

## Briefing: Usability

Identity in the digital world is fragmented, with people having a plethora of digital identities (or accounts) on disparate unlinked systems. The average user maintains 25 different web accounts but manages them with just 6.5 passwords<sup>i</sup>, while 85% of people are dissatisfied with current authentication methods<sup>ii</sup>.

Even where low-grade federated identity is used (Facebook, Google etc.) this is typically restricted to authentication (user-name and password) and is increasingly raising privacy concerns over the aggregation of linked information that those organisation have about the individual.

Clearly, the challenge as we move identity forward, is how we solve the problems of usability while still maintaining (or even increasing) the level of privacy. Key to solving this problem is understanding “primacy” – placing the individual entity (typically a person) at the centre and in control (to have “agency”) over their own identity.

In real life, the assertion of identity starts with an understanding by the individual that “I am me” and from that makes assertions of “sameness” (typically using their face as their identifier) linked to the different persona they use (such as family, work, sports, citizen etc.).

It is possible to use this approach into the digital world; allowing an individual from a single anonymous digital identifier (proving “I am me” or asserting “sameness”) to create and manage multiple digital trusted personas using one-way trusts to ensure privacy.

In this way an entity, once linked to their digital identity, can move around within their digital world with authentication happening transparently, while they retain agency over how their identity attributes are used.

This can extend beyond their current web-based digital existence to encompass every aspect of their future digital lives such as e-Voting, driving (digital car-keys), their house (digital front door keys, managing their Internet-of-Things devices, personal medical devices, digital-rights-management for entertainment etc.) and their work place with building access and computer log-in.

### Why should I get involved?

The Global Identity Foundation is a non-for-profit, vendor neutral organisation combining the identity requirements of numerous sectors of industry, as well as other interested parties, to define a consistent set of use cases for identity and from that a single set of requirements.

Building on the work of the Jericho Forum and many others, our aim is to further prove and expand the current draft identity ecosystem to a viable solution set of capabilities, that would be implementable by anyone, anywhere, as an open-standard.



In this way, vendors can implement their piece of the identity puzzle, being able to rely on others to play their part, saving both money and time, with users able to bring their own single global identity (BYOiD) to all aspects of their digital lives; while users can be assured that using this single standard all the components will interact correctly while protecting their privacy and leaving them in control.

## What does a future with global identity look like?

Imagine saving a person to your address book while their cryptographic key is automatically stored as well; now sending them an e-mail automatically encrypts your communication, as does a video or phone call with them. Receiving a mail, voice call or video chat from them automatically verifies their identity and displays confirmation that is really is the person in your address book.

Imagine picking up your personal phone and it automatically authenticates that it's you; going to work and using that same phone (containing your cached corporate persona) to access the buildings, while walking up to your terminal automatically unlocks and/or logs you in.

Imagine a world where your identity and attributes are under your control, with attributes signed by the authoritative source. This allows you to shop at a new web-site, order an expensive bottle of alcohol and buy it simply by asserting proof that you are over 21, your delivery address and your ability to pay; all without opening an account, generating a user-name and password, or entering more information that is necessary for the transaction.



In this new world, the choice to share attributes of your identity are under your control, while combining this persona-based approach with cryptographic one-way-trusts ensures that should a single persona be compromised then all your other personas (and their attributes) remain safe, while even if stolen, the thief is unable to use those attributes to impersonate you.

## What can I contribute, and what do I get back in return?

As a corporate member of the Global Identity Foundation you have access to all aspects of the process, from the scenario workshops being held globally which will define the generic use cases; the distillation of those use cases into a set of identity ecosystem design requirements; all based around the concept of a user being able to have a single global identity (and identifier).

We envisage organizations will want their experts in the areas relevant to them to be actively involved, both to submit their requirements and influence the design, as well as to have advanced knowledge of how their products may want to evolve in the future or understand new products or offerings that they could develop.

## About the Global Identity Foundation

The Global Identity Foundation is a not-for profit foundation constituted to first oversee the development and then maintain the core technology for the solution developed, together with its ongoing evolution.

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i [research.microsoft.com/pubs/74164/www2007.pdf](http://research.microsoft.com/pubs/74164/www2007.pdf)

ii [opusresearch.net/wordpress/2012/07/30/survey-results-caller-authentication-likes-dislikes-and-preferences](http://opusresearch.net/wordpress/2012/07/30/survey-results-caller-authentication-likes-dislikes-and-preferences)