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Unified Platform for Secure Networked Information Systems

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Unified Platform for Secure Networked Information Systems

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we present a unified declarative platform for specifying, implementing, analyzing and auditing large-scale secure information systems. Our proposed system builds upon techniques from logic-based trust management systems, declarative networking, and data analysis via provenance. First, we propose the Secure Network Datalog (SeNDlog) language that unifies Binder, a logic-based language for access control in distributed systems, and Network Datalog (NDlog), a distributed recursive query language for declarative networks. SeNDlog enables network routing, information systems, and their security policies to be specified and implemented within a common declarative framework. Second, we extend existing distributed recursive query processing techniques to execute SeNDlog programs that incorporate the notion of authenticated communication among untrusted nodes. Third, we demonstrate that an integrated declarative framework enables cross-layer analysis and auditing via the use of distributed network provenance. Finally, using a local cluster and the PlanetLab testbed, we perform a detailed performance study of a variety of declarative secure networked information systems implemented using our platform. We further perform an evaluation of network provenance via a SeNDlog-based packet tracing service within a local cluster.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, we have witnessed a proliferation of networked information systems deployed at Internet-scale for a variety of application domains ranging from Internet monitoring infrastructures, publish-subscribe systems, to content distribution networks. Despite their widespread usage, designing and implementing these large-scale systems remains a challenge, in part because of the sheer scale of deployment, but also due to emerging security threats.

In response, there have been several proposals aimed at evolving the underlying network infrastructure to provide better support for accountability [6, 19], efficient packet tracing [30] and flow analysis [33], all are geared towards better tools for analyzing and securing networks. Surprisingly few of these proposals have been integrated in a useful manner in existing networked information systems, or have any significant impact on the design of new distributed query engines. We argue that the reasons are two-fold. First, these mechanisms are typically designed to tackle specific security threats at the underlying network, without taking into account content distribution and information processing at higher layers. Second, they are often afterthought, implemented and enforced in a different language or environment from the networks that they are trying to protect, hence raising the barrier for adoption.

As a step towards the integration of networked information systems with security policies, we present a unified declarative platform for specifying, implementing, analyzing and auditing large-scale secure information systems. Our work has largely been inspired by recent efforts at using declarative languages that are aimed at simplifying the process of specifying and implementing security policies and networks. Our paper builds upon and unifies three bodies of work: (1) logic-based trust management systems [32, 15, 20, 26, 11], (2) declarative networking [23, 22, 21], and (3) database techniques for analyzing data computations via the concept of provenance (or lineage [8]). From a practical standpoint, this integration has several benefits, ranging from ease of management, one fewer language to learn, one fewer set of optimizations, finer-grain control over the interaction between security and network protocols, and the potential of doing analysis, optimizations, and auditing across levels.

Access control is central to security and it is pervasive in computer systems. Over the years, logical ideas and tools have been used to explain and improve access control. Several logic-based languages such as Binder [11], SD3 [15], D1LP [20] and SecPAL [26] have been proposed to ease the process of expressing, analyzing and encoding access control policies. Similarly, the Network Datalog (NDlog) declarative networking language also has its roots in logic programming. NDlog is a distributed variant of Datalog to express recursive queries [29] over network graphs, hence allowing compact, clear formulations of a variety of routing protocols and overlay networks which themselves exhibit recursive properties.

Despite being developed by two different communities and used for different purposes, logic-based access control languages and NDlog extend Datalog in surprisingly similar ways: by supporting the notion of context (location) to identify components (nodes) in distributed systems. This suggests the possibility of unifying these languages to create an integrated system, exploiting good language features, execution engine, and optimizations. In addition, our unification will dispense with much of the special machinery proposed for access control, and instead rely on distributed database engines to process these policies, leveraging well-studied query processing and optimization techniques. It has been shown previously [1] that access control languages such as Binder share similarities to data integration languages such as that used in the Tsimmis [9] data integration system, further indicating that ideas and methods from
the database community are directly applicable. Specifically, the contributions of this paper are as follows:

**Unified declarative language for secure networked information systems:** We propose the Secure Network Datalog (SeNDlog) language that unifies logic-based access control and declarative networking languages. Our language builds upon our previous proposal [3] by incorporating runtime types for location specifiers which references data based on both IP addresses and logical overlay addresses. It provides support for dynamically layering multiple overlays at runtime, and enables security policies to be enforced across various layers. We further demonstrate that SeNDlog can be used to declaratively specify a variety of networked systems, including authenticated path-vector routing protocol, secure Chord distributed hash table [25], and a secure implementation of the PIER [14] distributed query processor, several of which can be layered on top of each other.

**Authenticated distributed query processing:** We extend existing distributed recursive query processing [21] techniques to execute SeNDlog queries, by incorporating the notion of authenticated communication. Our proposed authenticated pipelined semi-naïve (APSN) evaluation ensures that all communication among untrusted nodes is authenticated during query execution, and recursive queries are evaluated in a pipelined fashion suitable for asynchronous distributed settings. The generated distributed dataflows further supports runtime address types which can be used to support layered authentication at various layers. When implemented, these dataflows implement the distributed information system together with their security policies. Beyond our platform, these techniques are applicable to other distributed stream processing systems [10] that require access control and enforcement of security policies.

**Diagnoses and forensics with network provenance:** The dataflow framework used in declarative networks captures information flow as distributed streams computations. Hence, it is natural to utilize data provenance [8] to "explain" the existence of any network state. We classify data provenance into various types (e.g. local vs distributed, online vs offline, authenticated, etc.), and demonstrate that they map into various use cases for secure networks including real-time diagnostics, forensics, accountability, and trust management.

**Implementation and PlanetLab experimentation:** We have developed a secure declarative networking engine that supports unified platform via the SeNDlog language, authenticated distributed query processing capabilities, as well as basic support for constructing and querying network provenance. Using a local cluster as well as PlanetLab [27], we demonstrate the viability of our system via a detailed performance study on a variety of secure networked information systems. We further perform an evaluation of network provenance via a SeNDlog-based packet tracing service within a local cluster.

The paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, we first present a background overview of trust management and declarative networking languages, focusing on the Binder [11] and NDlog [21]. In Section 3, we present the unified SeNDlog language, and present several examples in Section 4 that illustrate usage of the language. In Section 5, we demonstrate how SeNDlog queries are compiled into authenticated dataflows to implement a variety of secure information systems. Section 6 outlines analysis opportunities that are enabled with the integration of network provenance into our system. We present evaluation results in Section 7.

2. **BACKGROUND**

As background, we briefly introduce **Binder**, a representative logic-based access control language, and **NDlog**, the query language for declarative networking. Binder and NDlog are query languages based on Datalog [29]. A Datalog program consists of a set of declarative rules. Each rule has the form \( p \leftarrow q_1, q_2, \ldots, q_n \), which can be read informally as "\( q_1 \) and \( q_2 \) and \( \ldots \) and \( q_n \) implies \( p \)". Here, \( p \) is the head of the rule, and \( q_1, q_2, \ldots, q_n \) is a list of literals that constitutes the body of the rule. Literals are either predicates with attributes (which are bound to variables or constants by the query), or boolean expressions that involve function symbols (including arithmetic) applied to attributes. In Datalog, rule predicates can be defined with other predicates in a cyclic fashion to express recursion. The order in which the rules are presented in a program is semantically immaterial; likewise, the order predicates appear in a rule is not semantically meaningful. Commas are interpreted as logical conjunctions (AND). The names of predicates, function symbols, and constants begin with a lowercase letter, while variable names begin with an uppercase letter.

