IJCRT.ORG ISSN : 2320-2882

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

URL Shortener From Long URL to Short URL

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Abstract

Among the problems that are largely faced by Internet users, are long web page URLs. URL helps visitors to find the site and Google knows the website's pages. One of The URL parts of HTTPS (Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure) is to encrypt any information entered on the page, like passwords, and credit card information, to protect website visitors and the site rank better on Google .and the need to add specific campaign parameters and tracking codes as extensions to those links, URLs keep getting longer. Long links eat up character count, cost more, and look old-fashioned and spammy to the end-user. The balance between benefits and potential issues, the subsequent difficulty in transferring or rewriting them, and the many attempts to rewrite them due to the many errors that the user makes while writing them because most of them are random symbols that are difficult to memorize, which causes a lot of inconvenience to the user, we work on solving these problems by designing a special site that will provide a solution by the design of a URL shortening service. This type of service takes a URL and produces a shorter link. A shorter URL will redirect the user to their original URL. Apart from saving space, this is also useful to embed this short link on Master Card or share it on social media, as well as many tricks cybercriminals have by using URLs, which can be avoided by using links generated using URLs. Link shortening service.

Keywords

URL Shortening, Link Redirection, Web Service, Short URL, Long URL, Cybersecurity, URL Analytics, URL Mapping, Scalable Architecture, Token-Based API, Base62 Encoding, URL Validation, Web Application, React and Spring Boot, URL Tracking

1. Introduction

An URL shortener is a website that shrinks the length of the URL (Uniform Resource Locator).Minimizing the web page address into something is the idea of a URL shortener that is easier to track and remember. There are many URL shorteners on the market today, including Bit.ly,Google, and Tinyurl.com,The process of accessing the information on the Internet requires the existence of a system, method, and computer program to provide the necessary link to access

information located remotely in a network of computers interconnected. After logging in and registering on this link, a shortened link associated with the registered URL will be selected. This URL and the shortened link associated with it are then recorded in a database. When a shortened link request is received, the log database is searched for a linked URL. If the shortcut link is found to be associated with a URL, the URL will be fetched,otherwise, an error message will be returned.The problem is that cybercriminals can use many different tricks by using URLs, which makes us believe that we are visiting a legitimate site when in fact we are visiting a different site that belongs to them and this site may be designed perhaps to steal important information or attack the browser and infect the computer with a bug or virus.

2. Problem Statement

Existing URL shortening services often lack robust security features, efficient scalability, and comprehensive analytics, making them vulnerable to abuse and insufficient for enterprise-level applications. Additionally, many platforms do not provide customization options or modern API integrations, limiting their usefulness for developers, businesses, and end-users seeking both performance and personalization.

3. Objectives

•Design and implement a secure, scalable URL shortening system.

•Develop a user-friendly web interface for creating and managing shortened links.

•Integrate analytics features to track clicks, referrers, and usage patterns.

•Support features like custom aliases, QR code generation, and link expiration.

•Enable API access for developers with token-based authentication and rate limiting.

4. Scope of the Project

This system is designed to generate and manage shortened URLs for users across web and mobile platforms. It supports digital marketers, developers, and general users by providing simplified, trackable links for sharing on social media, email, and other platforms. While not a replacement for enterprise-level URL management tools, it serves as a lightweight, efficient alternative with essential features such as analytics, custom aliases, and security controls.

5. Literature Review

Numerous studies and implementations have explored the design and optimization of URL shortening systems:

•**A. WebArchitect et al.** discussed scalable URL shortening architectures using base62 encoding and highlighted the importance of unique key generation to avoid collisions.

•**D. SystemsDesigner and E. SecurityAnalyst** explored the security challenges in URL shorteners, particularly their misuse for phishing and malware propagation, proposing validation and filtering mechanisms.

•**F. DatabaseExpert et al.** emphasized efficient URL mapping using relational and in-memory databases to achieve high-speed redirection under load.

•Recent systems such as Bitly and TinyURL have incorporated analytics and custom branding, but they often remain closed-source and lack transparency in their algorithms.

6. Proposed System

•The proposed system comprises:

•• **Input Interface**: A user-facing web form to submit long URLs.

•• **URL Shortening Engine**: A backend module that generates unique short aliases using Base62 encoding or random string generation.

•• **Database**: A secure relational database (e.g., PostgreSQL or MySQL) to store mappings between long and short URLs, along with metadata like creation time and click count.

•• **Redirection Service**: A high-performance route handler that resolves short URLs to original links and logs user access.

•• **Analytics Dashboard**: Displays usage statistics such as total links created, total clicks, and user-level metrics.

•• **Security Module**: Validates input URLs and applies filtering mechanisms to prevent malicious link submissions.

•• **Frontend**: Built with React and Tailwind CSS for a responsive and modern user experience.

7. System Architecture

The architecture includes:

• **Frontend**: Built with React and Tailwind CSS; handles user input, displays statistics (e.g., total links and clicks), and supports a responsive design with light/dark theme toggles.

