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A sense of identity

Digital strategies to help you know and serve your customers better.

If you're serious about engaging more deeply with users, building loyalty and maximising security, you need to be a master of identity and access management. Here's how.

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Foreword: Powering seamless citizen experiences through Identity

The enormous challenge of managing citizen and departmental data in a safe and appropriate way is not a new one for central government organisations. The increased use of technology, the widespread adoption of data and analytics to bring greater value to public services, and heightened awareness of data management risks have all elevated the need to transform digital identity across government services and operations.

While there have been some strides in improving citizen and employee access to government services, substantial challenges remain. Government departments still face the balancing act of upholding privacy, safeguarding valuable resources, and enhancing the citizen experience, all whilst managing legacy, siloed systems.

This white paper, 'A sense of identity', reveals the transformative power of Identity and Access Management (IdAM) and Customer (Citizen) Identity Access Management (CIAM) and serves as your guide to unlocking the value it can bring to central government. It focuses on how identity solutions can not only fortify the security of government data through robust authentication and authorisation mechanisms, but also simplify employee and citizen access to a myriad of government services.

Through real-world case studies and successful identity solution implementations, you will discover the pivotal role these solutions can play in enabling frictionless digital experiences, data protection and access to critical information and vital resources.

Mastering identity solutions in central government enhances cybersecurity through Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), facilitates seamless inter-departmental data-sharing, and ensures seamless digital citizen access to public services, including the adoption of modern login methods such as passwordless authentication. Done well, your identity strategy can transform the quality of citizen interactions, maintain privacy, and provide essential insights into the use of government services.

In the complex realm of central government, where data security and citizen satisfaction must harmoniously coexist, identity solutions hold the key to a brighter, more efficient, and citizen-centric future. Immerse yourself in the insights and strategies offered in this white paper, understand the transformative power of the journey that lies ahead, and take the first step towards a future where central government not only meets but exceeds the expectations of its citizens.

Introduction

Identity: much more than data security

There's an understandable perception that <u>Identity and Access Management (IdAM or IAM)</u>, along with its close cousin Customer Identity and Access Management (CIAM), are principally – or even exclusively – concerned with optimising online security.

That's hardly surprising, especially in the case of IdAM, which was developed primarily as a way of enabling secure access to internal systems from both sides of a company's firewall. This meant IT departments could configure specific user permissions for remote workers, contractors and other authorised users.

For many organisations, that's enough to make identity solutions a foundational component of ongoing digital transformation – with profound implications for data security, the streamlining of internal processes, increased productivity and readying your infrastructure for a move to the cloud.

But identity solutions are also a key enabler of innovation, a prerequisite for the adoption of biometric authentication, and play an instrumental role in the use of blockchain to create new customer propositions.

Identity and access management also *truly* comes into its own when applied to customer-facing or citizen-facing environments. Enter CIAM, the branch of Identity and Access Management that focuses on customers, citizens and any other external users of your digital estate.

A cornerstone of exceptional customer experience

Whether you operate in the public or private sector, there are common challenges that almost all organisations need to address:

- Giving customers and citizens the smooth, frictionless onboarding experience that they now expect as standard - both virtually and in person, and regardless of which channel they use to interact with you.
- Creating a personalised, joined-up experience that's consistent across your physical and virtual channels, sub-brands and beyond.
- Making it easy and motivating for people to transact for the first time, via any device or channel and without having to re-enter the same information.
- Making customers and citizens feel known, recognised and valued each time they use your product or service.
- Using data that the individual provides in a way that works for them and you, allowing you to act and communicate in a coherent, seamless way that deepens affinity with each interaction.
- Protecting each user's personal information in line with modern data legislation.
- Respecting individual preferences with regard to privacy (for example, by providing consent management options for cookies and so on).

Although each of these imperatives manifests itself differently according to your sector and the needs of your organisation, it's likely that all (or at any rate most) resonate with you to some degree.

The good news is that a well-designed, fit-for-purpose identity strategy can be instrumental in helping you deliver them.

In this white paper we explore the principles behind these and other benefits of identity solutions (both cloud hosted and software-as-a-service) and examine how they translate to other industries in both the public and private sectors.

1

The impact of identity

Whatever your sector, if your organisation engages directly with the public but doesn't yet have a comprehensive identity solution in place, you could be missing a chance to understand your customers or citizens as deeply as you otherwise might, potentially missing out on revenue and diminishing user satisfaction.

But the impact goes way beyond that. On a societal level, the absence of a fit-for-purpose identity system can prevent the digitally vulnerable from accessing vital services, impacting people's quality of life. In the corporate sphere, cloud migration strategies, human capital development and more can all be compromised if identity is managed poorly.