2.1 **Binder: Access Control Language**

Binder is a logic-based language for expressing access control policies. We select Binder as our representative language since it has a simple language design, and is most similar to NDlog. Basically, a Binder program is a set of Datalog-style logical rules. Unlike Datalog, Binder has a notion of context that represents a component in a distributed environment and a distinguished operator \( \text{say} \). For instance, in Binder we can write:

\[
\begin{align*}
b1 \text{ may-access}(P,O,\text{read}) & \leftarrow \text{good}(P). \\
b2 \text{ may-access}(P,O,\text{read}) & \leftarrow \text{bob says may-access}(P,O,\text{read}).
\end{align*}
\]

The \( \text{say} \) operator implements one of the common logical constructs in authentication [18], where we assert \( p \text{ says } s \) if the principal \( p \) supports the statement \( s \). The above rules \( b1 \) and \( b2 \) can be read as "any principal \( p \) may access any object \( O \) in read mode if \( P \) is good or if \( \text{bob says } p \text{ may do so} \)."

A principal in Binder refers to a component in a distributed environment. Each principal has its own local context where its rules reside. Binder assumes an untrusted network, where different components can serve different roles running distinct sets of rules. Because of the lack of trust among nodes, a component does not have control over rule execution and message generation at other nodes. Instead, Binder allows separate programs to interoperate correctly and securely via the export and import of rules and derived tuples across contexts. For example, rule \( b2 \) can be a local rule that is executing in the context of principal \( \text{alice} \), which imports derived \( \text{may-access} \) tuples from the principal \( \text{bob} \) into its local context via \( \text{bob says may-access}(p,o,\text{read}) \) in its rule body.

The \( \text{say} \) operator abstracts from the details of authentication. In one specific implementation, communication happens via signed certificates, where derived tuples and rules signed using the private key of the exporting context can be imported into another context and checked using the corresponding public key.

2.2 **NDlog: Declarative Networking Language**

The high level goal of declarative networks is to build extensible network architectures that achieve a good balance of flexibility, performance and safety. Declarative networks are specified using Network Datalog (NDlog), which is a distributed recursive query language used for querying network graphs. NDlog queries are executed using a distributed query processor to implement the network protocols, and continuously maintained as distributed views over existing network and host state. Declarative queries such as NDlog are a natural and compact way to implement a variety of routing protocols and overlay networks. For example, traditional
routing protocols can be expressed in a few lines of code [23], and
the Chord DHT in 47 lines of code [22]. When compiled and ex-
cuted, these declarative networks perform efficiently relative to
imperative implementations. We illustrate NDlog using a simple
example of two rules that computes all pairs of reachable nodes:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{r1 reachable}(@S,D) & : - \text{link}(@S,D) . \\
\text{r2 reachable}(@S,D) & : - \text{link}(@S,Z), \text{reachable}(@Z,D).
\end{align*}
\]

The rules r1 and r2 specify a distributed transitive closure com-
putation, where rule r1 computes all pairs of nodes reachable within
a single hop from all input links, and rule r2 expresses that “if there
is a link from \(S\) to \(Z\), and \(Z\) can reach \(D\), then \(S\) can reach \(D\).” By
modifying this simple example, we can construct more complex
routing protocols, such as the distance vector and path vector rout-
ing protocols.

NDlog supports a location specifier in each predicate, expressed
with \(\hat{\text{}}\) symbol followed by an attribute. This attribute is used to
denote the source location of each corresponding tuple. For example,
all \(\text{reachable}\) and \(\text{link}\) tuples are stored based on the \(\hat{\text{}}\text{S}\) address
field. The output of interest is the set of all \(\text{reachable}(\hat{\text{}}\text{S}, \text{D})\) tu-
uples, representing reachable pairs of nodes from \(S\) to \(D\). The above
NDlog program is executed as distributed stream computations,
where streams of \(\text{link}\) and \(\text{reachable}\) tuples are joined at differ-
ent nodes to compute routing tables. Tuples can also be maintained
as soft-state, where tables are first declared with lifetimes that
indicate the duration each tuple is maintained in the system (see [22]).

2.3 Comparing Binder and NDlog

Having introduced Binder and NDlog, we now elaborate on the
differences between these two languages, to set the stage and moti-
vate the unified features of SeNDlog in Section 3.

Trusted vs untrusted networks: One of the important require-
ments of both Binder and NDlog is the ability to support rules that
express distributed computations, where nodes can communicate
with each other. Hence, NDlog supports the notion of location that
is similar to Binder’s notion of context. On the other hand, NDlog
is designed for a fully trusted environment, where the location rel-
ates to data placement. Each NDlog rule takes as input predicates
with different location specifiers, and generate tuples are blindly
accepted by other nodes. On the other hand, Binder assumes an
untrusted network, where rules are executed with their own con-
text, and communication happens via the use of “says”; unlike in
NDlog, reliable authorization is required.

Export of derived tuples: In Binder, there is no integration of the
security policy with the policy for exporting data. To illustrate, we
consider the rule \(b2\) from the above example. The principal \texttt{alice}
that runs these rules may wish only to export \texttt{may-access(P,G,read)}
to the principal \texttt{P}, and not all nodes. It is not possible to ex-
press this restriction in Binder. Hence, any principal can import
the \texttt{may-access(P,G,read)} tuple derived by \texttt{alice}. Being able to
restrict the sending of messages to selected recipients is an im-
portant requirement in secure network protocols, both from perfor-
mance and secrecy standpoints. NDlog achieves that with the use
of location specifiers at the rule head.

Bottom-up vs top-down evaluation: Most access control languages
including a practical implementation of Binder and SD3 utilize a
goal-oriented top-down evaluation (backward-chaining from head
to body) strategy. Specific requests are made as goals, which are
then resolved against the security policies. On the other hand, net-
work protocols are long-running processes, and incrementally re-
compute and repair routes based on changes to the underlying net-
work. Hence, NDlog programs are executed in a bottom-up (or
forward-chaining) [28] evaluation where the bodies of the rules are
evaluated to derive the heads. This has the advantage of permitting
set-oriented optimizations while avoiding infinite recursive loops,
and at the same time, is a better fit for the incremental continu-
ous execution model of network protocols. In addition, there are
well-known database optimizations such as magic-sets [4] where
one can achieve the benefits of bottom-up evaluation, while avoid
computing redundant facts in a goal-oriented fashion.

3. SECURE NETWORK DATALOG

Next we present the SeNDlog language based on the unification of
Binder and NDlog. The goals of SeNDlog are as follows. First,
the language should be easy and intuitive to use, but still as expres-
sive as Binder and NDlog to support security policies and network
protocols that have been previously supported by both languages.
Second, the language constructs of SeNDlog should support au-
thenticated communication and also enable the differentiation of
nodes according to their roles. Third, SeNDlog should support both
trusted and untrusted environments. Fourth, to leverage existing ex-
ecution engines and fit the incremental continuous execution model
of network protocols, SeNDlog must be amenable to efficient ex-
cution and optimizations by a distributed query engine using a
bottom-up evaluation strategy.

