RESTENA

Réseau Téléinformatique de l'Education Nationale et de la Recherche

FILESENDER

A GOOD ALTERNATIVE FOR SENDING LARGE FILES

« The file to transmit exceeds the maximum limit» is a message frequently returned by email systems before blocking the transmission of large email attachments. So, how to proceed to transmit a large file to its destination?

Since email transmission fails on this point, a new trend is to upload large files in the cloud and to provide access to the receiver. These systems (e.g. DropBox) are not designed for the simple task of transferring large files, but they are collective or shared workspaces.

An alternative focused on sending large files is the temporary hosting service and transfer service "FileSender".

How does FileSender work?

RESTENA FileSender is a platform for sending large files in a secured way. This open-source service has been developed by an international consortium[*] of research networks aiming to satisfy the specific needs of the research community.

The principle of FileSender is quite simple. The user authenticates on the website of the RESTENA FileSender service and uploads his file onto the dedicated RESTENA server. He indicates the destination email addresse(s). An email is sent to the receiver(s) including a personalized link pointing to the file location. After a receiver has downloaded the file, the sender is notified about the download.

After a maximum retrieval time of 10 days, the "download invitation" and the uploaded file will be deleted from the server.

At all time, a user may check his uploaded files on the server, resend a download invitation to an additional receiver or delete his uploaded files. The functionality of RESTENA FileSender is shown in Figure 1 on the following page.
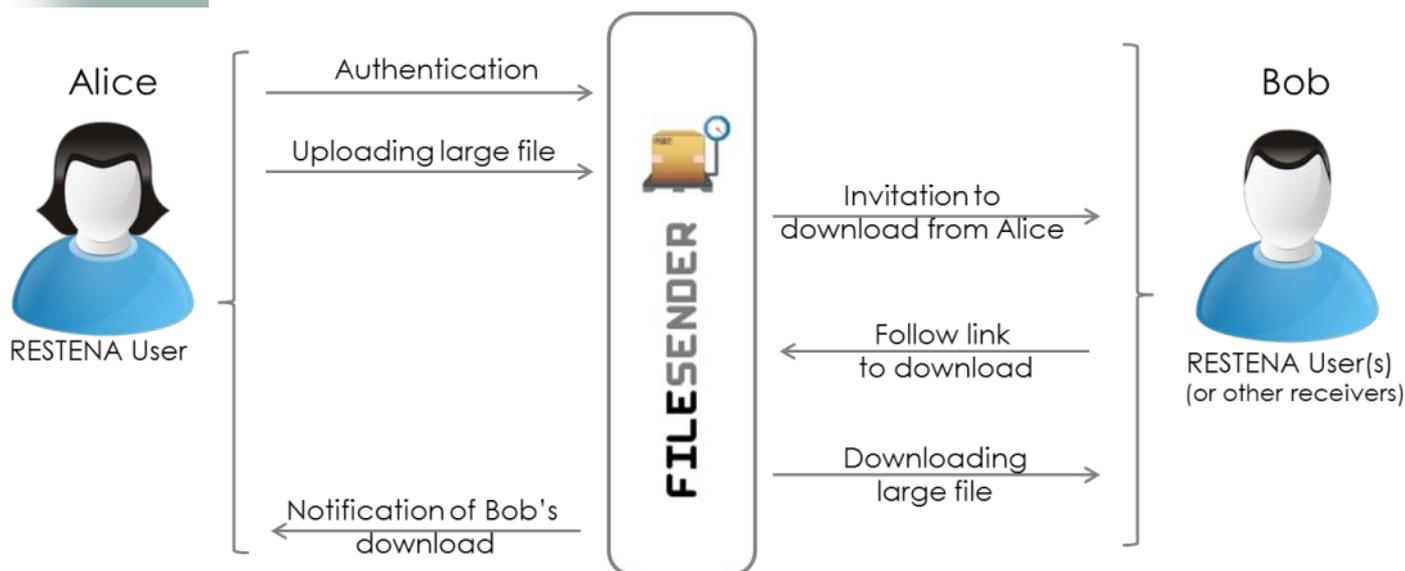
* http://www.filesender.org

Figure 1: How to send a large file by using FileSender as a RESTENA user

Why using FileSender?

The FileSender service offers numerous advantages:

- No installation of tools or additional complex configuration (as for example for an ftp server) is required. You simply connect to the RESTENA FileSender website (https://fs.restena.lu).

- To use the service, it is sufficient to authenticate on the website of the FileSender service with your user credentials for the RESTENA services. A secure connection is established. Please note that the RESTENA Foundation never collects data about user applications and machines.

- When sending files to users outside of the RESTENA community, FileSender does not need any data about the users receiving the file, except the email address for notification purpose.

- The number of file transfers as well as the file size are not limited (only valid for recent browser versions).

- The temporary storage of the files on the server is anonymous, but not encrypted (for the moment) and the exchanged files are not archived after expiration or download.

- Regarding recent developments on data security aspects, RESTENA FileSender does not share data with surveillance programs of any kind.