While most organisations are likely to have *some* form of identity solution in place, how many of them are leveraging its potential to the full?

By starting your journey towards maturity and mastery in this area, you can potentially acquire a considerable competitive edge, especially in industries where IdAM and CIAM are relatively underdeveloped.

2

Driving customer acquisition

The easier you make it for new users to sign up and sign on, the more likely they are to complete the process and consider transacting, accessing your services and so on.

CIAM allows you to make onboarding and sign-on as frictionless as possible across your different sub-brands and environments, even if the customer uses multiple devices such as a tablet, laptop, smartphone or games console. The retail industry is already blazing a trail in the effective use of CIAM, and enjoying a wide range of benefits as a result, not least for its ability to enhance the online checkout experience (which in turn can boost online conversions by up to 35.2%[1]).

When designed effectively, a single identity strategy allows customers to identify themselves with the same details in stores and physical environments as well as online, unifying the picture you have of them still further and making their experience truly seamless. It also provides ample opportunity to encourage and reward loyalty.

A key aspect of CIAM is the creation of single sign-on (SSO) solutions that function across all of your customer touchpoints and can be integrated with social media logins, Google sign-up and Azure Active Directory. This helps to create a trusted, dynamic and light-touch way for customers to interact with your brand as a whole, while controlling and safeguarding access to your systems. Better still, these increasingly popular sign-in methods give you increased access to a wealth of customer data, allowing you to personalise each user's experience.

It is widely reported that the average attention span is just eight seconds, and with a tolerance for poor service at an all-time low, the picture is clear: **give a buyer minimal (or zero) hoops to jump through in pursuit of their goal, and your chances of closing an online sale leap.** Having a unified sign-in and password across your federated brands can also help to reduce cart abandonment.

An innovation story: The Gym Group

As part of a wholesale upgrade of their eCommerce platform, one of Europe's largest gym operators wanted an identity management solution that would truly set it apart.

The Ensono team designed and deployed a new CIAM solution, together with a headless CMS and microservices, to facilitate customer sign-on and drive conversions.

SSO between The Gym Group's legacy site, eCommerce site, mobile app, and members area resulted in a seamless customer experience (CX) that secures valuable personal data.
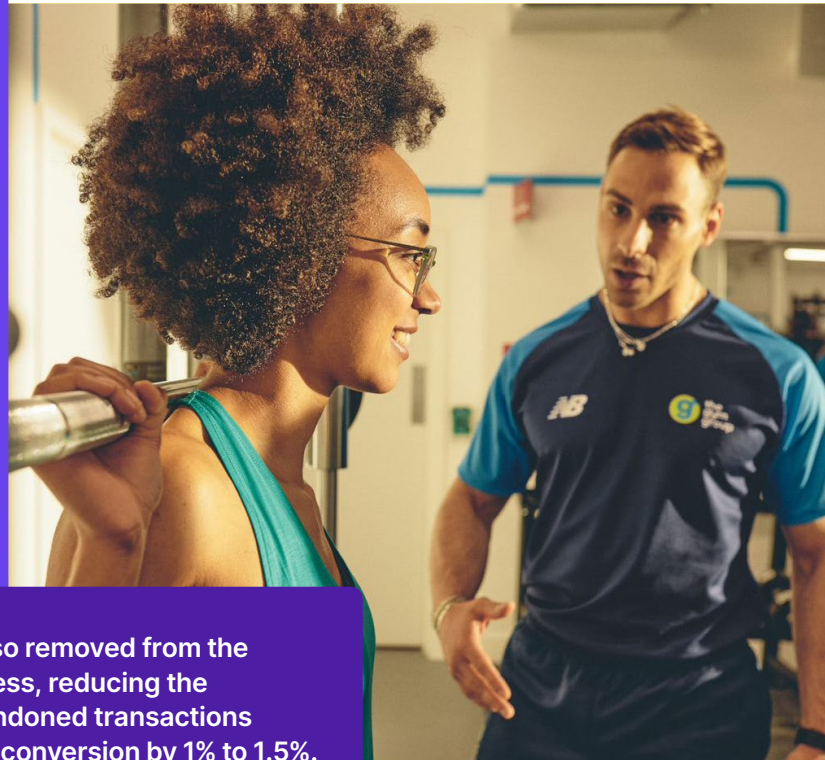
1.5% Friction was also removed from the checkout process, reducing the number of abandoned transactions and increasing conversion by 1% to 1.5%.

