

The problem with Identity

(a summary of why the current identity ecosystem is broken)

Background

- Most digital crime has an identity failing at its root and the bad guys are winning!
- Identity is not easy (or transparent) for users or consumers of identity

Locus of control (Silo identity solutions)

- Currently identity can only be (successfully) implemented when you manage the locus-of-control
- Governments and corporations want to control the root of your identity
- Inter-silo identity, persona and attributes are not trusted (the federation problem)
- There is an unacceptable risk of liability for anything you have not verified yourself

Risk; or lack of it



- Identity (and authentication) is binary and not risk based
- The level of immutability of a person to the device/firmware is unknown to the entity taking the risk
- There is a lack of trusted, truly authoritative, attributes
- Contextual understanding of an entity (or its attributes) are difficult and often impossible

Identity ecosystem

- Identity is obsessed with identifying and authenticating “people”, forgetting about the other four entity types (devices, organizations, code & agents)
- People confuse authentication and identity
- Great point solutions do not have a common framework within which they can operate
- Solutions rarely work (well) off-line
- Identity ecosystems do not interoperate well, if at all
- The identities of different entity types are not interchangeable
- Identity ecosystems currently need an identity broker, CA of last resort or other infrastructure
- There are too many players wanting to operate in areas for which they are not authoritative (in the hope of controlling and/or monetizing identity)

Privacy

- People (entity:people) are not in direct and absolute control of their identity and identity attributes
- The battle to keep personal attributes private is already lost (most attributes are already breached)
- Governments and corporations want to control the root of your identity
- There is no simple, universal method for leveraging a secure personal identity (cryptographic keys) to keep communications and documents interchangeable yet secure and private
- We cannot leverage identity to deliver serial pseudo-anonymity (e-Voting, blogging etc.)
- Biometric registration and verification is stored outside of the entities direct control

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