Two-factor authentication is quickly becoming the industry standard for protection against password fraud. Twitter, Google and Facebook all introduced two-factor authentication, which requires two-steps to identify a user at login, within the past two years.

The University of Texas at Austin is adopting a homegrown solution in Toopher, an Austin-based startup created by UT Electrical and Computer Engineering (UT ECE) alumnus Evan Grim and Josh Alexander, an adjunct professor in the McCombs School of Business at The University of Texas at Austin.

Evan Grim received his MS at UT ECE from Prof. Christine Julien in 2012. He began working on his PhD in Software Engineering in the Mobile and Pervasive Computing Lab before taking leave to launch Toopher in 2011 along with co-founder Josh Alexander, an adjunct professor in the McCombs School of Business at The University of Texas at Austin.

Toopher joined the Austin Technology Incubator at The University of Texas in January 2013 after closing $2 Million in funding from investors in December 2012. The Austin Technology Incubator is the startup incubator of The University of Texas at Austin.

Toopher aims to create a significant reduction in password fraud by using a novel approach to two-factor authentication: the physical location of a user’s phone. The Toopher system can be installed on a corporate website with very little code. At login, the Toopher system compares the computer they are using to the physical location of the user’s phone. Compared to other methods of two-factor authentication, Toopher promises a superior user
experience by not requiring a user action every time you log on, but rather only the first time you log on to an individual machine.

The University of Texas at Austin is beginning to integrate Toopher to protect certain sensitive services, such as employee payroll applications, as a test case. Toopher has also been adopted by the Texas Advanced Computing Center, one of the leading advanced computing centers in the United States.

Keywords:

- Toopher [5], Almumi [6], Evan Grim [7], Two-factor authentication [8], Austin Technology Incubator [9]

Video of nkmk7g6Vjvc
Video of VG3wWTnagvQ

Related Research Areas:

Software Engineering and Systems [10]

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