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[1] Baymard Institute (2023) 49 Cart Abandonment Statistics.

3
When interacting with you becomes a pleasure

When a customer instinctively feels that you're putting their needs first, they feel valued and listened to. As with any other kind of relationship, it encourages them to stick around.

We've already seen how an effective identity strategy brings all of the information you hold on a customer together under one unified identity. If your organisation includes multiple brands, that identity can be valid across all of them, enabling users to move seamlessly from one to the other without having to log in repeatedly. When they click through, they can find that the personal information necessary to complete their task or transaction is already securely held by the new brand.

This simple convenience might seem now somewhat commonplace. But imagine the sales that may be lost or aborted if your organisation fails to offer it.

Those same benefits can translate powerfully into areas of the public sector like local and regional government. Here too, a single identity might allow citizens to deal seamlessly with affiliated government departments, such as (in the United States) the Secretary of State's office, department of motor vehicles, health services and the department for natural resources (for example, to apply for a fishing or hunting licence).

This doesn't just create a more joined-up experience for individual citizens. It can also drive process and IT efficiencies that streamline costs and make taxpayers' money go further.

- After working with Ensono to introduce single sign-on (SSO) and social media sign-on across all of its apps and websites, online fashion leader <u>ASOS</u> experienced a **30% upswing in revenue.**
- The <u>Gym Group</u> achieved **£8m in incremental revenue** after upgrading customers' online experience with SSO.
- Amazon offers another classic example, merely by ensuring that customers can place a purchase in their basket on amazon.com and log in later to complete the purchase on the mobile app (or vice-versa).

An innovation story: <u>Save The Children International</u>

Save the Children International (SCI) acts as an umbrella structure for over 30 member organisations worldwide, who need ready online access to SCI's many tools and resources.

Due to mulitple localised, legacy ID systems, onboarding for new users was painfully slow. Users were also growing frustrated when required to re-register every time they needed a different tool. Ensono worked with SCI to create a single global identity platform that integrates seamlessly with its wider infrastructure, through a deft combination of Azure Active Directory, Azure Serverless technology, namely Logic Apps, and Azure Automation scripts.

98.6%

The new system can load all users from a new member organisation in under an hour - 98.6% faster than before - while giving SCI a clearer understanding of the needs and behaviours of its global user base.

4

How identity takes personalisation to a whole new level

Today's organisations accumulate vast amounts of data from their customers or citizens, but it's often spread across a range of siloed sites and systems, which makes it hard to analyse and use effectively. Solve this problem, and you can meet your customers' growing need for truly personalised services.

From financial services to utilities, logistics and beyond, businesses are finding new ways to add value by personalising customers' experience.

- Leading media companies use online services and subscription models to break down traditional product silos.

- Motor insurers use telematics to offer personalised quotes based on individual driving behaviour.

- Meanwhile, their counterparts in health and life insurance do the same with profile information provided by customers.

- The UK government's "digital by default" approach enables deeper personalisation while reducing cost to serve.

According to McKinsey, companies that excel at personalisation generate 40% more revenue than the average players[2]. While retailers that target regular shoppers with personalised programmes yield an ROI three times higher than that of mass promotions[3].

But personalisation is a subtle, "handle-with-care" concept that can easily be done badly. Suggesting to a customer that you know them is a pretty grandiose claim, and can easily come across as intrusive or "creepy" – a failing that could lessen intent-to-purchase.
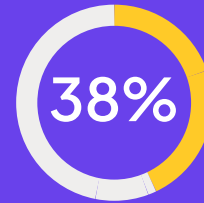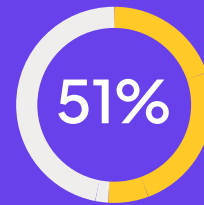
Pitfalls of personalisation

63% of consumers will stop buying from brands that use poor personalisation tactics.[4]
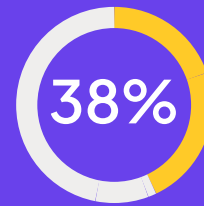
38% of brands risk losing customers because of poor marketing personalisation efforts.[5]

38% of customers will stop doing business with a company if they find personalisation efforts to be "creepy".[5]

51% believe brands are failing to personalise their experiences because the data they have on them is not accurate or up-to-date.[6]

[2] McKinsey & Co (2021) The value of getting personalization right—or wrong—is multiplying.
[3] Erik Lindecrantz, Madeleine Tjon Pian Gi, and Stefano Zerbi (2020) Personalizing the customer experience: Driving differentiation in retail.
[4] Smart Insights (2020)
[5] Gartner Personalization Survey.
[6] Harris Poll Survey (2021) Customer Experience Gaps, sponsored by Redpoint Global.

