Wireless Ad hoc Networks:

Dynamic Resource Location Discovery

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a generic service which allows a device to discover the location of other devices in an ad hoc network. The service has advantages in a variety of scenarios, since it does not rely on location infrastructures such as GPS satellites or GSM cellular base stations. An outline of the technology that will be needed to realize the service is given, along with a look at the fundamental security issues which surround the use of this location discovery service. The emergence of wireless technology has provided a catalyst for industry and academia to develop numerous new applications and services. How the underlying wireless technology works dictates what services can be provided.

Keywords : GPS, Device Discovery, Ad hoc Network, etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

Ad hoc networks are potentially very useful in certain scenarios, such as emergency response networks, where a dynamic set of entities, such as police, fire services, paramedics and other agencies, need to intercommunicate in an environment where no communications infrastructure exists, either because there was none to start with or because it has been destroyed by a disaster.

In this paper we present a service that can be provided in an ad hoc network environment that enables the location of an object to be determined by appropriately authorized users. This is achieved using ad hoc network routing principles, so that there is no need for an expensive communications infrastructure. The first scenario involves the use of the service to locate a vehicle. One case where such a service would be useful is where a driver walks into a car park but forgets where his car is parked. The user‘s mobile phone can form an ad hoc network with all the cars in the car park, including the user‘s car and other ad hoc capable devices.

A second scenario involves locating items of stock in a warehouse. We suppose that the stock items contain devices capable of forming an ad hoc network. When a warehouse worker wishes to locate an item in the warehouse, the stock items create an ad hoc network which is used to indicate the location of the desired item to the warehouse worker.

A third application is military, appropriately given that research in the use of ad hoc networks was originally driven by military scenarios. The ability to accurately locate military devices and personnel has obvious advantages in battlefield scenarios.

Yet another set of applications is provided by the _active office' environment [9, 25]. Here, users or even an automated telephone system can locate where colleagues are located within an _active' building, e.g. to route telephone calls. Alternatively, a user's PC work environment might be automatically transferred to a display adjacent to their location.

2. TERMINOLOGY

The following terms are used in this document, but may be used differently elsewhere.

(a) A node is a device which has a network interface that is participating in the ad hoc network's routing service.

(b) A locating device is a node which wishes to discover the location of other nodes, known as targeted devices.

(c) A node is a neighbor node of another node if it is only one hop away and within direct transmission range.

(d) If the destination node is not a neighbor node of the originator node, the data packet will have to traverse a multi-hop route consisting of intermediate nodes.

(e) In a specific scenario, the sending node is the last node to have forwarded the data packet.

There are two types of location discovery. The first is absolute location where a node learns the exact geographical location of a targeted device, to a certain degree of accuracy. The second is relative location where a locating device will discover the location of the target device relative to its own location, e.g. in terms of which direction the targeted device is located.

3. AD HOC NETWORKS

The motivation for using ad hoc networks for this location discovery application is that ad hoc networks have the potential to be deployed anywhere, leading to true pervasive computing. They are thus not subject to environmental limitations which may prevent other technologies from working. Also, the multi-hop nature of ad hoc networks means that each device does not need

sophisticated and potentially power hungry wireless communications facilities to be able to exchange information with the whole network. We assume the existence of an ad hoc network independent of any infrastructure, although there may, of course, be limited infrastructure available.

This service makes use of ad hoc routing protocols to disseminate information. We will describe an application protocol that runs over an ad hoc network. This creates various requirements on the underlying network architecture.

There are two main types of ad hoc network routing protocol, namely proactive and reactive protocols. Within these categories, individual schemes use a variety of techniques to find and maintain routes. Most routing protocols are table-driven, where information is processed and stored in routing tables, but other methods have been proposed.

Reactive protocol operation is typically divided into route discovery cycle and route maintenance. A node initiates route discovery when it needs to send a data packet to a destination whose route is unknown. This typically involves broadcasting some form of route request message, where an intermediate node or the destination node itself can provide the originator node with a reply containing the route to the destination. Route maintenance is required, as there are no periodic route update messages.

Examples of reactive routing schemes are the Ad hoc On-Demand Distance Vector (AODV) protocol [15]; Dynamic Source Routing (DSR) [12], which use _source routes‘; and Location Aided Routing (LAR) [23], which uses geographical coordinates to increase the efficiency of routing.

