

## Description

### TECHNICAL FIELD

**[0001]** The present invention is related to a method and system for providing an identity-related information about a person to a requesting entity. Moreover, the invention is related to a method for transferring the identity-related information hosted on a location entity, also referred to as wallet, to the requesting entity.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

**[0002]** Identity management in its widest sense means management of all the personal information about a person, including at least all the person's digital relations. Over the next decade, identity management systems in this wide sense are likely to evolve. Short-term, identity management is typically said for web single sign-on with the transfer of a small amount of data about a person.

**[0003]** The main business case is a general boost of electronic business: Identity management is an infrastructure issue where a standard, like the Internet and web standards, may benefit almost all parties.

**[0004]** Single sign-on enables a person or user to log in to different organizations while remembering only one password without allowing all the organizations to impersonate the person towards each other as simply as using the same password directly with all organizations would.

**[0005]** Recently, identity management, in particular single sign-on, are known, for example, by the Liberty Alliance (URL: <http://www.projectliberty.org>) or by Microsoft Corporation's Passport system (URL: <http://www.passport.com>). The so-called Passport system or short Passport of Microsoft Corporation is a web service operated exclusively by Microsoft Corporation that allows users to sign in to web sites and conduct e-commerce transactions. Less exclusive operations have been promised, but not revealed. Passport currently includes an authentication service, a specialized authentication service just for kids, and an express purchase service.

**[0006]** Older system types related to identity management are classical single sign-on products, public-key infrastructures, and form fillers.

**[0007]** However, none of known products and proposals can, in the interoperable way needed for a global information society and general electronic business in particular, adapt to all the different requirements that the various participants in this information society and electronic business have. Particularly, all prior products and proposals fail to fulfill at least one of the following requirements, as explained below in more detail:

1. Suitability for a free choice of location entities that hold identity-related information about a person, including location entities under the respective user's own physical control, so-called local wallets, and including that multiple location entities hold informa-

tion of one person.

2. Suitability for browser-only clients and even users that access the system via varying browsers, while not making it necessary for them to do all their browsing through a location entity in a proxy role, which would enable the location entity to see all the user's message contents. Clearly the browser-only users and those with local wallets are not the same -- the requirement is that the server's method interoperates with both.

3. Suitability for the transfer of both authentication information and other identity-related information, where the latter may be both freely chosen by the user, such as preferences, or in need of third-party confirmation.

4. Suitability for users that want to remain anonymous, while still allowing the transfer of some identity related information, such as preferences or demographic information.

5. Flexible privacy policies for the release of identity related information.

**[0008]** It may be helpful to discuss the benefits of an identity management system fulfilling these requirements, hereafter abbreviated as Req.: Req. 1 is made by companies like employers and banks who want to act as location entities for their employees or customers at least in relationships related to their business. Moreover, whether persons will embrace identity management voluntarily now is not as clear as one might be led to believe. Currently, the fear of "putting all eggs in one basket" and privacy and trust concerns outweigh the perceived benefit of both single sign-on and simplified form filling for most people. Here again, free choice as in Req. 1 may help, in particular to allow the "local" location entities for the user's truly personal information. These latter concerns also motivate Req. 4. Req. 2 is made for practicality, both because many users cannot be made to install additional software and because some users use the information society infrastructure from varying Internet kiosks and the like. The Internet kiosk is contemplated as a public computer, e.g., in an Internet cafe. Req. 3 is for general applicability and user friendliness, e.g., to allow, with just one system, the restriction of access to certain information and certain operations only to certain users, and also the transfer of addresses, shipping information etc. to business partners. The benefit of the last part of Req. 3 and Req. 5 can be seen as follows: Transferring a small amount of data aims at standard e-commerce applications, where data like shipping and billing information are needed often and quite independent of the communication partner. In extensions to more specific data such as book and travel preferences, one will have to distinguish the partners better. Long-term comprehensive solutions will include data that need third-party confirmation; they will also manage transaction data, e.g., the person's receipts obtained from these partners; and they will integrate with other personal applications, such