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Clickshare supports industry recognition of need for collaboration on single sign-on; calls for federated approach to authentication

WILLIAMSTOWN, Mass., Sept. 27, 2001 -- Clickshare Service Corp., which developed the Internet's first multi-site user authentication service for purchasing, said today it supports the Liberty Alliance, Microsoft Corp. and others in efforts to give consumers what they want -- a single, simple way to sign on to web sites and assure their privacy.

"Seven years ago, Clickshare originated the 'open passport' concept for publishers and other websites to register their customers and have a simple sign-on to use and buy content at multiple websites," said Nell Fields, Clickshare's CEO "Now that technology is in use and ready to be incorporated into other industry applications."

Major news organizations and publishers have been among the first to adopt Clickshare's transaction platform for digital content purchasing, including Belo Corp., MediaNews Group and Andrews McMeel Universal Syndicate.

"These are the pioneers at federated authentication of users," said Fields. "The announcements by Microsoft and the Liberty Alliance Project signify that major companies now recognize the wisdom of a wide-open marketplace for digital content and for simplified, shared user authentication. The way is cleared for an Internet industry collaborative that finally gives consumers what they want -- an end to the endless array of registrations, log-ins and accounts."

Sun Microsystems on Sept. 26 announced the formation of the Liberty Alliance Project [<http://www.projectliberty.org/>](http://www.projectliberty.org/) to develop a "federated" approach to giving consumers a single ID and password that works at all web sites. Among companies listed as supporting the alliance were Nokia, General Motors, NTT DoCoMo, Bank of America, American Airlines, Cisco Systems, Dun and Bradstreet, Sony Corp. and United Airlines.

Microsoft Corp. said on Sept. 20 that it would expand its popular Passport authentication service to interoperate with enterprises, network and other service operators to deliver trusted, universal single sign-on spanning multiple organizations and services.

"There is no single passport authority in the real world. Each country controls the credentials of its own citizens but collaborates on common standards for checking, stamping and managing those passports," said Fields. "In that same spirit, Clickshare looks forward to sharing proposals for collaboration with Microsoft, the Liberty Alliance Project founders, and our own partners. We are pleased to help convene collaborative efforts around the idea that the marketplace for user identity and transaction management should be broadly owned and managed."

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Fields said the key to agreement on a federated approach to authentication and user privacy is to make sure that consumers and participants have choice in where their data is stored and who controls it. The only thing that needs to be shared is the knowledge that a user is valid at one "home base" in the system.

"Companies that have account relationships with hundreds of millions of customers do not want to force those customers to provide credit card and other personal information to a single site in order to have the benefit of one ID and password for the entire Internet," said Fields. "Clickshare's experience in the market has proven that centralizing personal information isn't necessary to achieve the privacy and convenience benefits of single sign-on."

About Clickshare

The Clickshare Service is an Internet transaction infrastructure for privacy-protected purchasing of text, music, video, software, and other products and services. Partners such as publishers, banks, ISPs, associations, retailers and other telecommunications carriers use it to enhance, extend and share customer relationships with publishers and entertainment providers.

Clickshare allows a consumer to have one account at a most-trusted "infomediary", and to purchase information from across the web without having to repeatedly enter credit-card information, register repeatedly or surrender personal information. The result is one account, one ID, one-bill simplicity.

Among Clickshare's other clients and partners are Multi Service Corp., Knight Ridder/Tribune Business News, Comtex News Network Inc., China Online Inc. and HomeTips.com.

Clickshare has offices in Portland, Maine, and Williamstown, Mass. Its investors include Sawgrass Seacoast Investors LLC, the University of Massachusetts and private individuals, including founding executives of PeopleSoft Inc., and the former publisher of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Chicago Sun-Times*. Its executives, board and advisors include veterans of the publishing and credit-card industries.

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