TeleSign
TeleSign Through the Customer Journey

White Paper

Intro to Digital Identity

Digital identity consists of the different pieces of information that compile a person's footprint on the internet. It is essentially a user's online passport, information that can be used to gain access to a variety of web eco-systems. A phone number, IP address, e-mail and name are all small pieces of the puzzle that are considered while evaluating a person's digital identity.

This knowledge can be then used to garner actionable insights about a user. Do we onboard them onto a platform, do we allow certain transactions to proceed? By leveraging this as well as bridging the gap between digital identity and communications, TeleSign builds an entire digital experience for platforms looking to connect with their users during the entire customer lifecycle. This e-book will walk you through that process and show in four chapters how TeleSign supports the largest web properties in the world through onboarding protection, transaction protection, communication and compliance. Through digital identity, TeleSign helps brands bolster their security and enables platforms to scale globally with the valuable new insights that identity solutions provide.

1 Onboarding Protection

Onboarding is the process of bringing a new user onto a platform. It is the first step in the customer journey and perhaps the most important. Businesses are incentivized to register as many users as possible, but must make sure they do it in a secure and scalable way.

Using digital identity solutions TeleSign is able to act as the ultimate gate keeper for a platform. We provide a seamless registration process for good users while keeping fraudsters out and reducing fake accounts. The best way to prevent fraud of course is to never allow fraudsters to access your eco-system.

We do this in several ways. TeleSign uses verification products such as two-factor authentication in concert with mobile identity solutions to build a risk profile of each potential user that attempts to enter your web eco-system. By leveraging a more complete solution, we are able to cover a wide range of vulnerabilities which are typically only covered in piecemeal offerings.

E-mail vs. Phone Number

Picture a good user registration. While creating an account a user creates a user name, a password, a few extra details and a phone number. TeleSign instantly checks that information, and sends a one-time passcode to the user's device and the account is verified in a matter of seconds. Our Mobile Communication Channels report shows that 98% of all SMS are eventually opened and the average amount of time for an SMS to be opened is under three minutes. It also has a 100% reach on mobile. E-mail overall has a 20% open rate and an average open time of over six hours after the correspondence has been sent.

Looking at those numbers, it's clear to see that SMS is a more effective way to verify users than e-mail. In addition, many people use a number of different e-mail addresses and only sync certain ones to their mobile device. At the same time, most users only have one phone number and a one-time passcode sent to a device can be sent and input quickly to register. The business impact of this can be a 30% rise in conversions.

Adding Mobile Identity

While most users have only one phone number, there are still small vulnerabilities in 2FA. TeleSign closes this gap with mobile identity solutions that look at the information behind a phone number. For example, certain fraudsters can find free or very cheap VOIP phone numbers on the internet. TeleSign's APIs can detect these types of phone numbers and allow you to screen these users out. This allows your platform to cut down on fake accounts that typically exist to cause havoc for your users in the form of phishing schemes and account takeover. Detecting VOIP numbers is just one of the capabilities we offer.

TeleSign can also use identity products to identify duplicate or bulk accounts created for the purpose of promo or referral abuse. For a full list of phone number and fraud intelligence services TeleSign offers, please see our product page.

2 Transaction Protection

Once a platform has verified a user and onboarded them onto their platform then comes the next step in the customer journey; protecting transactions. While Onboarding protection can prevent most fraudsters from entering your eco-system, it is still important to protect every transaction on your platform to not only protect your users, but protect yourself from the fiscal and opportunity costs associated with fraud.

TeleSign is pleased to offer an entire suite of digital identity solutions that protect users at the transaction level. This includes monitoring online behavior with data science and assessing the likelihood that any single log-in or purchase is fraudulent.

In doing so, we are able to prevent many types of fraud including account takeover and SIM Swap attacks, which we'll talk about more at length later on. At the same time we are able to bolster the integrity of a platform, looking for fake reviews or attempts at promo abuse. TeleSign leverages a user's mobile footprint and matches it against telco records and our global data consortium to make sure every online user is indeed who they claim to be.

