Umpio provides researchers with a tool for processing sensitive data

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Abstract

The Umpio service is an answer to researchers' queries about how to process sensitive personal data. The service was developed and tested on during last year, and the service will be further developed. At the moment, Umpio offers a more efficient and lighter solution for storing sensitive data than a dedicated server.

Keywords: Umpio, Sensitive data

The EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into effect almost a year ago in May 2019 and has affected the way personal data is processed. For the University of Helsinki IT Solution Consultants the regulation has resulted in a radical increase in queries about how to process sensitive personal data. The Umpio service has been developed as an answer to this high demand. While the service was rolled out on a tight schedule in late 2018 and still has its quirks, it can already be used for sensitive data processing.

Virtual and physical servers have previously been the only options for storing sensitive data at the University of Helsinki, although CSC also provides virtual servers for sensitive material. These solutions, however, can be quite cumbersome to build up if the purpose is simply to store moderate amounts of data. Maintaining servers also requires additional technical know-how. The Umpio service was developed and tested on a demanding schedule during the summer and autumn of 2018, because the number of servers required for processing sensitive data would have grown exponentially via the utilization of existing systems.

Umpio is accessed via UH virtual desktop

As a service Umpio is very similar to group folders. It is a tightly isolated data storage space on a disk system located in the IT Center's server room. Unlike group folders, which can be accessed from a physical workstation, Umpio can only be accessed via a University of Helsinki remote virtual desktop. To use Umpio, users create an IAM group, which is connected to the correct folder in the disk system. In order to access the folder, users must create an authentication key, which will generate a one-time code for signing in to a remote desktop.

We recommend that users install the code application on their phone. You can read instructions for using Umpio at the Helpdesk website.

Umpio will be further developed

Umpio is a good service for sensitive data handling, but it is still far from perfect. During the trial phase users have reported that it is difficult to begin using it despite detailed instructions. Starting up secure virtual workstations often takes time, and the transfer of large amounts of data is fairly slow. We will continue to develop Umpio, and our goal is to offer the service for secure Linux workstations as well. Despite its challenges, Umpio is still a more efficient and lighter solution for storing sensitive data than a dedicated server.

If you need secure storage space for your files, contact helpdesk@helsinki.fi and we will direct

your request accordingly. We also recommend that you familiarize yourself with remote desktops, because this makes starting with Umpio easier.

- [Virtual desktop instructions](#)
- [Umpio instructions](#)

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