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How to Protect a Document – DRM, Public Key and Encryption Provide Best Solutions
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For many organizations the protection of their documents is tantamount to protecting their revenue streams and thus they will do anything to ensure that their documents are always secured from unauthorized persons. Encryption is the best way of how to protect a document as anyone who does not have the decryption key cannot view the documents. One way to encrypt document files is through using passwords as encryption keys. This is however a very weak form of encryption method as first of all passwords can be passed on to unauthorized persons, and two, many types of crack-password tools are readily and freely available in the market.

The best approach to encrypt document is whereby the file is kept encrypted in the disk and is only decrypted in the memory. Further, the decryption keys are sourced from the server of the document owner. The keys are then held encrypted in a keystore, which is locked to individual computers such that the keys cannot be shared with other users. We of course desire the most powerful encryption available, and we now have it in the AES algorithm at its highest strength i.e. 256 bit. AES is the perfect algorithm for encrypt document files use; it is also the algorithm that is used to protect US Government confidential information. When used together with public key technology, AES encryption provides a robust and secure way of how to protect a document ensuring that it will only be accessible to authorized users.

However, most cases of intellectual property theft are orchestrated by users who are authorized to access protected documents. This means that even if you encrypt document, once it is decrypted it becomes open to all forms of abuse including unauthorized copying, printing, sharing, and even editing. We therefore need a method of how to protect a document once it is decrypted. Such a solution is fortunately available in the form of Digital Rights Management (DRM) controls.

With DRM controls we not only look to stop copying, sharing or printing, but indeed a finer level of control based on regulation. These controls are imposed if we use a special document viewer to access the documents. With DRM we can determine if the document can be printed and if so how many copies can be made. We can also determine if the document can be viewed and how many times, and can revoke its viewership anytime we detect an irregularity. This solution can also help us to make a log of how the document was used. In conclusion, we can confidently declare that the best way on how to protect a document is via using a combination of DRM, encryption, and public key technology.

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