3.1 Rules within a Context

In the SeNDlog language, we bind a set of rules and the associ-
atied tuples to reside at a particular node. We do this at the top level
for each rule (or set of rules), for example by specifying:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{At N,} & \quad \text{r1 p :- p1,p2,...,pn}. \\
& \quad \text{r2 p1 :- p2,p3,...,pn}.
\end{align*}
\]

In the example above, the rules \(r1\) and \(r2\) are in the context of
the node named \(N\), where \(N\) is either a variable or a constant.
For example, the principal \texttt{alice} and (2) distributed derivation of security decisions. Imported tu-
ples are communicated among contexts via the use of \texttt{import predicates}
and \texttt{export predicates}.

2 Examples from a principal \texttt{alice} and (2) distributed derivation of security decisions. Imported tu-
ples are communicated among contexts via the use of \texttt{import predicates}
and \texttt{export predicates}.

3.2 Communicating Contexts

Similar to Binder, the SeNDlog language allow different princi-
pal or contexts to communicate via import and export of tuples.
The movement of tuples serves two purposes: (1) maintenance
messages as part of a network protocol’s updates on routing tables,
and (2) distributed derivation of security decisions. Imported tu-
ples from a principal \(N\) are automatically quoted using “\(N\) says”
to differentiate them from local tuples. During the evaluation
of SeNDlog rules, we allow derived tuples to be communicated among
contexts via the use of \texttt{import predicates} and \texttt{export predicates}:
Definition 1: An import predicate is of the form \( \text{N says } p \) in a rule body, where \( \text{N} \) is the principal that is asserting the predicate \( p \).

Definition 2: An export predicate is of the form \( \text{N says } p@X \) in a rule head, where principal \( \text{N} \) exports the predicate \( p \) to the context of principal \( X \). Here, \( X \) can be a constant or a variable. If \( X \) is a variable, in order to make bottom-up evaluation efficient, we further require that the variable \( X \) occur in the rule body. As a shorthand, we can omit \( \text{N says } p \) if \( \text{N} \) is the principal where the rule resides.

The use of export predicates ensures confidentiality and prevents information leakage, by only exporting tuples to a specified principal. Similar to principals, our location specifiers need not be IP addresses. They can flexibly refer to logical overlay addresses whose types are determined at runtime. This feature is necessary for dynamically layering multiple secure overlays at runtime, e.g. a distributed query processor over a secure DHT. Detailed description of dynamic overlay composition is outside the scope of this paper (see [24] for more details).

With the definitions above, a SeNDlog rule is a Datalog rule where the rule body can include import predicates, and the rule head can be an export predicate. We provide a concrete example with the following four SeNDlog rules e1-e4:

\[
\begin{align*}
e1 & : p(X,Y) :- p1(X), p2(Y). \\
e2 & : p(X,Y,W) :- Y \text{ says } p1(X), Z \text{ says } p2(W), Z \neq N. \\
e3 & : p(Y,Z) X :- p1(X), Y \text{ says } p2(Z). \\
e4 & : Z \text{ says } p(Y) X :- Z \text{ says } p(Y), p1(X).
\end{align*}
\]

Rule e1 is a traditional Datalog rule. Rule e2 contains two predicates \( p1 \) and \( p2 \) imported from \( Y \) and \( Z \) respectively. The output of \( e1 \) and \( e2 \) are stored locally as \( p \). Rules \( e3 \) and \( e4 \) contain an import predicate each, and export their derived heads to \( X \). Note that, in rule \( e4 \), the export principal \( Z \) differs from the principal \( N \).

To ensure that \( p \) is indeed asserted by \( Z \), we introduce the honesty constraint in all SeNDlog rules:

Definition 3: A SeNDlog rule in the context of principal \( N \) is honest if the following condition is satisfied: if the rule head is \( \text{"N says } p\)" , where \( X \) is a constant or a variable, either \( X \) is \( N \), or \( \text{"X says } p\)" occurs in the body of the rule.

The honesty constraint enables a simple implementation. Specifically, for security, whenever a principal other than \( N \) exports \( N \) \text{ says } p, it should provide a proof that this is the case; the proof is a signature by \( N \). With the honesty constraint, the principal may simply forward the signature that corresponds to the occurrence of \( N \) \text{ says } p in the rule body. Like iNDlog, SeNDlog allows derived tuples to be exported to specific nodes via the export predicates. This is done as a way of enforcing secrecy and also performance (avoiding broadcast of tuples).

\section{3.3 Language Extensions}

We aim to keep the SeNDlog language as simple as possible. Nevertheless, in this section we briefly discuss some possible extensions. The implementation of "says" may depend on the system and its context. Ideally, SeNDlog should support a heterogeneous network where nodes have different security levels. In a hostile, world, "says" may require digital signatures. For example, in rule \( e3 \) from Section 3.2, \( N \) should check that \( p2 \) indeed came from \( Y \) by checking the signature of the imported tuple against \( Y \)'s public key. In a more benign world, "says" may simply append a cleartext principal header to a message—and this will of course be cheaper. Somewhere in between, the use of digital signatures may be applied only to certain important messages: there is a trade-off between security and efficiency, and the language does not provide any leverage in deciding how that trade-off should be made. Note however that the policy writer could easily provide hints along with rules, indicating that some "says" are more important than others.

Going further, one can support multiple "says" constructs with different security levels. This requires the export predicate be explicit about the security level, e.g. "\( N \) \text{ says } p@X" exports predicate \( p \) to \( X \) with security level 0 (which may simply involve a cleartext principal header with no signatures), and \( X \) can only import \( p \) in its rule body via an authentication scheme at the same or higher security level.

There are several other security constructs such as secrecy [2], delegation [20], speaks-for [18], and privilege revocation that we would like to explore in future. Another language extension includes support for security protocols that utilize distributed vote-based agreements. This has been formalized in various trust management languages [20], where a fact in the rule head is derived only when \( k \)-out-of-\( n \) principals in a rule body predicate derive a similar fact concurrently.

\section{4. Practical SendLog Examples}

In this section, we provide three example specifications using SeNDlog to demonstrate its language features. Our examples build upon previous examples, starting from a secure routing protocol, to a secure DHT overlay, followed by secure p2p query processing layered over a secure DHT. We present evaluation results of these examples in Section 7. In addition to these examples, we have also explored using SeNDlog to implement a secure version of DNS as presented in SD3 [15], and enforcing access control policies in p2p file-sharing networks and shared testbeds [27].

\subsection{4.1 Authenticated Path-Vector Protocol}

At \( Z \),
\[
\begin{align*}
z1 & : route(Z,X,P) :- \text{neighbor}(Z,X), P=f_initPath(Z). \\
z2 & : route(Z,X,P) :- X \text{ says } advertise(Y,P), \text{acceptRoute}(Z,X,Y). \\
z3 & : advertise(Y,P1)X :- \text{neighbor}(Z,X), route(Z,Y,P), \text{carryTraffic}(Z,X,Y), P1=f_concat(X,P). \\
z4 & : \text{acceptRoute}(Z,X,Y). 
\end{align*}
\]

Our first example shows the basic path vector protocol as presented in the declarative routing paper [23], with the additional use of the "says" operator. At every node \( Z \), this program takes as input \( \text{neighbor}(Z,X) \) tuples that contain all neighbors \( X \) for \( Z \). The input \( \text{carryTraffic} \) and \( \text{acceptRoute} \) tables are used to represent the export and import policies of node \( Z \) respectively. Each \( \text{carryTraffic}(Z,X,Y) \) tuple represents the fact that node \( Z \) is willing to serve all network traffic on behalf of node \( X \) to node \( Y \), and each \( \text{acceptRoute}(Z,X,Y) \) tuple represents the fact that node \( Z \) will accept a route from node \( X \) to node \( Y \).

