Privacy in the GENI project

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GENI and Privacy

GENI has visionary, constructive and beneficial aims, but some of them introduce privacy-related tensions:

● Data-sharing, versus legitimate privacy expectations
● Observability, versus sensitivity of real data and real traffic
● Monitoring (and correlation) of usage patterns, versus user consent and control over collection and disclosure
● Catering for cross-border differences in legislation and governance

Resolving these tensions can potentially

● directly benefit GENI participants
● remove obstacles to end-user trust and adoption
● show how to design privacy in from the outset, in the networks and distributed systems of the future
1 – Why is privacy an issue?

There are both 'hard' and 'soft' factors -

- Identity data as a thing of value (and therefore a target)
- Cost of compliance, balance of technology and governance
- Respect for privacy as a cultural/trust/ adoption factor

When times are tough, governance ('people') measures get squeezed sooner – and harder – than technical measures. But technology isn't self-managing...
2 – What tends to de-rail privacy discussions?

- Diversity of stakeholders and their views/goals (and who are GENI's stakeholders, exactly?)
- Lack of shared concepts and language
- "Techno-blinkers": technology input is totally valid, but can narrow the discussion and distract attention from implementation and adoption factors
- Trying to apply a linear process instead of a cyclical and iterative ("bee-hive") one

There are simple and well-tested models for building a common conceptual framework and creating a productive stakeholder dialogue
3 – Practicalities in the GENI context

Assume that:

● Privacy is really about disclosure... but with user control and consent;

● Privacy is about 'contextual integrity';

● Privacy is relationship-based, and can be multi-party, transitive and mediated...

   (not that all those assumptions are easy to fulfil...)

   How could privacy work if it were designed in?
   What outcomes could we expect?
   How would we get there from here?
4 – Suggested approach

- Identify and engage with GENI stakeholders
- Establish conceptual framework for productive discussions (different perspectives, different levels)
- Contribute to a 'GENI position' on identity, privacy and governance, including cross-border use-cases
- Set goals for privacy-related GENI outcomes

How might we do GENI if we set the following goals?

- Enhance the privacy of GENI participants
- Improve privacy for Internet users in general
- Minimize privacy-related risk to GENI
Workshop on GENI and Security
January 2009
UC Davis

Thank you

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