Pro-active protocols use periodic topology updates to disseminate route information throughout the whole network, but try to minimize the information being sent in order to save bandwidth. Various techniques are used to achieve this, as exemplified by the Optimized Link State Routing (OLSR) [5] and Topology Broadcast Reverse Path Forwarding (TBRPF) [3] protocols.

4. THE LOCATION DISCOVERY SERVICE

We now give an overview of the service and introduce some terminology. An outline is then given of possible technologies that may be used to provide the service.

We suppose that the user has a collection of wireless-enabled devices, perhaps as part of a Personal Distributed Environment (PDE) [7]. When the user wishes to locate a device beyond the radio range of its own device, they can do so using one of the devices in an ad hoc network.

The locating device may or may not be currently operating in the ad hoc network being used to provide the location service. If not, the user must first perform whatever operation is required to make the device join this ad hoc network, including providing any necessary authentication credentials. Once this has been achieved, the user will need to specify the identity of the device to be located.

The location discovery service is provided using a special pair of messages sent through the ad hoc network. The location device broadcasts the identifier of the targeted device throughout the ad hoc network using a TrackingRequest message. When the targeted device receives the TrackingRequest, it uncast a DirectionReply to the locating device. this DirectionReply is forwarded back to the locating device via intermediate nodes. When the locating device receives the DirectionReply it uses location information contained within the Message to determine the direction and distance of the targeted device. The contents and format of the location information will depend on the underlying technology being used.

As the nodes may be mobile, the service could be periodically re-run, so that the targeted device periodically sends a Directionreply. To save power, the targeted device could even be instructed to sleep, checking less incoming messages. It could be instructed to wake when it expects to be located by the locating device.

Possible advantages offered by this application include that it allows smaller devices with restricted battery power to participate, and not every device needs location aware hardware such as a GPS receiver. The service is designed to cope without an infrastructure, but is capable of taking advantage of an infrastructure should it be available.

The success of the service will depend on the density of ad hoc network deployment in the area in which the user is located. If there are no nodes to form an ad hoc route from the user to the target device, then clearly the system will not work.

5. REQUIREMENTS AND ARCHITECTURE

this is providing the requirements on devices that are to be involved in the provision of this service, and introduced two possible scenarios—an infrastructure based scenario, and a pure ad hoc network based scenario.

5.1 Requirements

Every device which is to be located using the scheme described here must be capable of broadcasting its identifier. Any device that the user wants to use as a locating device will need to store the identifiers of all the devices that the user may wish to locate. All devices should be able to operate within the ad hoc network using the existing routing protocols.

The locating device will need to have a measure of location-awareness, i.e. to have some information about its current location. This is necessary in order for the locating device to be able to provide a user-accessible interpretation of the location information it receives regarding the targeted device. The location-awareness may be absolute and precise, e.g. as provided by a GPS receiver, or it may only be relative to some other device.

The locating device will also need a user interface capable of conveying location information to the user. This might be achieved using a compass style direction indicator, or a more sophisticated graphical display. Current mobile phones and PDAs will clearly be adequate in this respect.

The requirements on the devices to be located will depend on the environment of use, and we now describe some possible usage scenarios.

5.2 Infrastructure Based Tracking

The first scenario makes use of an existing location infrastructure, and we use the setting of a car park. We suppose that the target device is the user‘s car. The car park is divided into zones, and each zone has a beacon device. These beacons simply transmit their identities either periodically, or upon request (which may be authenticated). Each car has a means of receiving and processing information from the beacons, and is also capable of acting as a member of an ad hoc network.

5.3 Ad hoc Tracking

In the second scenario, again concerned with locating a car, we suppose that either one or both of the mobile phone and car is not within range of a location infrastructure device. Here we need an alternative means of relaying the location information to the user. As the targeted device cannot be sure whether the locating device is linked to an infrastructure location node, it has to provide location information which is not dependent on the infrastructure.

The location information could thus be relayed in one of the following ways:

(a) Physical Route Method: This is similar to how a source route in the DSR protocol is constructed. Here, each intermediate node appends the direction from which it received the DirectionReply message to the Physical route field of the packet. This provides the locating device with a sequence of directions to follow in order to reach the targeted device.

(b) Periodic Beaconing Method: Every intermediate node which receives the DirectionReply message periodically broadcasts the identifier of the targeted device, and the direction from which the DirectionReply was received. Thus, as the locating device moves within transmission range of an intermediate node, it can pick up the beacon. This is particularly useful when the targeted device is mobile and periodically sends a DirectionReply message to indicate its new location. Also, the hop count may be included in the DirectionReply message, indicating how many hops away the targeted device is. Thus the locating device can determine that it is getting closer to the targeted device, as the hop count in the received DirectionReply messages decreases.