At every node \( Z \) that runs the above program, the \( Z \) \text{ says } advertise(Y,P) tuples containing the path to destination node \( Y \) is communicated among neighboring nodes. As noted in Section 3.2, we omit "\( N \) says" for brevity in rule \( z3 \). The use of "\( N \) says" ensures that all advertise tuples are verified by the recipient for authenticity. The eventual outcome of executing the program is the generation of \( \text{route}(Z,X,P) \) tuples, each of which stores the path \( P \) from source \( Z \) to destination \( X \). Rule \( z1 \) takes as input \( \text{neighbor}(Z,X) \) tuples, and computes all the single hop \( \text{route}(Z,X,P) \) containing the path \( Z,X \) from node \( Z \) to \( X \). Rules \( z2-z4 \) are used to compute routes of increasing hop count. Upon receiving an \( \text{advertise}(Y,P) \) tuple from \( X \), \( Z \) uses \( z2 \) to decide whether to accept the route advertisement based on its local \( \text{acceptRoute} \) table. If the route is accepted, a route tuple is derived locally, and this results in the generation of an advertise tuple which is further exported by node \( Z \) via
rule z3 to selected neighbors X based on the policies of the local carryTraffic table. Each exported advertise tuple has a new path P which is computed by prepending neighbor X to the input path P using the f_concat function. A more complex version of this protocol will have additional rules that derive carryTraffic and acceptRoute, avoid path cycles and also derive shortest paths with the fewest hop count.

With a basic authenticated routing protocol in place, we can add additional rules to implement large-scale information systems that require a secure routing layer. The secure version of the BGP [31] inter-domain routing protocol is an example of a large-scale information system where autonomous AS gateways exchange route advertisements. Other information systems include p2p file sharing systems. Other information systems include p2p file sharing systems.

4.2 Secure Distributed Hash Tables

In our second example, we use SeNDlog to specify the assignment of node identifiers in secure DHT overlays. We base our example on a declarative version of Chord originally implemented in 47 rules [22]. Our version of the code avoids a security weakness in a DHT where malicious nodes can occupy a large range of the key space. We focus on showing SeNDlog versions of the relevant rules from the original Chord specification.

This example also demonstrates the use of SeNDlog to specify the different roles for nodes. There are three sets of rules for three types of nodes: (1) a new node NI joining the chord ring, (2) the certificate authority CA, and (3) the landmark node LI. Each node runs its respective set of rules as follows:

At NI,
\[
\text{ni1 requestCert(NI,K)@CA} := \text{startNetwork(NI), publicKey(NI,K), MyCA(NI,CA).}
\]
\[
\text{ni2 nodeID(NI,N) :- CA says nodeIDCert(NI,N,K), NI=Chord::K.}
\]
\[
\text{ni3 CA says nodeIDCert(NI,N,K)@LI :=}
\]
\[
\text{CA says nodeIDCert(NI,N,K), landmark(NI,LI).}
\]
At CA,
\[
\text{ca1 nodeIDCert(NI,N,K)@NI :-}
\]
\[
\text{NI says requestCert(NI,K), S=secret(CA,NI), N=f_generateID(K,S).}
\]
At LI,
\[
\text{li1 acceptJoinRequest(NI) :-}
\]
\[
\text{CA says nodeIDCert(NI,N,K).}
\]

In rule ni1, a node NI that wishes to join the Chord ring first exports a requestCert tuple to its CA (as indicated in the entry in its MyCA table) to request nodeID certificates. Upon receiving the request, the CA generates a nodeIDCert(NI,N,K) tuple containing the nodeID certificate, which is then exported back to node NI. The nodeIDCert(NI,N,K) tuple contains the IP address of node NI, the corresponding public key K, and a generated identifier N randomly chosen from the key space using the function f_generateID(K,S) that takes as input the public key of K and a previously exchanged secret S known only to the CA and NI.

Upon importing the nodeIDCert tuple from the CA, using rule ni2, node NI initializes its local node identifier which stored as a nodeID(NI,N) tuple. It also forwards the nodeIDCert to its landmark node LI in order to join the chord ring. At the landmark node LI, nodeIDCert is imported and checked for authenticity. If nodeIDCert is accepted, the landmark node derives an acceptJoinRequest(NI) tuple that can further be used to generate a lookup request to locate the successor node on behalf of node NI. The rules as presented [22] can then be used by node NI to implement the rest of the Chord protocol.

In the above example, CA generates a certified node identifier for a node NI to join the network. To take this one step further, one can express the SeNDlog rules that result in authenticated all communication among all Chord nodes. In this case, each message exchanged between nodes is communicated via says, and digitally signed by each node.

4.3 Secure DHT-based Join Processing

In our third example, we present a distributed database join operation that can be performed securely over a DHT. Joins over DHTs are widely studied and used in p2p query processors such as PIER [14] for the purposes of p2p keyword search and performing network event correlations. In an untrusted environment, authenticated communication is essential for ensuring that malicious nodes do not inject tuples that will corrupt the final answer. Our example demonstrates that additional query processing capabilities at the application level can be written elegantly as SeNDlog rules, often with the use of logical location specifiers to address network state at the lower levels. Moreover, authentication can be performed at various layers in the network. The following rules implement a distributed join operation in the PIER query processor:

At alice,
\[
\text{al storeA(X,Y)@NI :- tableA(X,Y), K=f_sha(X), NI=Chord::K.}
\]
At bob,
\[
\text{bl storeB(X,Y)@NI :- tableB(X,Y), K=f_sha(X), NI=Chord::K.}
\]
At NI,
\[
\text{rl results(X,Z)@r :- alice says storeA(X,Y), bob says storeB(Y,Z).}
\]

Our example consists of two tables tableA and tableB, owned by principals alice and bob respectively. Rules al and bl are executed in the context of alice and bob respectively. For the ease of exposition, our rules indicate the two principals as alice and bob constants. In practice, the principle may additionally include the address of the principals, as described in Section 3.1.

Ownership-based publishing: Rules al and bl result in indexing all of tableA and tableB in the DHT, based on the hash of the first attribute. To do that, both alice and bob compute the SHA-1 hash of the first attribute X to generate a Chord identifier K, denoted as the logical address Chord::K in the rules. The resulting storeA and storeB tuples are then sent to the node NI responsible for storing tuples for the identifier Chord::K. In an untrusted environment, these published tuples also include the signatures of alice and bob, which are verified before being stored at NI.

Layered authentication: This example demonstrates the possibility of layered authentication. The execution of rules al and bl would result in a Chord lookup to locate NI, and the communication for the underlying Chord protocol can be authenticated as described in Section 4.2. Layered authentication ensures that alice and bob can authenticate in an end-to-end fashion at the query processor layer, in addition to any authenticated communication at the underlying Chord overlay.

