



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

Research Seminar

Towards practical anonymized analytics with cloaked computing

Paul Francis

Max Planck Institute for Software Systems
12-1pm Friday 9th Oct 2015

Abstract: In spite of several decades of research on anonymized analytics, the state of practice is mostly simple pseudonymization (replacing personally identifying information with random identifiers, but otherwise leaving the data intact). I argue that the reason practitioners have ignored the last 15 years of research in anonymized analytics (from K-anonymity to differential privacy) is because these approaches lack utility. Rather than a formal approach to privacy, my research group is attacking the problem empirically, with a focus on utility and practical impact. Working with the startup Aircloak, we have designed a built a practical high-utility anonymized analytics system. In this talk, I describe the Aircloak "cloaked database" system and our experiences so far.

Short Bio: Paul Francis is a tenured faculty at the Max Planck Institute for Software Systems and co-founder of the startup Aircloak, both in Germany. Paul has held research positions at Cornell University, ACIRI, NTT Software Labs, Bellcore, and MITRE, and was Chief Scientist at two Silicon Valley startups. Historically, Paul's research centers around routing and addressing problems in the Internet and P2P networks. Paul's innovations include NAT, shared-tree multicast, the first P2P multicast system, the first DHT (as part of landmark routing), and Virtual Aggregation. In recent years, Paul has shifted gears and is working on solving the problem of user privacy loss through tracking, but without hurting the industries that benefit from tracking (advertising and analytics). The startup Aircloak is a spin-off of this research.

Venue: Large Conference Room, O'Reilly Institute.

Further Details: <https://www.scss.tcd.ie/Doug.Leith/seminars.php>

