

# Introducing MIT Touchstone

IS&T Help Desk

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# What is MIT Touchstone?

- Suite of technologies
  - A web logon server
  - Communicating information about the authentication to appropriate web servers
  - Account management beyond the MIT core community
- Focused on Web authentication
- Is this Single Sign On?

# Why are we introducing MIT Touchstone?

- Support a wider variety of authentication methods?
- Minimize the exposure of passwords
- Provide a consistent methodology for web developers and system administrators
- Provide a maintainable approach to introducing evolving authentication technologies
- Provide the ability to use other identity providers

# How will MIT Touchstone improve the user experience?

- Users will be able to use a variety of authentication mechanisms
- Users will be able to traverse Touchstone enabled web sites and resources transparently
- Ultimately, less information about the user will have to be released to many web sites

# What technologies are used?

- Login server is Stanford's WebAuth server
- Shibboleth developed by Internet2
- Account management for "external users"
  - User ID based on email address
  - Supporting username/password and OpenID
  - Self-service account creation and sponsored accounts

# Timeline

- Pilot any day now
  - Login server (without certificates)
  - Shibboleth IdPs and SPs
- By end of IAP 2008
  - Login server including certificates
  - Initial pilot of new account management system
- Fall of 2008
  - Full production

# Scope of the pilot

- Any MIT user of a pilot application will have the option of using Touchstone to authenticate
- During the pilot only a limited number of applications will be allowed to integrate with MIT Touchstone
- Initial pilot applications will prompt for a certificate by default just as they do today.
- Certificate authentication to Touchstone login server temporarily removed. It will be returning.

# Applications expected to be in the pilot

- Stellar
- Confluence wiki system (now [wiki.mit.edu](http://wiki.mit.edu))
- Jira
- Dspace
- Thalia
- Alfresco
- And one NIST application to be determined



# Support

- Users will not be expected to distinguish between Touchstone components or services and the application they are trying to access
- User will contact the support group that they normally contact for a given application. Typically the help desk.
- Determine if the problem is with Touchstone or the use of the application and resolve or escalate as appropriate

# Touchstone contact points

- RT queue: ISDA::touchstone-support
- Mailman: touchstone-support

# Touchstone test application

- <https://idp.mit.edu/auth-options>
  - This is the application that staff should normally use to determine if Touchstone is functional at this time.

# URLs for demos

- <http://stellar.mit.edu/setshib.phtml>
  - Can be used today to set a cookie which will let you use Touchstone to authenticate to Stellar
- <https://stellar.mit.edu/S/login/?u=%2Fatstella%2F>
- Another sample application
  - <https://posteverything.mit.edu/MIT-shibenv>
  - That URL will change over time