Citizen F1RST

Digital Identity:
Focus on the Pan-Canadian Trust Framework

JOINT COUNCIL'S EXECUTIVE MONTHLY REPORT
(Product of the Research Committee)
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Image Source: PixaBay

1. Introduction

As expectations for digital services rise among consumers, governments are looking to evolve their service strategies and leverage technology to provide citizens with efficient, client-focused digital service delivery. Digital transformation is progressively making waves on the customer identification and verification front.

Digital Identity in Canada's Public Sector

A trusted digital identity platform can play a vital role in reducing some of the inefficiencies (and associated costs) of the current system and can enable better coordination between different jurisdictions; this can ensure citizens are being provided with seamless service delivery.[1]

The public sector is providing a commitment to advancing digital identity for Canadians, in a way that makes it simpler and easier for Canadians to get the services they need from governments, in a safe and secure way.

The Joint Councils, through the IMSC, works collaboratively with the Digital ID Authentication Council of Canada (DIACC) on the development of the PCTF. DIACC members collaborate in committees to accelerate digital identity services and establish interoperable ecosystems Canadians can use with confidence.

The Importance of the Pan-Canadian Trust Framework

The Pan Canadian Trust Framework (PCTF) is more important now, than ever, in the current context. Recall the Joint Councils Declaration on Digital Identity.[1]

The establishment of trusted digital identities is the foundation required for us to jointly accomplish the goal of delivering real results to Canadians.

We recognize that there is currently no simple, visible statement of shared intent to enable digital government through the establishment and use of trusted digital identities. This Declaration addresses that gap. Our intent is to clearly demonstrate our commitment to working together and providing the resources required to establish trusted digital identities within our respective jurisdictions to allow Canadians to participate and contribute to digital government and society.

In this Pan-Canadian Declaration, each jurisdiction has a shared commitment to:

• Enabling digital society without borders and a modern and innovative government through the establishment, issuance and recognition of trusted digital identities, with no jurisdiction left behind;

• Ensuring individuals and other legal entities are empowered to share their digital identity information, issued by their jurisdiction, as they choose within the limits of the law;

• Confirming that the digital identity information, which is issued by jurisdictions will be interoperable, verifiable and respectful of privacy according to the established Pan-Canadian frameworks and standards for digital identity and authentication.

1. "Digital Identity- A Key Driver of Canada's Digital Economy". 2019. Susan Crutchlow

1. Joint Councils Declaration on Digital Identity

2. The Pan-Canadian Trust Framework

Background

"Canada's identity management ecosystem currently employs a federated identity model, comprised of multiple identity providers relying on authoritative source registries that span provincial/territorial and federal jurisdictions[1].

The PCTF is an outcome of the Pan-Canadian approach for federating identities, which is an agreement embodied in the PCTF that outlines how identity solutions should be developed in Canada. This approach aims to facilitate digital transformation, which will subsequently enable transformative digital service delivery solutions for Canadians."

What is the PCTF?

"The PCTF is a model that consists of a set of agreed-on concepts, definitions, processes, conformance criteria, and an assessment approach[1]. It is not a "standard" as such, but is, instead, a framework that relates and applies existing standards, policies, guidelines, and practices, and where such standards and policies do not exist, specifies additional criteria. The PCTF aims to complement existing standards and policies surrounding security, privacy, and service delivery."

