Identity Observed

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RL “Bob” Morgan,
University of Washington and Internet2
It's the Year of Identity

- Compelling standards/specifications
  - SAML 2.0, WS-Sec, WS-Federation
- Real products, real deployments
  - functional id-mgt suites, making money (?)
  - US E-Auth, R&HE federations, many industries
- Serious thinking
  - Identity blogosphere (Cameron's Laws, others)
  - IdM in app frameworks (eg Eclipse, others)
  - new tech proposals (InfoCard/metasystem, SXIP, many others)
Why now? (corporate version)

- Compliance
  - HIPAA, SOX, 21CFR part 11, etc, etc
  - accountability, assurance
- Real threats
  - identity fraud, phishing, information theft
- Online business relationships now the rule
  - highest-value apps enabled by identity
- Costs
  - complex infrastructure can now be justified
Why now? (Individual version)

- “Web 2.0,” social networking
  - compelling apps (blogs, Flickr, delicious, etc etc)
  - online communities of constructed identities
  - individual empowerment, control, linkage
  - identity is userid, attributes, creations, community
- Every blogger their own computer center
  - ISPs offer range of IT services to consumers
  - so why not IdM too? federated, of course ...
  - the blog-comment spam use case
What it is, this identity?

- Locke: substance, human being, person
  - persons legal: who you can contract with, sue
  - persons cultural: who you can talk with
- digital identity
  - real-world intentions, digital expressions
  - not (just) identifiers any more
  - “claims by one subject about itself or another”
  - “a story”, a locus of interpretation
  - roles, preferences, portfolios, reputations ...
The future of identity?

- Two directions: exclusive or co-existent?
- Compliance-driven
  - small number of universal identity providers
  - serving broad cross-industry needs
  - procedures based on national ID law
- Expression-driven
  - millions of individually-managed “providers”
  - organized into practical, ever-shifting webs
  - based on ease of use, reputation
What should we be doing?

- We (R&HE community) have won
  - univ-style identity now pervasive
    - linked to array of services, (some) user control, public
- so, we're being eclipsed
  - ease of use, assurance, control, distribution, ...
- so, stay in the game
  - make sure products/standards meet our needs
  - are we ready for unification?
  - ready for reputation-based identity systems?
A Few Links

• Identity blogs
  http://identityblog.com/ (Kim Cameron)
  http://notabob.blogspot.com/ (Bob Blakley)
  http://www.idcorner.org/ (Stefan Brands)

• Services
  http://www.technorati.com/ (blog aggregation)
  http://del.icio.us/ (shared bookmarks)
  http://flickr.com/ (photo sharing/tagging)

• Federations
  http://incommonfederation.org/
  http://cio.gov/eaauthentication/