

SoundSoftware Code Site - Feature #214

Anonymised code escrow for anon peer review

2011-07-15 11:59 AM - Dan Stowell

Status:	New	Start date:	2011-07-15
Priority:	Normal	Due date:	
Assignee:		% Done:	0%
Category:		Estimated time:	0.00 hour
Target version:			

Description

I often submit a piece of code along with a journal/conference submission, to demonstrate an algorithm. There's an uncomfortable tension between the anonymisation needed for review, and the attribution required for asserting copyright (whether or not you're also specifying a licence such as an open-source one).

What would be interesting would be a feature to create a URL to give to referees, who could then access the code without knowing who the author was. The identifier in the URL would have to be some opaque ID which doesn't give away the author/project/institution.

It could simply point to a particular commit in a soundssoftware repository.

However, there's also the problem of whether the code has copyright notices or author names written into it. For this, maybe simply scan the code at the time the user requests to create the anon URL, and warn about any suspected giveaway info. It might also be possible for the system to offer some sort of automatic anonymisation search-and-replace, though that's potentially fragile.

A security issue that occurs to me is that it would be possible for a persistent person to search through all the public repositories to find matching code (if it's in a public proj). Not sure there's a way around that, that's just inherent if someone's made the choice to put the code out in the open in any form.

History

#1 - 2011-07-15 12:00 PM - Dan Stowell

...also, maybe users would want to be able to point at a subfolder inside a particular commit, rather than the whole snapshot. That's a bit trickier for the hg but might be better fr users.