6. LOCATION TECHNOLOGY OVERVIEW

We now propose a variety of location determining techniques which could be used to help deliver the desired service. With each scheme we provide a discussion of its relative advantages and disadvantages in the context of the location service.

6.1 The GPS Method

If both the locating device and targeted device can discover their coordinates using GPS, then the targeted device can send its coordinates to the locating device via a DirectionReply message. The locating device can readily combine the received coordinates with its own coordinates to calculate the distance and direction of the targeted device.

However, if the locating device does not know the direction in which it is pointing, it will not be able to convey this direction information in a useful form to the user. Determining the orientation of the locating device will require the device to move. In such a case the device could use its new coordinates and the previous coordinates to display a direction for the user to move towards the targeted device. This feature exists with many current GPS devices [24]. However, the disadvantage of using GPS is that it is very inaccurate indoors. Hence, using GPS would not be suitable for the warehouse scenario. Also, in this situation, GPS may not be accurate enough to pinpoint individual items.

However, the car parking scenario could readily use the GPS method, as many cars are equipped with GPS capable devices. The locating device does not need to be GPS capable, as the cars themselves can calculate a relative location for the locating device to use.

Military scenarios could use the Precise Positioning Service (PPS) [24], which give an even greater accuracy than the civilian enabled Standard Positioning Service (SPS) [24].

However, there are many disadvantages to using GPS, as has been widely discussed [19]. The relatively high cost of equipment and the lack of accuracy indoors are among the main issues with using GPS [9].

6.2 The Smart Antenna Method

If a mobile device is equipped with a directional antenna, then this could be used to help provide the location discovery service. Ramanathan [18] gives an overview of the possible uses of such antennas in ad hoc network, along with a discussion of possible advantages and disadvantages. Directional antennas can be used to help provide the service described in this paper through Direction of Arrival (*DOA) techniques. DOA techniques attempt to determine the direction from which a radio transmission has been received.

If the wireless device can determine from which direction a transmission was received, then this information can be included in the DirectionReply messages. If a device is also fitted with an electronic compass, then the DirectionReply could also include a compass heading.

The use of smart (directional) antennas would allow the service to be provided in the absence of any pre-existing location measurement infrastructure. Line of sight problems can be overcome, since the path from the locating device to the targeted device can go around obstacles.

The main disadvantage of using directional antennas for wireless communication is the size and relative cost. However, as Ramanathan [18] states, antenna size is decreasing as technology becomes more advanced.

6.3 DOA for Omnidirectional Antennas

A possible DOA technique for devices with omnidirectional antennas is as follows. This idea uses the same techniques that the human brain uses to determine the direction from which sound originates. A device would need two aerials spaced as widely as possible. As the device receives a reply it can determine the DOA of the Directional Reply by measuring the differences between the strengths, frequencies and times of the two received signals.

Harter et al. [9] apply a similar technique by measuring the time difference between two _bats' in order to determine the orientation of an object. they state that the greater the distance between the _bats' the better the orientation measure.

The Cricket compass scheme [17] uses the differences in distance between sensors on a device to determine orientation. However, the authors state that, with current technology, this cannot be achieved reliably, and so they outline other techniques to improve the accuracy of their system.

7. SECURITY REQUIREMENTS

The security concerns lie largely with privacy and authentication. In a hostile environment, where there may exist many nodes from multiple domains, it is possible that some nodes cannot be trusted.

An unauthorized node is defined as one which is not authorized to view location information or infer location information regarding a targeted device.

One possible security requirement is that it should not be possible for an unauthorized node to link target and locating devices. Doing so compromises the privacy of both the target device and the locating device. For example, if an unauthorized node discovers that locating device A is requesting the location of target device B, then it may be able to deduce that A is related to B. In the car park scenario, the unauthorized node could deduce that a particular car is owned by a certain person.

Another security requirement may be that it should not be possible for an unauthorized node to acquire information linking target and locating devices by posing as a targeted device, posing as a locating device, passively eavesdropping on communications, or by subverting a valid target device or locating device. For example, due to the likely mobile nature of devices used in ad hoc network, the probability that they may be lost or stolen is greater than with desktop computers. For this reason, particular attention must be paid to prevent access to information in compromised devices.

