

From: GDMR "George D M Ross" 25-OCT-1985 13:59 To:
RNI,RWT,FRED,WEX,GORDON,JHB,GDMR Subj: John's filestore document.

John's document seems to me to be based on the assumption that there will only be one kind of file server on the network, that being "The Filestore". I would contend that this is wrong. There will be a number of systems on the network which will be capable of acting as a file server. Some of these will be multi-access systems with local file storage, which export this (mainly) for the convenience of their "normal" users, while some will be dedicated machines (for cost/performance reasons). There may in fact be several varieties of each on the network.

We already have this situation, since ECSVAX exports its file storage capabilities to the rest of the (slow) ether. The code to do this was written because the old Interdata Filestore was too unreliable to support the development of the current filestores. It is fully capable of acting as a filestore, though it doesn't implement some of the more Filestore- specific features of the protocol.

So we really have two tasks. We have to design a file access protocol which can be used reasonably effectively to communicate with all the various systems which might want to export their file storage capability. We also have to design our stand-alone file servers. Since the various file systems on the network are already highly diverse, there is no reason why we should want to be artificially restrictive in the stand-alone servers just to avoid complication. The complication already exists, so we might as well design something functional rather than something primitive.