Here's the upshot: if you want to convince customers that you know them, then you'd better be right. Often, however, the most effective personalisation comes in ways the customer isn't even aware of: organisations simply use the data they've accumulated to model and predict future customer behaviour, and align their activity to meet those future needs.

That's where CIAM comes in, and for the same core reason as before. Every piece of data you hold on a customer across your organisation, from personal details to their habits, preferences and behaviour, is connected to a single identity, allowing you to build up an ever-more-detailed and increasingly nuanced picture of their likes, wants and needs.

This in turn can be linked to your preferred data platform so you can cut and analyse the data to create actionable insight - whether that's segmenting your customer base in a usable way or identifying indicators that might trigger personalised offers, from targeted discounts to loyalty rewards.

This potential is compounded if your CIAM approach includes Google or social media sign-on. While more and more customers find this a convenient (and acceptable) way to access third-party products and services, you benefit from being integrated into their social universe, where further insight can be acquired and reviews or offers can be readily shared.

Understanding who your customers are, and how they interact with your platforms, is critical to providing exceptional experiences. Personalisation, targeted marketing and truly frictionless customer journeys can't happen otherwise.

A growth story: ASOS

Online fashion leader ASOS wanted to offer its digitally-savvy customers the smoothest online journey possible, from register and sign-in though to final purchase, while improving conversion rates in the process. They also wanted to understand their customers better and make the experience "more personal" to improve engagement and loyalty, and needed a solution that could support their global growth ambitions.

Ensono developed a new single-sign-on identity service that also connected ASOS' online storefront with leading social channels. This was based on a vendor-neutral, multi-service cloud architecture that integrated seamlessly with ASOS' existing technology stack.

ASOS now has a consistent, user-friendly sign-on experience across all of its apps and websites, radically reducing friction and abandoned transactions. Combined with social sign-on capability, this has delivered new levels of customer insight and engagement.
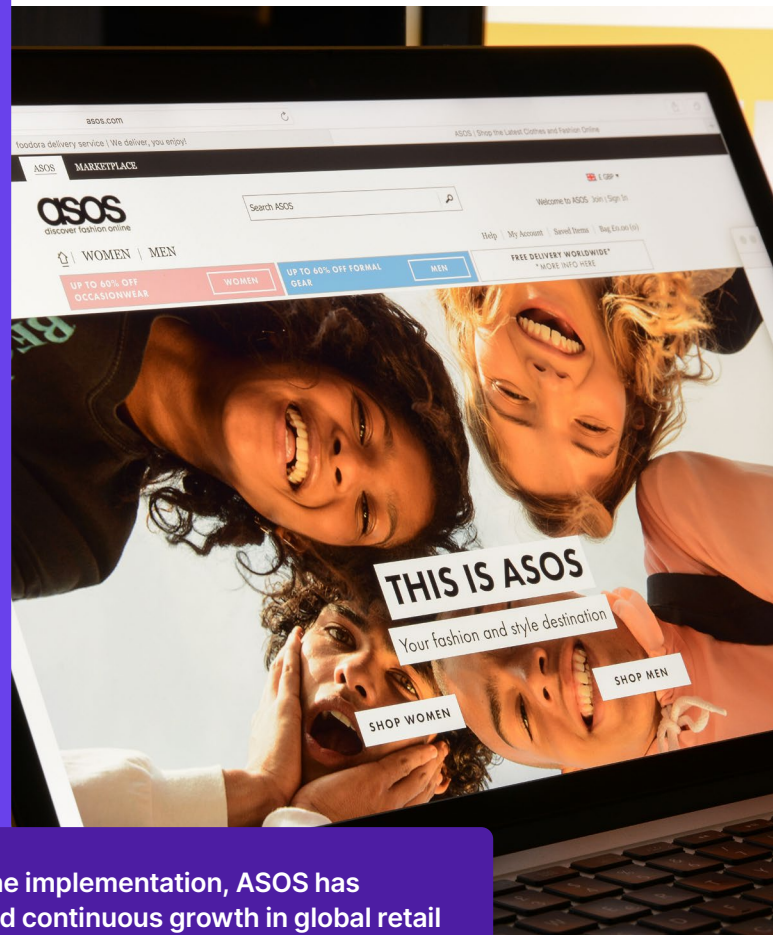
30% Since the implementation, ASOS has achieved continuous growth in global retail sales, effectively tripling their revenue.