Security requirements may also extend to preventing unauthorized nodes learning of a device‘s presence. Not only should it be impossible for an unauthorized node to find the precise location of nodes, it should also not be possible for them to learn the existence of such nodes.

If a traditional authentication mechanism is being used, then node existence may be inferred by receiving messages which deny access to location information. Looking at the military scenario as an example, when an enemy receives a message stating that access to some location information is denied, then they may still deduce a node exists in the direction from which the signal was received, which is an undesirable property. in this case, anonymity may also be a requirement.

An unauthorized node should not be able to acquire location information by replaying intercepted messages. This means that replay prevention is required.

Finally, it is also prudent to mention user acceptance of location systems, since this is both an important issue in its own right and a driver for security in such schemes. Some techniques, such as the location tracking and prediction service proposed by Liu, Bahl and Chlamtac [14], could arouse opposition and a low uptake of the service could potentially result.

Such a reaction could occur despite the fact that, as in this latter case, the service could enhance connection reliability by managing cell handoffs more effectively.

8. POSSIBLE SECURITY SOLUTIONS

Securing the routing of protocol messages should be the responsibility of the underlying ad hoc routing protocol. For example, the routing protocol should provide availability, so that if a route exists between a locating device and a targeted device, then the service should be successful in sending the location discovery service messages between the two. There are already several papers on this topic (see, for example, [26]), so we do not address this issue further here.

The control of access to the location discovery service is clearly an important issue. Conventionally, this requires the use of an authentication mechanism. This might be possible in the car park scenario, so that only locating devices within the car park, and maybe only those locating devices which have subscribed, can use the location discovery service. However, where an infrastructure does not exist it will be difficult to provide an authentication mechanism; indeed, one of the advantages of the

proposed service is that it can be provided by a set of ad ho devices which meet for the first time. One possible solution would involve device manufacturers collaborating to support a key management infrastructure for all mobile devices.

Our service has the advantage over conventional ad ho network security schemes that we can assume that the locating device and the targeted device have a security association. This is likely to have been set up by the owner of both the devices. Thus both symmetric and asymmetric cryptography could be used to provide end-to-end protection.

9. RELATED WORK

Much research has already been performed in this area, and many schemes have been proposed that offer a similar location tracking service using different technologies. However, not much has been written about the associated security issues. We now give an overview of the advantages and disadvantages of the various existing techniques, and also, where relevant, highlight the security concerns which have been raised. Hightower and Borriello [10] provide taxonomy of location systems and give a survey of current research.

The _Active Badge' location system [25] provides a similar service, but in an indoor environment. this system relies on infra-red technology, where sensors detect periodic signals emitted by _Active Badges'. these signals are collated and processed by a central server. this information is either relayed via a desktop application, or used to automate the routing of telephone calls in a Public Branch Exchange (PBX) telephony network. The _Active Badge' successor, the _BAT' system [9], uses ultrasound techniques. the main difference between our scheme and the _Active Badge' system is that the latter depends on a infrastructure backbone and a central server, the presence of which cannot be assumed in an ad hoc network. Also, Hightower and Borriello [10] highlight the limitations of using infrared and ultrasound technology. Want et al. [25] discuss the privacy issues arising from use of the Active badge system. In particular, they consider concerns about the misuse of location information and giving users the right not to wear Active badges.

The _EasyLiving' tracking system [13] uses computer vision techniques to track the location of people in an indoor intelligent environment. Stereo camera images in the room are analyzed for _blobs', which are used to form the shape of a human figure, and additional information such as color histograms are used for identification purposes. So, while the application is similar to ours,

_EasyLiving' provides a more specialized system, which again relies on an indoor infrastructure and probably also does not scale well.

10. FUTURE WORK

The next logical step in this research would involve an investigation into the messages transferred in this scheme. This would enable a quantitative measurement to be made of the cost of deployment of such a scheme. Further, simulation of this scheme would enable an analysis of its efficiency.

Research in the underlying technologies which would enable this service to function, such as those touched to create greater efficiency in location calculation. This, of course, would also improve the general efficiency of this scheme.

11. CONCLUSIONS

We have shown how a locating service may be useful in a variety of scenarios, and we have introduced the notion of providing such a service using ad hoc network routing principles. In particular, we have shown the requirements of an infrastructure for such a service and evaluated ways in which this may be implemented using a variety of different technologies. Security requirements for the deployment of such a service with a focus on authentication and privacy with corresponding solutions have been discussed. An overview of solutions proposed by other authors has also been provided. Finally, we examined future directions for this research.

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