Distributed joins: Rule rl is a query issued by node r to perform a distributed join of storeA and storeB tuples. This rule is disseminate as a query, and upon reaching all nodes NI, a distributed DHT-based join [14] is performed as follows. The rules for rehashing these tuples can themselves be automatically rewritten by a PIER query processor implemented in SeNDlog as follows:

At NI,
In rule ria, all storeA tuples are rehashed as rehashA tuples based on the hash of join attribute Y. Rule ria rehashes all storeA tuples while retaining the original signature of Alice, adhering to the "honesty constraint" described in Section 3.2. The join is performed at node RI with local storeB tuples, and the resulting result tuples are sent back to node r.

5. SECURE QUERY PROCESSING

In this section, we describe query processing techniques for executing SeNDlog programs. Our proposed Authenticated Pipelined Semi-naive (APSN) is an adaptation of the Pipelined Semi-naive (PSN) [21] proposed for processing distributed recursive queries in declarative networks. We first provide a brief background on PSN followed by APSN. We will additionally describe opportunities for future extensions.

5.1 Background on PSN

Unlike traditional semi-naive evaluation, PSN relaxes the requirement to perform computations in synchronous rounds (or iterations), a prohibitively expensive operation in a distributed setting. We describe the simplest version of PSN, where tuples are processed tuple-at-a-time in a pipelined fashion, and duplicate evaluations are avoided using local arrival timestamps. We consider the following recursive Datalog rule $p : d_1, d_2, ..., d_n, b_1, b_2, ..., b_m$.

In the rule body, there are $n$ derived predicates $(p_1, ..., p_n)$, and $m$ base predicates $(b_1, ..., b_m)$. Derived predicates refer to intentional relations that are derived during rule execution, and may be mutually recursive with $p$. Base predicates refer to extensional (stored) relations whose values are not changed during rule execution. In PSN, a delta rule is generated for each derived predicate, where the $k^{th}$ delta rule is of the form: $\Delta p : d_1, \ldots, d_{k-1}, \triangle d_k, d_{k+1}, \ldots, d_n, b_1, b_2, \ldots, b_m$.

$\triangle d_k$ denotes a tuple $t_k \in d_k$ that is used as input to the rule for computing new $d_k$. In PSN, each node maintains a FIFO queue (ordered by arrival timestamp) of new input tuples. Each new tuple is dequeued and is used as input to its respective delta rule. The execution of a delta rule may generate new tuples which are either inserted into the local queue or sent to a remote node for further execution.

5.2 Authenticated PSN

In APSN, import and export predicates (Section 3.2) denoted by the "says" keyword require additional operators for authentication. Consider the following SeNDlog rule: $p$ says $a : d_1, \ldots, d_n, b_1, \ldots, b_m$, $p_1$ says $a_1$, $p_2$ says $a_2$, ..., $p_k$ says $a_k$. There are $o$ additional import predicates of the form "$p_i$ says $a_i"$ in the rule body, and an export predicate in the rule head. For each $k^{th}$ import predicate, a authenticated delta rule is generated as follows:

$\Delta p$ says $a : d_1, \ldots, d_n, b_1, \ldots, b_m$,

$\Delta p_1$ says $a_1$, ..., $\Delta p_k$ says $\triangle a_k$, ..., $\Delta p_k$ says $a_k$.

In the rest of the section, we will show how delta rules are compiled into execution plans.

5.2.1 Basic Dataflow Generation

Figure 1 shows an example dataflow that is automatically generated from the SeNDlog rules by our query processor. The dataflow execution model is based on that of the P2 declarative networking system [22]. In P2, queries are compiled and executed as distributed dataflows and share a similar execution model with the Click modular router [17]. At the edges of the dataflow, there are several network processing operators (denoted by Network-In and Network-Out) used to process incoming and outgoing messages. Flow control operators such as Mux, Queue, TimedPullPush, and Demux supports buffering, multiplexing, demultiplexing, and periodic flow of tuples within the dataflow.

At the core of the dataflow are rule strands shown within the gray box, which are directly compiled from the PSN and APSN delta rules into a series of relational operators such as joins, aggregations, selections, and projections. Messages flowing among dataflows executed at different nodes, resulting in updates to local tables, or query results that are returned to the hosts that issued the queries. The local tables store the state of intermediate and computed query results, which include the network state of various network protocols. Each P2 tuple has an associated lifetime declared at creation time of each table. Each incoming tuple is then stored locally for its lifetime.

In traditional PSN, each delta rule will be compiled into two rule strands one for incremental insertion and one for deletion respectively. Given an input tuple, the output of executing a tuple would either be local state modifications (insertions/deletions to local tables), or generation of new messages which are then transmitted via the Network Out operators.

APSN rule strands (shown as the first two gray boxes in Figure 1) differ from PSN in the use of authenticated communication. This requires two additional operators shown in bold in the dataflow:

- The SigGenerator operator is used to sign outgoing tuples based on the private key of the local principal. All outgoing tuples $t$ that require authentication are communicated as $p, s, t$ triplets, where $p$ corresponds to the source principle, $s$ is the signature generated by encrypting a message digest (essentially a cryptographic hash of $t$) with $p$'s private key.

- At the receiving node, if authentication is required, an additional SigChecker operator checks all incoming tuples $p, s, t$, by decrypting $s$ with the public key of $p$, and verifying that the decrypted contents matches the cryptographic hash of $t$.

Figure 1: Dataflow execution plan for a single node.

\(^2\) A zero lifetime tuple is treated as an event stream that will trigger rules and be discarded. An infinite lifetime tuple is stored locally until explicitly deleted. In between, tuples may be maintained as soft-state with a fixed lifetime, similar to time-based sliding windows in stream processing [10].
The SigGenerator and SigChecker uses a public-key cryptography scheme that can be computationally expensive. The SigChecker operator requires knowledge of the public key of the principle whom the dataflow is importing tuples from. Note that Key management is an orthogonal problem to our work. In the simplest model, each node has full apriori knowledge of all the public keys of all other communicating peers. This is evidently not practical. A more feasible approach that we have adopted (e.g., in Section 4.2) involves the runtime system to fetch public keys on demand (upon receiving a tuple that requires authentication) from a known CA, and cache the public key for future use. Other lightweight key management schemes are possible, and integrating them into our execution plans is an avenue for future work.

5.2.2 Example APSN Strand

Figure 2 provides a closer look at individual operators that comprise each rule strand shown in Figure 1. Our example is based on rule z2 used in the authenticated path vector protocol presented in Section 4.1. The APSN delta rules are as follows:

- z2a △ route(Z, Y, P) :- X says △ advertise(Y, P), acceptRoute(Z, X, Y).
- z2b △ route(Z, Y, P) :- X says advertise(Y, P), △ acceptRoute(Z, X, Y).

The first rule strand z2a (shown as strand z2a@Z in Figure 2) takes as input advertise(Y, P) tuples from the network. After each advertise tuple is verified by the SigChecker operator based on the public key of X retrievable from the local store, the advertise tuple is inserted via the Insert operator, and if this is a tuple not seen previously, joined with matching tuples from the local acceptRoute table to generate new route tuples which are further inserted into the local route table. Rule z2b (shown as strand z2b@Z) is triggered by changes to the local acceptRoute table, and hence requires no authentication. A similar join is performed with the local advertise table to generate new route tuples. Since both delta rules insert into the local route table rather than export the output tuples to remote principals, they need not be signed. On the other hand, the rule strand for rule z3 from Section 4.1 would require a SigGenerator operator to generate the signature using the private key of z before being sent.

