

Liberty: Single Sign-On for the Internet

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ABSTRACT

The basic element of a community is the notion of identity. Technology exists today to create, manage, and authenticate *online identities* and broker services based on information related to that identity. *Federated network identity* represents the natural evolution of the next generation of the Internet.

The first waves of the Internet, namely communications, global access, commerce, and community identity, gave us a pervasive user medium that has largely been relegated to one-to-one, customer-to-business relationships and experiences. The inflection point starting the Internet's next wave will be marked by an era of open, federated identity with promises of bold new business taxonomies and opportunities, coupled with economies of scale that, until recently, were simply unimaginable.

Federated network identity will enable the next generation of the Internet: *federated commerce*. In a federated view of the world, a person's online identity, their personal profile, personalized online configurations, buying habits and history, and shopping preferences are administered by users, yet securely shared with the organizations of their choosing. A federated network identity model will enable every business or user to manage their own data, and ensure that the use of critical personal information is managed and distributed by the appropriate parties, *rather than a central authority*.

In October of 2001, Sun Microsystems initiated a public effort, called *Project Liberty*, to deliver and support a federated network identity solution for the Internet that enables *single sign-on* for consumers as well as business users in an open, federated way. Project Liberty has over 60 member companies and can be found online at <http://www.projectliberty.org/index.html>.

In this talk, I will provide an overview of the Liberty project, as well its technical architecture.