

What is a Single Sign-On Solution and Why Shibboleth is Recommended

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In brief

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What is a Single Sign-On Solution?

SSO is an authentication scheme, a way to have a user log on with a single set of login credentials on multiple software systems, apps, or websites that are related, yet independent. A good, quality solution will let a user log in once, and access the services needed without any authentication being required again. How does it work? Well, it's actually simple. You have the software system, and the SSO provider, which has communication with tokens. When the user tries to log on, the software system sends a token with the user information to the SSO provider for verification. If the user has logged on to a related system previously, the authentication is successful, and another token is sent back to the software system, confirming that. Then, the software system grants access to the user, and that's it - simple as that.

Why Should You Use One?

The main argument against using a single sign-on solution is security, a.k.a. the "keys to the castle" issue, where someone gaining access to your unique credentials basically gives them access to all related services and apps. But in practice, that's actually the main benefit of a single sign-on solution. When you need to remember (potentially) hundreds of passwords, you're dealing with password fatigue, and it's understandably hard to deal with that. This is why many users make their passwords simple and easy to remember, but they're also consequently making them easier to guess and breach, too. If you only have a single password to remember, you'll be much more inclined to make it long, complex, and overall difficult to breach. You can mix it up with lowercase and uppercase letters, numbers, and symbols, and you won't even have to write it down because, again, it's a single password. Then there's the fact that software adoption and integration is going to be a lot more successful. With new apps coming to market pretty much constantly, chances are that as an enterprise, you've had a situation where you wanted to use one of them to make your enterprise's business easier, but you couldn't do that because of the signup process is difficult. Now, as an enterprise, you and your employees will deal with that. But you'll probably lose some customers that aren't exactly inclined to deal with that, and you don't want that happening. These are only two of the various benefits of single sign-on solutions, so let's check out Shibboleth SSO and why that's the one you should opt for.

Why Shibboleth SSO is the One to Go For

It's known as one of the fastest-growing solutions for enterprise-grade single sign-on, and users and entrepreneurs love it. It makes use of existing systems and extends the authentication to cloud apps without replacing the existing system, making it much easier to implement, and can be managed both on-premise and in the cloud. One of the main reasons to go for Shibboleth is the open-source implementation, which makes it highly easy to tailor it to your specific needs and requirements. We already mentioned that it leverages pre-existing Identity and Authentication (IAM) systems like LDAP and Active Directory, so deployment is a breeze when you consider you don't have to do many things from scratch. Security is top-notch, too, because Shibboleth is tested each year with no problems as of yet. There are a lot of apps that work with it, and over 5,500 of them are enterprise, cloud apps, which means that it probably covers the cloud-based apps your enterprise makes use of. both does this make things easier, but it also helps with any future apps you want to implement. in practice, what's almost certain is that if your enterprise relies on more than one app, you need a single sign-on solution. It'll increase security, it'll improve the user experience, and it will help you and your enterprise run things without having to worry about customers calling with sign-on issues all the time. And when you're debating on which SSO solution is right for you, Shibboleth has a lot of things going for it, and for various enterprises, it's going to be perfect. But don't take our word for it - check it out and see for yourself.

References

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