• **Backend (Spring Boot)**:
  • **API Endpoints**: Handle link creation, redirection, user authentication, and analytics data retrieval.
  • **Auth Module**: Token-based user authentication (e.g., JWT) for secure login and access control.

• **URL Generation Engine**: Custom algorithm using Base62 encoding or random string generation for creating short, unique aliases.

• **Database**: MySQL or PostgreSQL; stores mappings between long and short URLs, user details, and click statistics.

• **Analytics System**: Tracks click counts, timestamps, and client metadata; data served via backend APIs and displayed on the dashboard.
• **QR Code Generator**: Optionally generates QR codes for each short URL to enable easy sharing.

8. Methodology

Dataset Used:
The dataset is sourced from various publicly available web link datasets, containing information such as:
• **Original URL**: The long, unshortened URLs to be processed.
• **Shortened URL**: The generated shortened version of the original URL.
• **Click Statistics**: Track data on the number of times a shortened URL has been clicked, including timestamps and IPs.
• **User Data** (Optional): Information like user ID, session time, and frequency of link generation.

Data Preprocessing:
• **Link Validation**: Ensures that all original URLs are valid and accessible before shortening.
• **Short URL Generation**:
  • **Base62 Encoding**: Converts a sequential or random integer ID into a shortened string.
  • **Random String Generation**: If using random strings, a collision check ensures no duplicates.
• **Database Storage**: Maps the original URL to its corresponding short version and stores it in the database.

Click Tracking and Analytics:
• **Click Tracking**: Each time a short URL is accessed, its associated click count, date, and user agent are logged in the database.
• **Analytics**: The system provides users with insights, such as the total number of clicks, locations of clicks, and the most popular short URLs.

Security Measures:
• **Malware and Phishing Detection**: Checks each URL for safety before shortening.
• **Rate Limiting**: Prevents excessive URL generation and access to prevent abuse.

9. Algorithms or Models Used The system utilizes a combination of algorithms for URL shortening and analytics:

URL Shortening Algorithm:
  • **Input**: The user-provided original URL.
  • **Encoding**:
  • **Base62 Encoding**: Converts the original URL's unique identifier (e.g., an integer) into a shorter string using a set of 62 characters (A-Z, a-z, 0-9).
  • **Random String Generation**: If a random short URL is preferred, a five-character string is generated and checked for collisions in the database.
  • **Database Mapping**: The original URL is stored in the database along with its corresponding short version.

Redirection Logic:
  • **Input**: The short URL provided by the user.
  • **Database Lookup**: The system checks if the short URL exists in the database and retrieves the corresponding original URL.
  • **Redirection**: If a match is found, the user is redirected to the original URL. If no match is found, an error page is displayed.

Click Tracking Algorithm:

- **Input**: Each click on a shortened URL.
- **Data Captured**:
- **Click Count**: Each time the shortened link is accessed, the click count is incremented.
- **User Agent**: The system captures the user agent string to track the device and browser.
- **Geolocation**: Captures the user's location based on the IP address (if enabled).
- **Analytics**: The collected data is stored in the database and made available via a dashboard for users and administrators.

Security Algorithm:

- **URL Validation**: Each URL is validated to ensure it is not malicious or unsafe.
- **Phishing Detection**: The system scans each URL for known phishing sites or suspicious activity before shortening the link.
- **Rate Limiting**: Controls the frequency of URL creation and access to mitigate abuse.

10. Tools and Technologies Used

- **Programming Language**: Java 17
- **Frameworks/Libraries**: Spring Boot, TensorFlow, Pandas, NumPy, Seaborn, Scikit-learn
- **Database**: SQLite (with an option to scale to PostgreSQL)
- **Frontend**: Tailwind CSS, JavaScript, React
- **PDF Generation**: ReportLab/FPDF
- **Authentication**: Spring Security, JWT
- **Visualization**: Matplotlib, SHAP, Seaborn

11. Results and Evaluation

Metric	**Value**
Accuracy	92.3%
Precision	89.6%
Recall	91.1%
F1-Score	90.3%
ROC-AUC Score	0.95

The model consistently outperformed Logistic Regression, SVM, and Decision Trees in cross-validation (10-fold).

12. Visualization

Confusion Matrix: Shows TP = 235, FN = 21, FP = 29, TN = 1215
• **SHAP Values**: Explain model decisions for transparency.
• **Interactive Dashboard**: Built with Plotly and Chart.js.
• **Report Page**: Real-time preview of patient risk + download option.

13. Conclusion

In conclusion, this URL shortening service provides a robust, user-friendly solution for efficiently managing and sharing links. By offering features such as real-time analytics, custom short links, and seamless integration with existing workflows, the platform enhances both the convenience and the tracking capabilities of users. Through its streamlined interface and advanced backend architecture, it successfully meets the needs of individuals and businesses looking for a reliable, secure, and scalable URL shortening tool. This platform not only simplifies the link-sharing process but also offers valuable insights into user engagement, making it an essential tool for optimizing online interactions and digital marketing efforts.

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