The potential to streamline costs

There's a distinct possibility that a comprehensive, well-designed identity solution can save your organisation money.

Consolidating multiple IdAM solutions into a single, centrally operated identity platform is much more cost-effective and efficient to run.

By eliminating the need for duplicate user profiles across branches, channels and sub-brands, the cost of maintaining multiple identity siloes can be reduced or removed. What's more, since password resets and other types of manual support are no longer required, IT costs in general can be streamlined.

With a comprehensive identity solution in place, the overall likelihood of costly "shadow IT" being deployed in your wider organisation is also radically lessened.

The result?
Maximum integration and process efficiency, saving time and mental bandwidth for all users while simplifying the overall IT burden.

An evolution story: The AA

After several years of using an identity platform to manage 14 million customer identities and a wealth of personal information, the UK's largest motoring organisation wanted to evolve its approach.

The aim? To migrate to a cloud-based solution that would allow them to upgrade their identity platform while enabling new levels of scalability and lower infrastructure costs.

To make the substantial leap from the AA's legacy CIAM platform to the latest version, the Ensono team carried out a ground-up rebuild in small increments, integrating a new AWS-based platform and seamlessly migrating 15 million customer identities with zero service downtime.

24/7

The AA now has an up-to-date, cloud-hosted, flexible and scalable identity management platform that's managed off-premise by their in-house team, enabling them to provide 24/7 services to customers, 365 days a year.

5
Protecting your systems and data

Alongside benefits like customer loyalty and relationship-building, let's not forget identity and access management's original *raison-d'être*: security.

Rigorous protection of customer data is a vital priority in every industry, while being especially pertinent for insurance, central government and commercial spheres where financial transactions are carried out. With an agile, sophisticated identity solution in place, perhaps augmented with multi-factor authentication or even biometrics, your organisation won't have to compromise between CX, productivity and security.

Given today's "connect anywhere" customer environment, along with the widespread use of microservices to build agile online services, cloud-hosted IdAM and CIAM services are a powerful way of ensuring your identity strategy can flex and scale effortlessly as your infrastructure evolves, providing constant protection for customer and business data.

By safeguarding your systems and data with identity, you can:

- Allow customers and citizens to access permitted parts of your infrastructure securely, 24/7.
- Give colleagues secure remote access to internal systems on both sides of the firewall, making work more flexible and internal processes more efficient.
- Configure, govern and verify individualised permissions for different parties who use your domains.
- Continually refine and improve user journeys while maintaining security.

A security story: Government agency

A high-profile UK government agency needed a secure online "self-service" system to streamline citizens' requests while safeguarding the data of its 49 million users.

This needed a centralised, cloud-based approach to authenticating users across all of the agency's services. Ensono worked with the client's in-house team to embed a DeSecOps shift-led approach that would prioritise data security from the very start of the project.

The new, scalable, cloud-based IdAM solution can be rolled out quickly across each new online service.

9/10

The government agency can now process citizen applications in minutes rather than weeks, raising customer satisfaction levels in the process and achieving a 9/10 customer satisfaction score.

In closing

Where do you go from here?

Mastering the art of identity is vital. Without placing <u>IdAM and CIAM</u> at the core of your approach, you're unlikely to get full value from your existing customer relationships, while missing opportunities to cultivate new ones. What's more, depending on how developed identity management is in your industry, acting quickly could help you acquire a substantial competitive advantage.

Working with a specialist identity provider will allow you to design and deploy these vital capabilities in a way that works for you, bringing together "best-of-breed" identity solutions in an integrated way that fits your organisation and strategy. In an age of fast-growing <u>microservices architecture</u>, <u>cloud-based applications</u> can be ideal for optimising connections, storage and the ongoing management of identity information. The opportunity is ripe for you to grow a firm technology foundation for your business to grow.

Ensono has a proven track record of delivering IdAM and CIAM solutions for major organisations like <u>ASOS</u>, <u>Save The Children</u>, <u>The Gym Group</u> and <u>the AA</u>. Our approach is vendor-agnostic, allowing our specialists to design a solution that's driven by your needs.

To do this, we draw on long-standing relationships with the world's top technology providers, who've awarded our teams with numerous high-level accreditations. We're also an Amazon Web Services Advanced Consulting Partner and an Azure Expert MSP. We can also help you deploy <u>integrated data platforms</u>, or connect your existing data sources together to better aggregate and analyse the unified data provided by identity management technology.

Wherever you are on your identity journey, we're here to help. Speak to one of our experts today.

Find out how identity solutions can benefit your business.

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Make better happen