5.3 Layering Support and Security Extensions

SeNDlog support layered authentication, as shown by the secure DHT-based joins in Section 4.3, where secure communication can happen at different layers (e.g., layering a secure p2p query processor on top of a secure Chord DHT). This requires dataflow support for layering [24] and dynamic location specifiers.

The dataflow includes three additional operators shown in bold in Figure 1: OverlayRecvUnwrap, OverlaySendWrap, and LocSpecDemux. The operators OverlayRecvUnwrap and OverlaySendWrap are used for de-encapsulation and encapsulation of tuples from an underlying network specified in SeNDlog.

At the top of Figure 1, the Mux multiplexes incoming tuples received locally or from the network. These tuples are processed by the OverlayRecvUnwrap operator that will extract the overlay payload for all tuples of the form overlay.recv(Packet), where Packet is the payload with type tuple. Since the payload may be encapsulated by multiple headers (for layered overlays), this operator needs to “unwrap” until the payload is retrieved. The Packet payload is then used as input to the dataflow via the ReceiveDemux operator, and used as input to various rule strands for execution. Executing the rule strands results in the generation of output tuples that are sent to a LocSpecDemux operator. This operator checks the runtime type of the location specifier, and then demultiplexes accordingly. Tuples designated for the local node are directed back to the same dataflow, and IP-based tuples are sent over the network. To support layering, outgoing tuples designated for a local overlay node are de-encapsulated, and reinserted back to the same dataflow.

To support different levels of “says,” an optional security level attribute can be included to the output of the SigGenerator operator. The SigChecker operator can then apply the appropriate level of authentication. For example, other computationally less expensive schemes such as the use of cryptographic message authentication code (MAC) are also possible, if nodes apriori agree upon a shared secret key. Our declarative framework and runtime system does not preclude the use of these alternative schemes: they will correspond to different levels of “says” and the query planner will automatically generate the appropriate SigGenerator and Checker operators to implement the authentication mechanism. In addition, while we focus our discussion to supporting the “says” operator described in Section 3. Other security mechanisms (e.g., public-key encryption for confidentiality) can be similarly supported by additional operators that encrypt/decrypt incoming and outgoing tuples.

6. DIAGNOSTICS AND FORENSICS WITH NETWORK PROVENANCE

The dataflow framework used in our platform captures information flow naturally as distributed streams computations. Hence, it is natural to utilize the database notion of data provenance to “explain” the existence of any network state. We summarize a variety of diagnostics and analysis opportunities [34] that arise from the use of our platform. The main goal of this section is to illustrate the potential for doing analysis and auditing across levels given a unifying declarative framework for network routing, information systems, and security policies.

6.1 Use Cases

We focus on use cases ranging from real-time diagnostics, forensics, and trust management, and relate them to different types of network provenance enabled by our platform.

Real-time Diagnostics: Provenance is useful for real-time diagnostics and debugging of distributed systems, in order to detect run-time anomalies resulted from divergent protocols and network intrusion. For example, a continuous query specified in SeNDlog can be used to compute the number of changes to a routing table entry over past T seconds, and generate an alarm event when the number of changes exceed a threshold as an indication of possible divergence. Upon receiving the alarm, the system may generate a distributed recursive query over the network provenance to detect-
Forensics: In addition to real-time data, historical data is often required to correlate traffic patterns of attackers. A common area of research has been in providing IP “traceback”[30] of traffic, either by the receiver or by an involved third party, to determine where packets are originated from without trusting the unauthenticated IP headers. One can store annotations either in the packet (i.e. piggyback each tuple with its complete “path” or “provenance”), or maintain state at each router, to allow for subsequent traceback via a distributed query during forensic analysis. To reduce the storage and communication overhead, summarization (via bloom filters) and sampling techniques respectively to compress the provenance.

Trust Management: In our final use case, network provenance is useful for enforcing distributed trust management [7] policies in networked information systems. Using an example from Internet routing, the path-vector protocol used in BGP carries the entire path networked information systems. Using an example from Internet useful for enforcing distributed trust management [7] policies in our system. We make use of an example network which consists of three nodes a, b, c and three unidirectional links link(a,b), link(a,c), link(b,c). Figure 3 shows the derivation tree for reachable(@a,c) that results from executing the NDlog program in Section 2.2. This derivation tree essentially represents the provenance of the tuple, where the initial input base tuples are at the leaves of the tree. The ovals in the diagram represent the rules (r1, r2, or union to combine their results) that are used for the derivation of reachable(@a,c). In order to incorporate provenance into NDlog executions, we annotate each derivation with its location (denoted by the location specifier).

Local vs Distributed Provenance The derivation tree shown in Figure 3 can be stored either locally or in a distributed fashion. In local provenance, the tree is stored at node a, which is the final storage location of reachable(@a,b). In order to have a locally complete provenance, each tuple that is derived needs to piggy-back its entire provenance when shipped from one node to another. On the other hand, one can utilize distributed provenance, which only stores pointers to the previous node to reconstruct its provenance on demand. Hence, node a only needs to maintain the fact that it is derived from its local link(@a,b) and node b’s reachable(@b,c). The analogy here is IP traceback, where one can either store the entire traversed path within each packet (similar to local provenance), or only maintain enough state at each router to traceback the route on demand (distributed provenance). There are evidently tradeoffs between local and distributed provenance. In local provenance, computation is more expensive for each tuple, but queries can be computed locally. Also, trust policies can be enforced without having to contact other nodes. On the other hand, distributed provenance requires no extra communication overhead, but incurs expensive cost of querying the provenance.

Online vs Offline Provenance. We can further classify provenance as either online or offline. Online provenance is maintained for network state that is currently valid (i.e. not expired), and offline provenance is kept even when the derivations have expired. The purpose of online provenance is to detect network anomalies at runtime. For example, when a node is detected to be suspicious, one can query the online provenance to delete all routing entries associated with the malicious node. However, online provenance by itself has limited usage given that most networked data are maintained as soft-state with limited lifetimes. In this case, we can additionally maintain offline provenance for data that has long expired. Offline provenance is useful also for real-time diagnostics, and can additionally be used to support forensics and enforce accountability.

Authenticated Provenance: In an untrusted network, authentication may be required to ensure the validity of provenance computed by other nodes (e.g. to prevent spoofing of messages from malicious attackers). Figure 4 shows an alternative derivation tree based on a SeNDlog version of the same reachable query. We note the following differences. First, since all rule bodies are localized within the context of a security principal, we can omit the location specifiers for each tuple. However, we annotate each operator (denoted by the oval) with the location (or context) where the rule is executed. Second, each node in the tree is asserted by a principal using “says”. In an untrusted environment, this means that individual nodes in the provenance tree need to validate the authenticity of the computed provenance using digital signatures. As notation, each tuple has an additional field denoted by <...> that stores the principals used for deriving the tuple are encoded as algebraic expressions [12]. + represents union, and * represents a join. Based on this algebraic expression, each principal can determine the principals involved in deriving the fact, and hence determine whether to accept this fact based on existing trust relationships.

To illustrate different types of network provenance, we provide an example based on network packet traceback. The following SeNDlog rule forwards packets in the network based on the local routing tables:

At Router,
1. packet (P, Dest, Data) @ Next Hop := forwarding (Dest, Next Hop), Router := Dest, P says packet (P, Dest, Data).

The forwarding table is stored at every router, and is computed by adding additional rules to the path vector protocol in Sec-

Figure 3: NDlog provenance for reachable (@a, c).

