



Press Release

Berlin
June 24, 2008

Serving safe and secure handling
of personal data on the Internet –
the Information Card Foundation

Fraunhofer FOKUS supports user-centric Identity Management on the Net

Information Card Foundation established for Secure Digital Identities

Together with leading names of the IT industry – including Equifax, Google, Microsoft, Oracle, Novell, and Paypal – the Fraunhofer Institute for Open Communication Systems FOKUS supports the 'Information Card Foundation ICF' now in the process of finalizing its launch plans. The aim of this non-profit corporation is to promote user-centric Identity Management on the Internet based on so-called 'Information Cards', a technique that brings identity cards to the world of digital technology. Members of the ICF can be representatives of any industry sector or institution that makes digital use of personal data – like commerce, healthcare, banks, finance, travel agents, telecommunications, education, social networks and so on – and that seek to build a safe and trustful relationship with their customers and clients. The ICF will evaluate methods and products of digital Identity Management and recommend future-proof solutions of special merit.

"The basic idea – which also underpins the activities of the ICF – is to give users control over their personal data and how they're sent to service providers," says Jens Fromm, head of the Secure identities unit at Fraunhofer FOKUS, talking about the project. "Similar to the pervasive use of business cards like credit cards, EC cards etc., users will be given a kind of electronic briefcase with full control over its contents."

Information Cards are produced digitally in a card-like format displaying the personal digital identity as graphics. Information Cards contain identity information like the issuing instance and the name of the card which can be the issuer or the user, a background picture which again can be given either by the issuer or user, as well as identity attributes mainly in a form visible to the user such as name, address, email address etc.

The main aim of Information Cards is to present users with a selection of identity information so that they can choose only the right – i.e. only the strict minimum of – information needed to use a service or resource.

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"Identity Management concerns a broad number of companies and organizations with a broad agenda of different interests," comments Charles Andres, CEO of the ICF. "But the same rule applies to them all – only a secure use of digital information where customers and users themselves decide how their personal data is to be used will lead to wide acceptance. The ICF will take account of the whole range of experiences and interests in its efforts to drive forward user-centric Identity Management."

As its own contribution to the ICF, Fraunhofer FOKUS will bring in the activities of its Secure eidentity Lab founded in April 2008 in conjunction with Bundesdruckerei. This brings to the forefront the Institute's special IT expertise in terms of interoperability, service oriented architectures, and security. Scenarios developed jointly with business partners give clear and compelling demonstrations of the possibilities of comprehensive identity and access management.

The Information Card Foundation co-operates closely with the OpenID Initiative which is dedicated to the goal of user-centric Web and unlimited data exchange. The Information Card Foundation is based in Needham, Massachusetts, USA.

Additional founding members are Aristotle, A.T.E. Software, BackgroundChecks.com, FuGen Solutions, Fun Communications, Gemalto, IDology, IPcommerce, ooTao, Parity Communications, Ping Identity, Privo, Wave Systems, and WSO2.

Information

www.informationcard.net (site goes live on June 24)

<http://openid.net/foundation>

<http://www.eidentitylab.org/>

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