December 07, 2017

Domain restricted secure podcasts

Dustin Beutin

Domain restricted secure podcasts

ABSTRACT

This disclosure describes techniques to securely provide access to audio files across desktop and mobile devices. The audio files, e.g., audio recordings that are part of a podcast, are converted to multimedia files of similar filesize. The converted files, which can optionally include a graphic related to the audio, are uploaded to secure, view-only cloud storage and configured for access by selected users, e.g., users within a particular domain. Access to the files is provided by a widget that can enable users to play the audio via any desktop or mobile device that can access the cloud storage service.

KEYWORDS

- Podcast
- Cloud storage
- Audio file
- Domain-restricted podcast

BACKGROUND

A number of platforms, applications, and products are available to host audio recordings - sometimes referred to as “Podcasts” - for public access. However, current technologies are limited with regard to secure mechanisms for sharing such podcasts among users. Such limitations include cumbersome processes that require users to login to access podcasts, security measures that are insufficient to ensure privacy and confidentiality of the content, etc. To make podcasts available securely, current platforms require use of workarounds. While some custom-built secure podcast sharing applications are available, such applications are not universally accessible, e.g., are limited to specific operating systems, user devices, etc.

Audio recordings can be uploaded to a folder in cloud storage, e.g., file storage services offered by cloud providers. Such services can be configured to provide secure access to the folder to specific users, e.g., "view only" and "non-downloadable" access. However, such configuration may prevent users from playing the podcasts with some devices, e.g., mobile devices. Further, the upload and access procedures can be cumbersome.

DESCRIPTION

This disclosure describes techniques to enable users to play view-only and non-downloadable audio content securely on mobile and desktop devices. The audio content, e.g., podcast, is uploaded to cloud storage and specific users are provided with secure access to the folder.

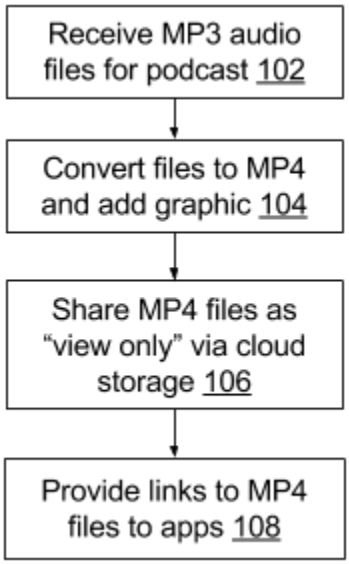

Fig. 1: Generating and sharing secure podcast via cloud storage

Fig. 1 illustrates generating and sharing secure podcast via cloud storage. Audio files, e.g., encoded as an MPEG Layer III, are received (102) for provision as a secure podcast. The files are converted (104) to a multimedia format, e.g., MPEG-4. During the conversion, a

graphic is optionally added to the files. Further, the frame rate of the MP4 files is reduced to a low setting, e.g., the lowest possible setting, typically one frame per 5 seconds. Reducing the frame rate of the MP4 podcast (with the graphic) to its lowest setting ensures that the resulting MP4 filesize is comparable to an equal-length MP3 file. Thus, the cost (in terms of data) of downloading or streaming MP4 files with the graphic is approximately equal to that of the audio-only (MP3) version of the file. Further, during playback, the graphic added to the MP4 file acts as a title card and provides a visual appearance similar to that of a podcast playing on a traditional podcast platform.

The MP4 files are uploaded to a folder within cloud storage and shared with individuals, groups, or aliases securely as non-downloadable "view only" files (106). The files are named sequentially, e.g., episode 1, episode 2, etc. To facilitate sharing, links to the MP4 files and/or corresponding folders are provided (108) as widgets or applets that can be embedded within a website or applications as access-points for the respective folder.

The podcasts as described herein can be accessed from mobile and desktop devices or apps. The podcast can be shared securely with individuals, groups, and/or aliases within an organization, e.g., that is configured for access to the folder. For example, users that have been provided access can simply select and play a file without having to login or enter security codes.

The present techniques are particularly useful to individuals and organizations that have a need to provide audio-only versions of events for easier and faster communication and sharing, while preserving security of the shared content. Also, secure and private communications can be ensured by restricting access to only users of a specific domain.

CONCLUSION

This disclosure describes techniques to securely provide access to audio files across desktop and mobile devices. The audio files, e.g., audio recordings that are part of a podcast, are converted to multimedia files of similar filesize. The converted files, which can optionally include a graphic related to the audio, are uploaded to secure, view-only cloud storage and configured for access by selected users, e.g., users within a particular domain. Access to the files is provided by a widget that can enable users to play the audio via any desktop or mobile device that can access the cloud storage service.