Figure 4: SeNDlog provenance for reachable (a, c) in a’s context.
7. EVALUATION

In this section, we present the evaluation of our platform on a local cluster and on PlanetLab. The goals of our evaluation are as follows. First, we validate that SendLog specifications achieve the expected functionality of a variety of secure networked information systems. Second, we experimentally quantify the performance overheads of using authenticated communication, both within a local cluster and on a wide-area testbed. Third, we perform a preliminary proof-of-concept evaluation of network provenance support using our platform via a SendLog-based packet tracing service within a local cluster. Our evaluation is based on the P2 declarative networking system [22], with enhancements to execute SendLog rules as described in Section 5. To generate signatures used in APSN, we utilize the OpenSSL v0.9.8b cryptographic libraries that generate 640-bit signatures given input data. We further added runtime support to the P2 system to compute online, local and authenticated provenance (Section 6) during rule execution.

7.1 Experimental Setup

Evaluation platform: Our first set of experiments are conducted by executing our within a local cluster with sixteen quad-core machines with Intel Xeon 2.33GHz CPUs and 4GB RAM running Fedora Core 6 with kernel version 2.6.20, which are interconnected by high-speed Gigabit Ethernet. The LAN environment allows us to isolate and examine CPU overhead of executing our platform within a controlled environment with sufficient bandwidth. Our second set of experiments are conducted on the PlanetLab [27] testbed, where 80 geographically distributed nodes in Asia, Europe, and North America are selected to execute our system. The PlanetLab testbed allows us to examine the real-world effects, such as bandwidth constraints and propagation delays imposed by geographic distances and queuing delays.

Query workload: Our query workload consists of three SendLog example queries presented in Section 4. The Best-Path distributed query takes as input rules $z_1$ to $z_3$ from Section 4.1 to generate route tuples, with an additional cost attribute that is the sum of all links along a path. Two additional local rules are used to compute the minimum path cost given the local route table, and select for each source/destination pair, the path with minimum cost. The Chord query is a declarative version of the Chord DHT [22] in SendLog that supports authenticated communication as described in Section 4.2, and continuously maintains the Chord routing tables as new nodes enters and leaves the Chord network. The PIER query consists of the rules in Section 4.3 that implements a declarative version of the PIER [14] distributed query processor that supports distributed indexing and joins of relational tables over the DHT.

Performance metrics: Given the above query workload, our performance metrics are as follows:

- **Query completion time**: Time taken for a query to finish execution. As our example queries are recursive, this means the time elapsed before the system reaches a distributed fixpoint, where all nodes finish their computations on queries.
- **Average Bandwidth**: The per-node average bandwidth utilization for executing a distributed SendLog protocol. This metric is used for the Chord query which is continuously executing and maintaining its routing tables.
- **Aggregate Communication Overhead**: The total amount of traffic generated when executing a single distributed query. The Best-Path and PIER queries fall into this category.

To get an accurate measure of actual bandwidth utilization, we make use of the tcpdump system tool that allow us to intercept and measure all network packets transmitted from one P2 node to another. To explore extremes in performance due to the use of authenticated query processing, we explore two extremes in all our experiments: Auth-None communicates all tuples without authentication, while Auth represents the other extreme where all communication that occurs during query evaluation requires a RSA signature to be generated from the entire tuple and verified by the recipient node.

7.2 LAN Experiments

In this section, we present the results of executing the Best-Path, Chord and PIER queries on our local cluster, based on the performance metrics described above.

7.2.1 Best-Path Query

Our first experiment consists of executing the Best-Path distributed recursive query to a fixpoint on all 16 cluster nodes. We vary the network size from 16 to 128, where at its largest, each cluster machine runs 8 P2 virtual nodes. As input to the Best-Path query, we initialized a neighbor table where each node has an outdegree of 3. To ensure a connected network, we first connect all nodes in a ring, and then randomly add the remaining neighbor links to achieve the network outdegree.

Figures 5 and 6 show the aggregate communication overhead and query completion latency for the Best-Path query averaged over 8 experimental runs. We make the following observations. For the largest network size of 128, Auth incurs 30% additional aggregate communication and an additional 7 seconds is required for the query to complete execution as compared to Auth-None. Since our experiments are carried out in a LAN where machines are connected by high-speed Gigabit Ethernet, the additional time required for query completion can be attributed to the computational overhead of generating the signatures for each message tuple.

7.2.2 Chord DHT

Next, we study the performance characteristics of a SendLog implementation of the Chord protocol. The main difference compared to the previous Best-Path query is the continuous execution flavor as opposed to a single query execution, where routing tables are incrementally maintained as nodes either enter and leave the network. Our experimented Chord network size consist of 128 nodes, and after all nodes have joined the Chord overlay at 1600s, random Chord
lookup queries are issued simultaneously from 8 different nodes at three seconds interval for the next 400 seconds.

Figure 7 shows the per-node bandwidth utilization over time, obtained by averaging tcpdump statistics gathered across all nodes at any point in time. After all nodes have joined the Chord network (at time 800s), the per-node bandwidth consumption stabilizes at 0.2Kbps and 0.3Kbps respectively for Auth-None and Auth. At 1600s, the bandwidth consumption increased due to the additional Chord lookups that we generated to measure lookup latencies. We make the following additional observations. First, Auth incurs 47% more bandwidth compared to Auth-None, which is larger as expected compared to Best-Path, given that Chord message tend to small (180 bytes on average). Despite incurring higher relative bandwidth usage, in a LAN environment with sufficient bandwidth, most of the additional performance penalty can still be attributable to CPU overhead of signature generation. Given that Chord messages are small, the actual processing penalty due to the signature generation is negligible, as reflected in Figure 8 where the latency CDF of Auth-None and Auth are almost equivalent.

7.2.3 DHT-based Join Query

Building upon our Chord experiment, we experiment with a SeNDlog implementation of a DHT-based PIER distributed join operation. This workload involves the continuous execution of a 128-node Chord network. At each node, we also execute a PIER query processing node that uses the Chord node for routing. Running PIER and Chord concurrently allows us to validate the ability of our platform to layer the PIER overlay over Chord, and experiment with layered authentication across two layers (PIER and Chord), as described in Section 5.

Once Chord has stabilized, we issued a bandwidth intensive PIER query which involves a distributed join over multiple DHT nodes. The actual SeNDlog query is shown in Section 4.3. First, tables tableA and tableB, each with N tuples varied from 100 to 800, are indexed over the Chord DHT based on the hash of their first attribute value using rules a1 and b1 respectively. Once these two tables have been published and indexed over the DHT, a distributed join operation is carried out. This join incurs communication overhead due to the rehashing of tableA and tableB tuples based on their join key, and the results of the join are sent back to the node initiating the query. To emulate large sizes of tuples and hence explore the performance limits of authentication using our system, we additionally padded each tuple with an additional 640 bytes.

Figure 9 shows the aggregate communication overhead incurred by the distributed join operation as the input table sizes increases from 100 to 800. We make the following observations. First, the increase is quadratic as expected, given that the join of two tables result in a quadratic increase of intermediate and final results (our join selectivity is set to 1/16). Second, Auth incurs only an additional 8% additional communication overhead comparing with Non-Auth, much lower compared to the earlier Best-Path query and Chord, due to larger sizes of tuples being shipped. To understand the performance impact of authentication on the query processing throughput of PIER, Figure 10 shows the progress of query execution (measured by percentage of total final results received) over time. For table sizes of 500 and 800, we observe that Auth increases the query completion time by only 1 and 6 seconds respectively.

