Lenovo, PayPal Declare War on the Password

Written by Marco Attard

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Lenovo, PayPal and 4 other companies team up and formally launch the Fast Identity Online (FIDO) Alliance, an organisation with plans to bring a standards-based approach to online security and authentication.

The Alliance was first founded back in July 2012, but now provides more details on its standard, as well as opens itself for participation from interested companies and organisations.

Once launched the FIDO standard will support a full bevy of security technologies-- biometrics (fingerprint scanners, voice and facial recognition), Trusted Platform Modules (TPM), USB security tokens, Near Field Communication (NFC) and One Time Passwords (OTP), together with other existing and future technologies.

"The Internet-- especially with recent rapid mobile and cloud expansion-- exposes users and enterprises, more than ever before, to fraud," FIDO Alliance President Michael Barrett says. "It's critical to know who you're dealing with on the Internet."

How will the FIDO system work? According to the Alliance, the system uses an authenticator or token (such as built-in fingerprint scanner, USB drive with a password or voice reader) and online accounts with a FIDO Validation Service. Once connection is established, the authenticator and validation service only exchange one time passwords.

In addition FIDO plug-ins will also be available for all browsers.

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The FIDO Alliance is not alone in trying to find a replacement for the humble password--
[Google is also working on a security protocol designed for integration with authentication devices](#)
with at least one partner, crytographic device maker Yubico.

According to IDC the authentication market is set for a strong future, with over $2.2 billion in revenues by 2016.

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