

InCommon Federation Now Serves 5 Million on U.S. Campuses

Ann Arbor, Mich. - November 3, 2010 - The InCommon Federation has announced the achievement of a milestone - its community now includes more than 5 million end users. The federation has 259 participating organizations - an increase of 30 percent since January 1 - including colleges and universities, research labs, agencies of the U.S. government, and private companies that offer web-based resources and services.

"It is gratifying to see that the federation continues to gain traction within higher education, with research labs and consortia, and with agencies of the U.S. government," said Kevin Moroney, chair of the InCommon Steering Committee and chief information officer and vice provost for information technology at Pennsylvania State University. "At Penn State, we've built this into our information technology infrastructure and it saves us time and money."

InCommon provides a secure and privacy-protecting method for giving individuals access to protected or licensed online resources, such as library databases, multimedia content, research information, and services provided by government agencies. This works because all participating organizations agree on standard policies, practices and technology standards for all interactions.

Individuals use their university credentials to access protected resources, with the higher education institution managing the identity information, providing the authentication, and guarding user privacy. The service provider authorizes access to the online resource based on information passed from the university.

As a result, the service provider no longer needs to provision user accounts, significantly reducing help-desk calls, and eliminates the custom integration work each time a new customer comes on board. All parties benefit from the increased security of leveraging one database, rather than maintaining multiple databases or giving multiple organizations access to the university database (which can result in data spills or compromise).

InCommon includes two types of members - research and higher education institutions, and companies that deliver some type of online resource, such as a library database or a course management system. When these entities join InCommon, they agree on a set of shared policies, processes, and technology standards, greatly streamlining the collaboration process.

InCommon also operates a certificate service, providing participating higher education institutions with unlimited SSL and, soon, personal certificates at one low annual fee.

For more information on InCommon and a full list of participants, visit www.incommon.org

About InCommon(R)The InCommon Federation (www.incommon.org), operated by Internet2, provides a privacy-preserving, secure method for higher education institutions and their partners to offer single sign-on convenience to their faculty, researchers, students and staff. Through InCommon, individuals no longer need to maintain multiple passwords and usernames and online service providers no longer need to maintain user accounts. The educational institution manages the level of privacy and security for its constituents. InCommon also offers the InCommon Cert Service, providing unlimited SSL and, soon, personal certificates to colleges and universities at one low annual fee.