Federated login to native applications
– the right way

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SURF NET

Due to the nature of SAML, using web based federated login within non-web applications is problematic. The workarounds that were known, were inadequate.

SURFnet found an alternative that is both secure and user friendly.

Step 1
Login from non-web application

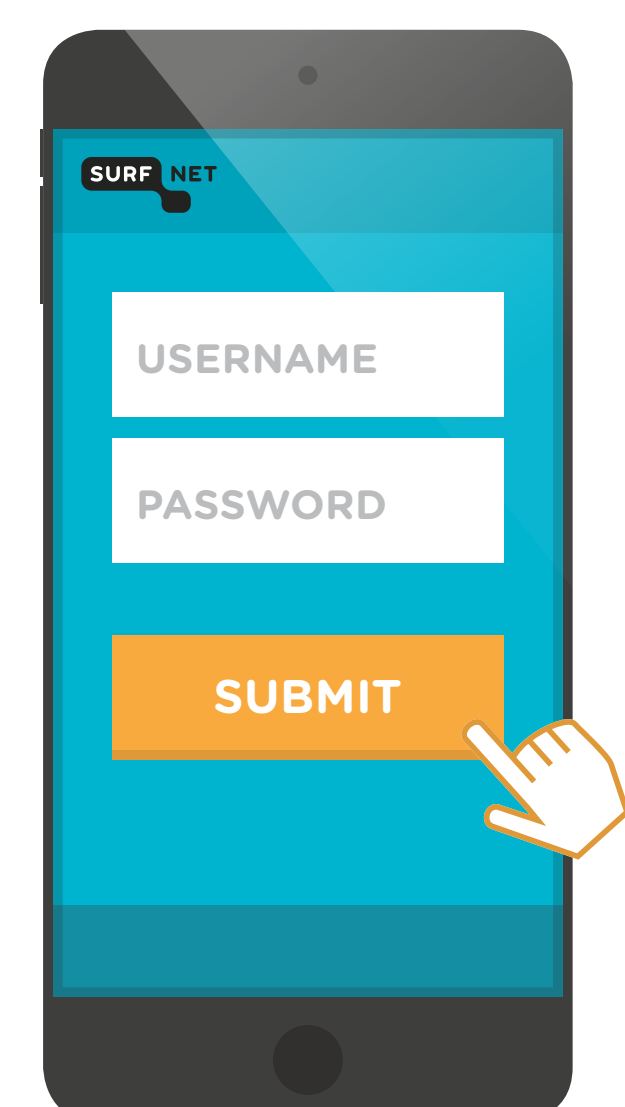User clicks the login button. **The default browser opens.**

LOGIN

Step 2
Browser

User selects his Identity Provider and verifies the **associated SSL-certificate.**

SSL CERTIFICATE

Step 3
User logs in

When the authenticity of the Identity Provider is verified by the user, the user enters his credentials and **logs in at his Identity Provider.**

USERNAME
PASSWORD
SUBMIT

Step 5
Try it out!

Use the iPad with our demo application to try it yourself.

Username: demo

Password: demo

Step 4
User returns to the application

The user returns to the non-web application **with a token**, using an application specific URL.

TOKEN
THIS TOKEN GRANTS ACCESS

WORKAROUNDS

Various workarounds such as embedded browsers and application specific passwords are undesirable. With most workarounds the user is unable to verify the authenticity of the Identity Provider by checking the server address and the SSL-certificate. In addition, application specific passwords are not user-friendly if implemented securely.

ACCESS TOKEN TO APPLICATION

When the user logs in, the OAuth 2.0 Authorization Server provides an access token. This access token is securely being passed on to the application so the application can access resources that are otherwise not available.

GENERIC SOLUTION – SDKs AVAILABLE

Because we really want to have impact on the way developers implement these methods, we also developed easy-to-use and open source Software Development Kits. These SDKs enable developers to easily implement federated login in their non-web applications.

SDKs ARE AVAILABLE FOR THE FOLLOWING PLATFORMS

- **Windows** 8(.1), 10, RT and Phone
- **Apple OS** X 10.0+, iOS 8 and iOS 9
- **Android** 2.2+

github.com/
SURFnet/nonweb-sso

blog.surf.nl/
en/federated-login-to-native-applications-the-right-way/

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