

Re: [OT] Is "Authentication" a Real Word?

Source: <http://www.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/comp.security.misc/2002-04/0505.html>

From: Casey Schaufler (casey@sgi.com)

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Alun Jones wrote:

- > *Unless, that is, Ms De Alvare has a different meaning for authentication*
- > *than authentication already possesses, and if that's the case, then I still*
- > *have a beef, in that it's a really bad idea to use two similar (and often*
- > *confused) words for concepts in the same field.*

Authentication is a combination of identification and authentication. In the case where authentication information is self-identifying (numbered bank account) the word should not be used. In other cases (username/password) the identification and authentication are separate, and the process of identification (looking up the username) and authentication (checking the password) are different. Thus, it would be improper to authenticate an numbered bank account, but proper to authenticate a computer user.

The word authentication is much like I18N, a shortcut. Perhaps it should be a contraction, authent'ification. Maybe not. Anyhow, it's cute and reasonably harmless insider jargon.

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