7.3 PlanetLab Experiments

To examine the effects of bandwidth constraints and propagation delays over the wide-area, we deploy our SeNDlog implementations of Chord and PIER on PlanetLab. Apart from using PlanetLab, our experimental setup was kept identical to that in our local cluster. As input to the PIER query, we utilize a distributed join of two tables with 100 tuples each.

Figure 11 shows the average bandwidth utilization for executing PIER distributed join query over Chord on PlanetLab. Compared to a similar LAN experiment in Figure 7, the bandwidth utilization of 0.2Kbps and 0.3Kbps for Auth-None and Auth are identical, validating that Chord is executing correctly on PlanetLab in terms of protocol messages. The PIER query is issued at time 2300s, after the Chord overlay has stabilized and the two tables tableA and tableB published and indexed by Chord.

Figures 12 and 13 shows the absolute performance in terms of Chord lookup latency and PIER query completion time on PlanetLab. In terms of absolute lookup latency, Chord lookups on PlanetLab are an order of magnitude slower compared to a LAN environment. We attribute the increase to real-world effects, where competing slices on PlanetLab contend for limited bandwidth and CPU resources. In addition, the performance penalty of authenticated communication is more apparent due to similar constraints. For example, the median Chord lookup latency increases by 1.5 seconds for Auth compared to Auth-None. We observe a similar effect for the PIER query on PlanetLab in Figure 13: while the time to receive 50% of result tuples are roughly equivalent for Auth and Auth-None, the eventual completion time for Auth is 40s larger. Overall, we observe that in a shared networked environment with limits on bandwidth and computational resources, authenticated query processing incurs observable performance penalty for bandwidth intensive distributed joins.

7.4 Network Provenance Experiment

In our final experiment, we perform a preliminary evaluation of a SeNDlog-based packet tracing service described in Section 6.2. This experiment validates and evaluates our runtime system support for computing and communicating local and authenticated prove-
nance. In local provenance, each packet is annotated with its entire derivation, essentially all visited routers along its path from source to destination. This provenance can be additionally authenticated and signed with signatures with the use of authenticated provenance. Distributed provenance as described in Section 6.2 is currently not supported in our system.

The experiment consists of 128 P2 nodes executing on our 16-node cluster, and the Best-Path query is executed to compute the forwarding tables used to determine the next hop along the shortest path from a given source to the destination. After this query has converged, we issue a SeNDlog continuous query on all nodes that result in 800-byte packets to be injected and forwarded from random sources to destinations at a rate of 160 packets/second. We execute SeNDlog packet forwarding with three settings: Auth-None Prov-None communicates all packets without authentication and provenance; Auth-None Prov annotates local provenance to every packet; and Auth Prov additionally signs each packet storing its provenance for authentication purposes.

Figure 14 shows the bandwidth overhead incurred in delivering packets. We observe a 12% increase in bandwidth utilization by Auth-None Prov compared to Auth-None Prov-None. Auth Prov incurs an additional 10% overhead over Auth-None Prov. Given that the diameter of the network is small, the provenance consisting of all intermediate routers along the path from source to destination is relatively small comparing with the size of packet. Hence, the additional bandwidth utilization due to provenance is relatively low.

Figure 15 presents the CDF of packets delivery latency (the time elapsed between sending and receiving a packet). Compared with Auth-None Prov-None, Auth-None Prov incurs 10% increase in median latency due to the additional cost of computing and shipping the provenance information with each packet. On the other hand, Auth Prov incurs high overhead, resulting in 60% increase in median latency. Since we are running our experiments in a local cluster, the absolute increase in median latency is negligible (less than 0.05 seconds). As follow up, we plan to better understand the performance implications of network provenance support in realistic wide-area networks, where optimizations such as sampling will be vital for efficient provenance processing.

7.5 Summary of Results

Revisiting the goals of our evaluation articulated earlier in this section, we validate that SeNDlog specifications for routing, Chord DHT, and PIER distributed join result in correct implementations. Our network provenance experiment on packet tracing with local and authenticated provenance also result in expected behavior. Within a local cluster, we note that the performance penalty of using authenticated query processing depends largely on the type of query being executed. For a continuous executing query that implements Chord with small message transfers, the overhead in terms of latency is negligible. For a bandwidth intensive query such as computing best paths or executing a distributed DHT-based join, the performance penalties due to authentication are more apparent, especially on PlanetLab where bandwidth and computation resources may be limited. These differences may be mitigated with alternative authentication schemes that achieve different performance/security...
tradeoffs. Integrating these tradeoffs in an application-tunable fashion into a query optimizer is an interesting area for future work.

8. RELATED WORK

This paper extends our initial SeNDlog proposal [3] on secure networking language to a unified platform to build secure information systems at various layers, including the use of dynamic location specifiers that enables layered authentication. In addition, we have a full-fledged implementation, and experimentations in a LAN cluster and on PlanetLab.

Our work is related to a large literature on access control in distributed systems (e.g.[15], [20] and [26]). In addition, through our use of declarative networking techniques, our work is related to a large literature of network specification languages (e.g.d3log [16], metarouting [13]). Our system extends and unifies these bodies of work to enable an extensible platform for secure networked information systems that integrates declarative routing, overlays, and security policies.

Access control in database systems is a well-explored topic. To our best knowledge, the usage has been limited to traditional database management systems. In recent months, we have observed new application scenarios where security and access control policies are integrated with distributed stream processing (e.g. [5]), as network stream processing become pervasively deployed on new and potentially untrusted networked environments (e.g. RFID, sensors, wireless mobile devices). While our paper focuses on secure declarative networking and applications supported within this framework, at its core, a declarative networking engine is essentially a distributed stream processor that incrementally maintains recursive stream views in a distributed setting. As future work, we would like to further explore applying our framework to other stream processing environments.

9. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we present a unified declarative platform for specifying, implementing, analyzing and auditing large-scale secure information systems. Our proposed SeNDlog language unifies logic-based access control languages with query languages for declarative networking. We extend existing distributed recursive query processing techniques to execute SeNDlog programs that incorporate the notion of authenticated communication among untrusted nodes. We conduct a detailed performance evaluation of various systems developed using our platform within a LAN environment as well as PlanetLab. We further perform an evaluation of network provenance via a SeNDlog-based packet tracing service within a local cluster.

Beyond language extensions to support additional security constructs described in Section 3.3, we believe that there are exciting cross-layer optimizations and analysis opportunities that can arise with a unified declarative framework, and we have barely scratch the surface with this paper. While preliminary, our initial exploration of network provenance lays the groundwork for future exploration in developing bandwidth efficient techniques for querying and maintaining network provenance, and grounding its practical usage for analyzing and securing networks. We would also like to further explore other practical aspects of our system, including query optimizations that exploit security/performance tradeoffs, scalable key management, extensible security type system, and also validation of our platform with a greater variety of networked information systems. To this end, we are working towards a publicly available deployment service on PlanetLab usable by the community to experiment with new secure networked systems.

10. REFERENCES

[4] F. Bancilhon, D. Maier, Y. Sagiv, and J. Ullman. Magic Sets and Other Strange Recursive Stream Views in a Distributed Setting. As future work, we would like to further explore applying our framework to other stream processing environments.

9. CONCLUSION

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