



Tech Info Library

AFP Passwords and User Authentication Methods

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Security: Everyone

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TOPIC -----

Are AppleShare File Server user passwords stored in the Users and Groups file in an encrypted or unencrypted form? If encrypted, what is the algorithm? If encrypted, is the encryption key stored on the server volume?

It is my understanding that in the Random Number Exchange method for user authentication, user passwords are never transmitted over the network unencrypted. Is this correct?

DISCUSSION -----

It is true that passwords are not encrypted in the Users and Groups file on the server. The theory is that the file is not accessible over the network and that a server requiring security can be locked away from prying eyes and software.

You are correct in stating that the Random Number Exchange method of user authentication does not send a password over the network unencrypted. Be aware that some third-party AFP servers may not support this method (although it would be unusual), and the user has no control over what user authentication method is used. The server being connected determines this. For a more detailed description of user authentication methods available through the AppleTalk Filing Protocol, read "Inside AppleTalk" pages 13-28 through 13-30.

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