Fraudulent Transactions

Despite screening your users at registration, humans are imperfect and there will be slips in personal security hygiene. All it takes is one phishing e-mail, a fraudulent link or even another company's data breach to compromise an account. Because of this, TeleSign looks at user behavior and encourages platforms to do the same. TeleSign solutions can be used to require additional verification steps if say a transaction value is over a certain amount or a new address is listed for delivery. Even though a fraudster might possess the credentials for log-in, 2FA and digital identity checks can stop fraud at the transaction level.

Additionally, monitoring the transactions can protect your platform in other ways. Most people associate transactions with money exchanging hands, but each time a review or rating is listed on an e-commerce platform this can be considered a transaction as well. TeleSign can help platforms trace and eliminate fake accounts that are associated with bulk/fake reviews created to beat an algorithm. As it stands, according to PC Mag up to 42% of online reviews are unreliable. TeleSign looks to rectify this to add trust between platform and user.

SIM Swap

SIM Swap is an account takeover that can leave users susceptible to enormous financial loss. It occurs when a fraudster uses phishing, bribery or social engineering to procure Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from a victim. The fraudster takes the information and convinces a cell phone provider to port the victim's phone number to a device controlled by the fraudster. Once this takes place a fraudster controls the account recovery process and can begin to take complete control of the victim's high value accounts.

This is often seen with banking and crypto services. There have been high profile cases of victims losing millions of dollars overnight. Fortunately, digital identity again comes to the rescue by looking at information behind a phone number. Every time a phone number is ported, a record of this is created. TeleSign can evaluate a transaction to see if the phone number associated with the account was recently ported and flag it for a manual review. Sometimes you will find that a good user just happened to buy a new cell phone that day and wanted to transfer some money around. Often, you will prevent thousands of dollars of fraud from fiscally harming your stakeholders.

3 Communication

While protecting your users and platform is paramount to TeleSign's customer centric mission, we also understand the value that can be gained from user engagement. TeleSign's communication solutions believe that an engaged user is a valuable user. From alerts, reminders and notifications to two-way voice platforms, TeleSign provides businesses endless options when it comes to directly interacting with their users. For example, in this case study, EA was able to increase spend, retention and engagement for mobile users that they contacted via SMS.

Businesses can drive direct revenue through RCS or lower support costs by building Voice Interactive Voice Response (IVR) trees. With TeleSign omnichannel communications businesses can reach users where they want to be reached, when they want to be reached.

How Users Want to be Reached

According to TeleSign's Customer Reach Report SMS, rather than e-mail command the immediate attention of users. In fact, 74% of users said they always or often read an SMS from a business within five minutes. That number is reduced to 48% with e-mail. Furthermore, 90% of users mentioned that they would like to be able to correspond directly with businesses via SMS. This article from the Wall Street Journal identifies some of the brands that are currently using this strategy.

As businesses look to expand on new ways to generate revenue streams, going directly to users on a mobile device can open new revenue streams, whether you are selling tickets directly through SMS or building out chat bot functionality through RCS.

Communication and Privacy

Businesses can leverage Number Masking (anonymous communication) to connect users and with on-demand services employees such as delivery drivers while still maintaining privacy on both ends. As users become more concerned what happens to their PII, it is important to provide options to opt out of sharing that information. Use cases would further include ride share services, dating apps and even utility workers.

4 Compliance

In a world with constantly evolving privacy regulations, it can be tricky for businesses to stay ahead of the curve. TeleSign is GDPR, CCPA and PSD2 compliant and can help businesses stay the same. Leverage digital identity to both bolster security and achieve compliance with Strong Customer Authentication.

TeleSign helps businesses focus on providing the best customer experience for their users while avoiding costly fines and legal battles. Our global privacy and security office makes sure that you can use TeleSign's technology to solve for your pain points and do it all legally.

In sum, the customer journey is always evolving and using digital identity to touch every aspect helps brands connect with all of their global users. By enabling scalable and secure growth while bridging the gap with communication, TeleSign ensures a successful future for its customers.

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