The PCTF Model[1]
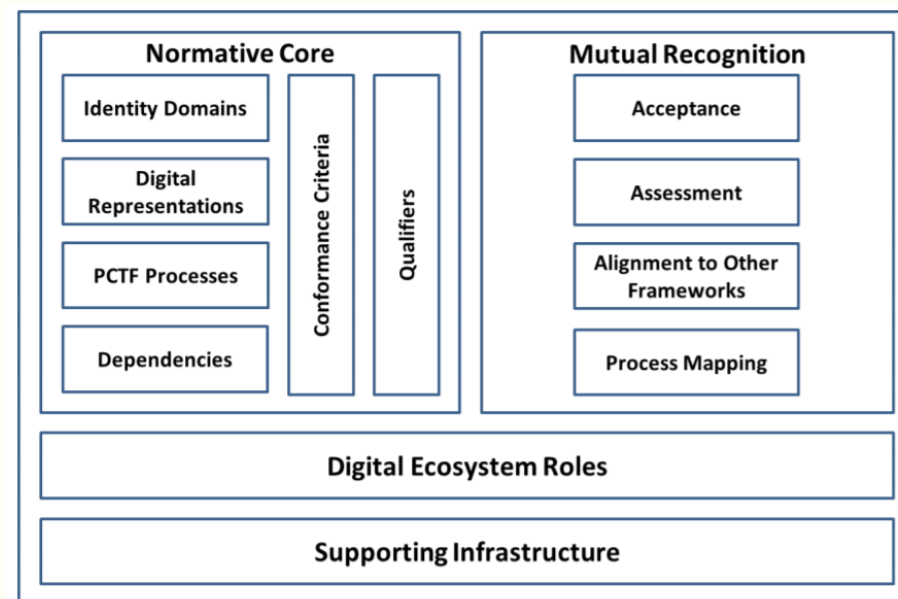
Scope of the PCTF

- Persons in Canada, which is defined as all citizens and residents of Canada (including deceased persons) for whom an identity has been established in Canada;

- Organizations in Canada, which is defined as all organizations registered in Canada (including inactive organizations) for which an identity has been established in Canada; and

- Relationships in Canada of persons to persons, organizations to organizations, and persons to organizations.

1. The Public Sector Profile Of The Pan-Canadian Trust Framework (PCTF) Version 1.1. 2020.

1. "Public Sector Profile of the Pan-Canadian Trust Framework (PCTF) | Cadre de Confiance pancanadian". 2020.

3. The Pan-Canadian Trust Framework and COVID-19

It is clear that digital identify is the "speedbump" to digital transformation.

In the current COVID -19 context, digital transformation is being accelerated out of necessity for people to work efficiently from home, for contact tracing and immunity passports to be developed, and for citizens dealing with gender-based violence to gain relief, among other factors.

While the current context is a call to action for policymakers to focus on the importance of digital identity, it is as critical as ever to move toward digital identity in a way that continues to build Canadians' trust.

The work on the PCTF will move deliberately and thoughtfully, so that when the PCTF is ready to be operationalized, in whatever mode that will take, the PCTF easily gains the confidence of Canadians.

Digital Identity - Real-World Applications

With countries around the world in lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of digital ID technology is being promoted at unprecedented rates.
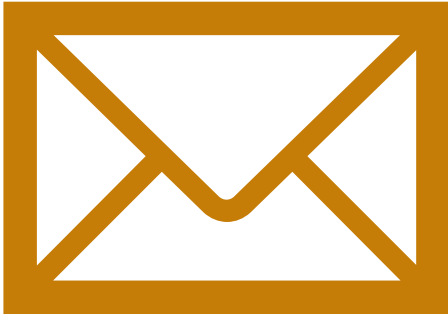

China is fighting the coronavirus with a digital QR code.

In Europe there is a move toward the Digital Euro, which can tie government authentication to payment transactions.

Canada's big banks are testing a Toronto-based digital identity network powered by blockchain

For further reading

- [The world is accelerating towards digital IDs for all](#)

- [Government needs digital identity infrastructure now more than ever](#)

- [Digital identification: A key to inclusive growth](#)

- [Digital Identity in the time of COVID-19](#)

- [Coronavirus: Chinese facial recognition firm says they can ID people wearing face masks](#)

- [Governments of Canada and the Pan Canadian Trust Framework](#)
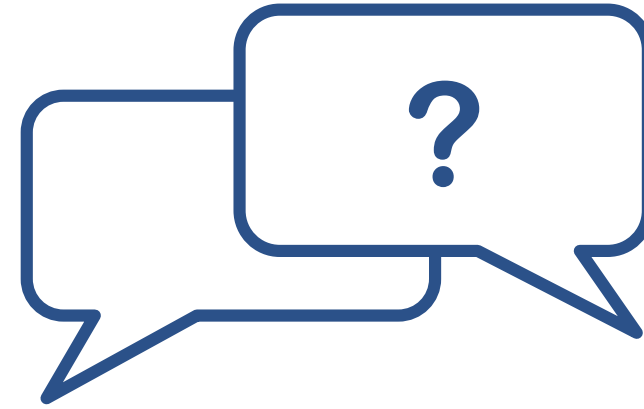
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Daily Newsletter: Trends This Month
April 2020

Contact Tracing

Countries worldwide have been seeking out ways in which they can best use technology to fight COVID-19- through contact tracing.

Read more here.

Digital Learning

Amid the coronavirus pandemic, schools have been forced to shut nationwide. Online instruction has been rapidly embraced.

Read more here.

Privacy and Security

The coronavirus has reinstated the post-9/11 debate about security and civil liberties. Read more about the U.S. response here.

Contact tracing has also raised concerns about privacy erosion. Read more here.

Research Repository

Access the Citizen First Research Repository here.