A Joint Effort; important for all stakeholders

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Presentation to the German Library Association,
Commission for Acquisition and Collection Development
DFG-funded Round Table Meeting
Berlin, 17 January 2019
RA21 seeks to replace IP-address recognition for access to content....

But why ??

And why is it important for all stakeholders?
IP recognition worked well in this environment
Until... people began connecting from everywhere
Until people began connecting via different devices.
IP Authentication isn’t all that great

• *IP Authentication has it’s own headaches for the library community.*
  – IP Address range management is no small task when you have dozens of publisher-suppliers
  – Proxy Servers/VPN systems need maintenance
  – Security issues abound
  – Risk of having the proxy servers shut down by publishers when abuse is noted.
  – Tracking data about who does what online still exists, it just is handled ‘internally’.
IP Authentication isn’t all that great (2)

- **IP Authentication has it’s own headaches for content and platform providers as well**
  - Security issues abound
  - Abuse cannot be traced down, other than shutting down a complete library or institute
  - Usage reporting is challenged for granularity
  - Personalization services are difficult to set up
  - Users find it hard to access the content
What do our users want?

- Seamless access to content.
- Seamless access to content.
- **Seamless access to content.**

  — ("OK, Privacy is nice. Security, I guess. Customization is fine. One password, please. And did I mention seamless?")
Privacy Requirements

• Librarians and other gatekeepers have a duty to protect the privacy of the users they serve, regardless of whether that user cares about it
• The EU introduced GDPR or FDPA in 2018
• Data gathering is restricted, and should be as anonymous as possible
• Informed consent is required
Demands of the library community

• Two track approach– This can’t move too quickly—Not every library has the same resources, the same skills, nor the motivation to move first.

• Broad adoption from publishers is necessary to motivate libraries.

• Single solution, not multiple approaches

• Support from vendor community to turn to when there are questions or implementation needs
RA21 will require greater interactions between libraries and IT

Staff person dedicated to library support from campus IT?

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Amy Pawlowski and Mark Beales (OhioLink) Authentication and Access of Licensed Content in Ohio: A Summary
CRITICISM OF RA21

• “SciHub is a motivator of RA21”
  Yes, but… it is not the only motivator.

• This project began with outreach from LIBRARIES!

• There are a variety of reasons why libraries would like to improve access control

• Evil twins? Come on....
MORE CRITICISM OF RA21

• “The only type of access libraries should care about is Open Access”

• Open Access is not the end-all be-all of library access control issues.
  – First, even if every journal article were OA, not all content provided by libraries will be freely available
  – A variety of services libraries provide still need authentication, regardless of whether they’re free or not
  – To presume that RA21 is a fight against open access is to have a very narrow and dim view of what libraries do and provide.
EVEN MORE CRITICISM OF RA21

• “RA21 is a nefarious plot by publishers to hoover up all sorts of patron data.”
  – First, SAML data released by identity federations is under the control of institutions, who can set limits on what data is released or not, it is NOT controlled by publishers
  – Second, RA21 will only be storing user preference information about which IDP to pass credentials – NOT the credentials themselves
  – Finally, if they wanted, publishers could use other methods to track user behavior, but are often limited by contracts and laws.
RA21 and the future of authentication

• There is an adopted infrastructure that RA21 is built upon
  • Institutions have years of experience working with it
  • SAML-based identity is demonstrably better than IP
  • RA21 just makes sense
Want to get involved?

- **Visit:** [https://www.RA21.org](https://www.RA21.org)

- **Everyone:** Register your interest in participation by emailing:
  
  Julie Wallace: [Julia@RA21.org](mailto:Julia@RA21.org) and
  Heather Flanigan: [Heather@RA21.org](mailto:Heather@RA21.org)
Questions?
THANK YOU!

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