

Summary

Symptom

Is MIT Kerberos 5 supported as a 3rd party security product for Secure Network Communication (SNC) in SAP R/3 components?

Other terms

MIT Kerberos, SNC, supported security products

Reason and Prerequisites

Solution

Yes and No.

Maybe it is more NO than yes, since SAP does NOT have Kerberos expertise and does NOT have any Kerberos-specific documentation.

SAP's support is strictly limited to SAP's side of the code which calls external products according to the definition of the GSS-API v2 interface specification (rfc-2743, rfc-2744) with the constraints published as part of SAP's BC-SNC interoperability certification.

There is no product called "MIT Kerberos 5" certified for interoperability with SAP's BC-SNC interface. There are, however, two BC-SNC certified commercial products that are derived from MIT Kerberos 5, and then there is the SAP-supplied wrapper DLL for Microsoft's W2K Kerberos SSP (called gsskrb5.dll--see note 352295).

Traditionally, MIT Kerberos 5 has been distributed as source code, and there are several different Releases available and in use. Release v1.0 through v1.0.5 had a few serious showstopper bugs in the GSS-API implementation which prevented interoperability with SAP BC-SNC (causing fatal program terminations); Release v1.1 appears stable.

Several Unix vendors are shipping Kerberos with their Operating systems which are derived from or related to the MIT Kerberos 5 code base. Some of these derived Kerberos 5 variants are NON-interoperable with SAP's BC-SNC interface. The reasons vary from missing bugfixes through subtle binary-incompatible changes at the API level to missing GSS-API v2 functionality required by SAP's BC-SNC.

In general, checking your MIT Kerberos library with our BC-SNC certification tool "GSSTEST" (see below) should give you some indication whether you library is interoperable with SAP R/3.

HOWEVER, it is up to the vendor to offer documentation and provide support for configuring and administrating their Kerberos 5 product with SAP's BC-SNC interface. And we strongly recommend that you only use products for which you can get the level of support that you will need in case of a problem - which in general means a commercial product which has passed the BC-SNC interoperability certification and is actively supported by it's supplier/vendor. This is particularly important when you consider interoperability in a heterogeneous environment across software updates (e.g. when using Microsoft W2K Kerberos on frontends and a Unix Kerberos implementation on Unix-based AppServers.)

There are some Universities with profound Kerberos expertise who are successfully running their SAP installations with self-maintained MIT Kerberos 5 software. Since MIT is using their Kerberos successfully with their SAP software you could ask MIT about the suitability of the particular version of MIT Kerberos 5 that you want to use with SAP R/3 Secure Network Communication (SNC).

In case that you encounter interoperability problems with a (Kerberos) implementation that has not been BC-SNC certified, SAP will at least look at the problem to figure out whether it might be a problem of SAP's application code or whether it is an interoperability issue caused by the specific external library that you are trying to use. It may be helpful if you include the output of GSSTEST with your problem report whenever you suspect an interoperability problem with your Kerberos library (i.e. the library is not found or cannot be loaded; authentication fails frequently or always).

SAP certifies interoperability with security software vendors on their request and for a fee. There are several certified security products available, including at least 2 commercial Kerberos 5 implementations.

A list of **BC-SNC certified products** is available here:

<http://www.sap.com/ecosystem/customers/directories/SearchSolution.epx>

Select "Network Encryption" in the top Listbox Certification Category and press the search button at the end of the page.

SAP provides the test program GSSTEST to verify correct operation of a gssapi shared library and some of the interoperability constraints with SNC. It is available as source code and compiles on Microsoft Windows 95/98/NT/2K/XP and all SAP-supported Unix platforms.

GSSTEST download and more information about the BC-SNC certification:

<http://www.sdn.sap.com/irj/sdn/interface-certifications?rid=/webcontent/uuid/e112cb72-0501-0010-63a3-f45326c176ae>

Header Data

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Category:	Installation information
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The Note is release-independent

Related Notes

Number	Short Text
352295	Microsoft Windows Single Sign-On options
150699	Latest patches for SNC-related problems
114045	Consulting: Technical system security
113426	SAPgui aborts with SNCERR_CONTEXT_EXPIRED
66687	Use of network security products

Attachments

File Type	File Name	Language	Size
ZIP	gsstest129.zip	E	1.200 KB