



Two Factor Authentication



While firewalls and verification solutions are important components of a comprehensive security framework, this framework is not complete without mechanisms and policies for authentication and authorization (access control). The role of the firewall is to attempt to limit unauthorized traffic from entering an enterprise's private network(s), in essence acting as an access control mechanism. Therefore, the firewall typically focuses just on the types of traffic and does not focus on authenticating the end user.

As companies develop an increasing need to provide more access to their networks, it becomes critical for IT managers to authenticate who is accessing these systems. We believe it is equally important to tie authentication to authorization, a process which not only ensures that only authorized users can gain access to IT resources, but, importantly, that these users can access only the information to which they are entitled. Passwords have long been used as the basis for authenticating users. However, stronger forms of authentication, including tokens, PKI and biometrics, all tied to authorization, are increasingly being required to protect the access to internal network resources. These new methods of authentication will drive an increasing need for comprehensive authentication management solutions which enable organizations to manage increasingly heterogeneous authentication and authorization infrastructures.

Tokens Are The Most Widely Deployed Strong Authentication Solution

Tokens, in the form of small hardware devices, or software embedded on devices such as PCs, Internet-enabled cell phones, or PDA's, currently have the highest implementation rate of more secure authentication technologies. The most widely deployed tokens are RSA Security's SecurID solution.

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These tokens work by generating a six-digit value based on an algorithm that changes every 60 seconds. The token works in concert with a password or PIN number to provide two factor authentication; the token and the PIN. In practice, in order for a user to access a system or application, the user must enter a password (or PIN number) and then the six-digit code appearing on the SecurID token. This is known as two-factor authentication.

It is important to note that two-factor authentication requires two forms of authentication, which may or may not consist of a token. A user could easily utilize a digital certificate, smart card, or biometric authentication to facilitate strong, two-factor authentication. To date, however, tokens have been the most widely deployed, due to both their cost-effectiveness and the fact that they provide an easier solution to deploy and manage compared to other highly secure authentication solutions.



Why use ITS?

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Our approach is to deliver innovation to clients by leveraging our industry knowledge, service offering expertise and insight into and access to emerging technologies. With this comprehensive approach, we are able to move clients forward in their business, from strategic planning to day-to-day operations. This often includes helping clients identify and enter new markets, increase revenues in existing markets, and deliver their products and services more effectively and efficiently.



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