- Uploaded files are stored on servers within the RESTENA network and will not be stored on third party facilities.
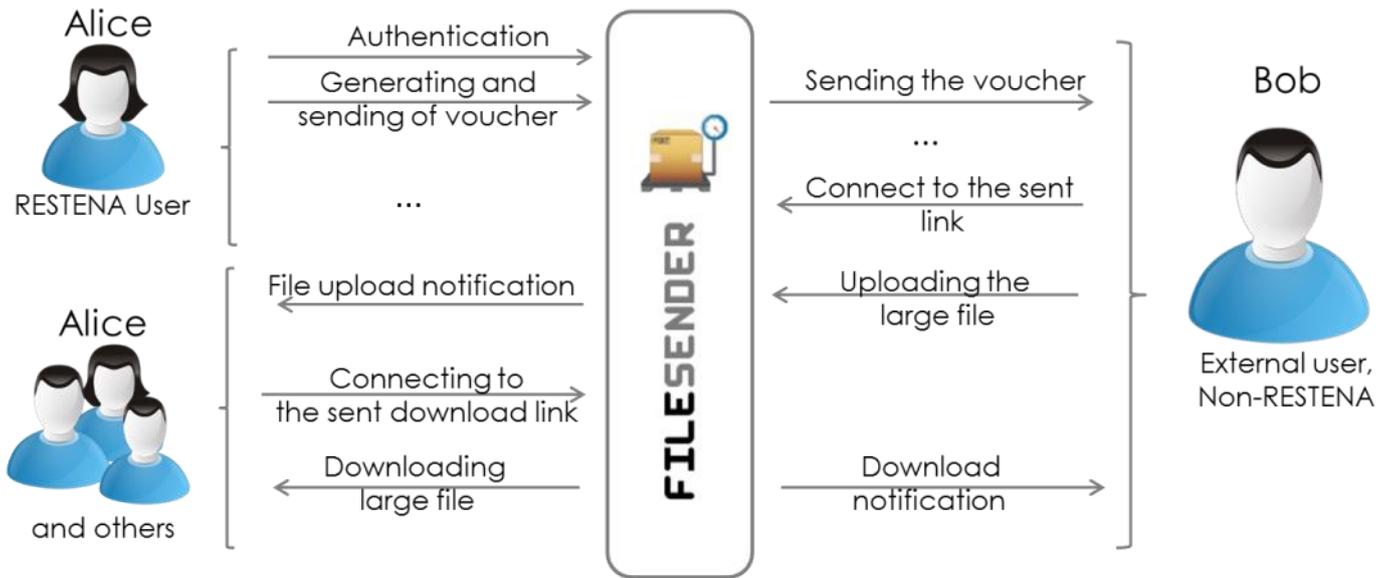
* ftp: File Transfer Protocol

Figure 2: Sending a transfer voucher to an external user and the file exchange process

Who can use FileSender?

The access to the FileSender service is completely free and mainly reserved to users having an access code to the RESTENA services and network. To access the FileSender service, the user only needs his usual login credentials.

- Who can receive large data files?

Everybody can receive data files from FileSender.

- Who can send large data files?

All users having RESTENA user credentials.

The transfer of a large file from an external user is not possible by default. For this, a user of the RESTENA community has to generate a voucher in FileSender first. This external user is then notified about his one-time voucher giving him all rights to upload large files and to transmit them. The process of generating and sending a voucher is shown in Figure 2 on top of this page.
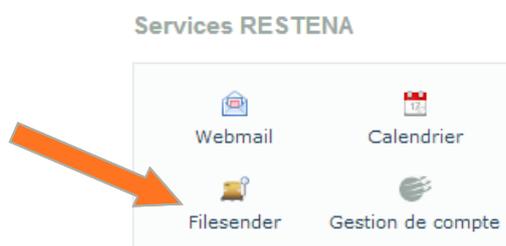
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Technical characteristics

- Web browser with HMTL 5 support, for example Firefox 4+, Chrome, IE 10, Safari 6.0.1+. Supported operating systems are Windows, MacOS, Linux. With HTML 5, transfers of a size larger than 2 GB are supported;

- User authentication is provided by SimpleSAMLphp supporting SAML2, LDAP, RADIUS or others;

- Maximum number of destination addresses per email : 100 separated by ',' or ';';

- Maximum number of files per transfer : 1 (or more files in a compressed file);

- Maximum supported file size: 50 Gb;

- Maximum expiration period: 10 days (The user can explicitly fix a shorter expiration period);

Notice: In future versions, FileSender will support encrypted transmission of files and support the transmission of multiple files per transfer.

Where to find FileSender?

The FileSender service can be accessed by the tool box on the website. Connect to http://www.restena.lu, then click on the FileSender icon in the RESTENA service tool box next to the "Quick Links" section.

Or by using the direct link :

https://fs.restena.lu

In case of problems or for additional questions, please contact the helpdesk team.

helpdesk@restena.lu or by phone +352 42 44 09 - 1

News from the RESTENA Foundation

Since September, the RESTENA Foundation actively supports the new campaign from BEE-SECURE about a reasonable usage of the computer in order to avoid an addiction.

More information: https://www.bee-secure.lu