scheme [1]. Next, the "change MAC with 2s silent period" means the system will stop sending frames about 2 seconds after each update of MAC address [2]. Finally, the "My Scheme with 2s silent period" indicates the system adopts our proposed scheme. Now, consider the fifth tracking round of x-axis. In our scheme, there are only about 30% nodes can be tracked after the 5th tracking round. This value is smaller than both the disposable scheme (70%) and silent-period scheme (50%). Therefore, our scheme effectively reduces the duration of time that a user can be tracked.



Figure 4-3 Comparison of maximal tracking round

Next, we show the comparison of maximal tracking round for each scheme in Figure 4-3. In our scheme the whole users can be traced at most 9 rounds. The value is far smaller than 27 rounds of disposal scheme and also smaller than 14 rounds of silent-period scheme. In other words, our scheme has the ability to obtain higher location privacy within less time.



Figure 4-4 Comparison of useless MAC address update

Finally, we analyze the improvement of useless MAC address update in Figure 4-4. Figure 4-4(a) shows that we conserve 67% useless MAC address updates as compared our scheme with disposable scheme. In addition, compared with silent period scheme we also conserve about 35% useless MAC address updates (Figure 4-4 (b)). This result substantially reduces the number of useless update and improves the performance of each user.

5. Conclusion.

In this thesis, we first described the problem of prior works without considering the mobile behavior of neighboring nodes. Furthermore, we pointed out that the drawbacks mainly derived from not taking mobile behavior into account, i.e. useless update and missing the opportune moment to update. So we proposed a new scheme to enhance location privacy through relative positioning system and the analysis of mobile behavior. By the experiment result, the duration of time that the whole users can be tracked respectively reduces to one-third and nine-fourteens as compared with prior works. In addition, our scheme also respectively conserves 67% and 35% useless MAC address updates as compared with prior works. Therefore, our scheme obviously has the ability to enhance effectively the user's location privacy within minimal time and reduce the wastage of useless MAC address update.

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