Authentication: Password Madness

MSIT 458: Information Security
Group Presentation

The Locals
The General Problem

Too many passwords to remember!

“The average user has 6.5 passwords shared across 3.9 different sites.”

–Florencio & Herley, 2007, “A Large Scale Study of Password Habits”
The General Problem

Password Resets
- Passwords are often compromised
  - Written down / shoulder surfing
  - Used across multiple sites
  - Dictionary attacks
  - No expiration dates

Authentication for Passwords
- Too secure
- Not secure enough
- Poor choice of authentication questions
Our Company’s Problem

16% of service desk calls are due to intranet password resets.

Reasons to Reset Passwords

- 43% of calls are due to expired passwords
- 49% of calls are due to forgotten passwords
Our Company’s Problem

Calling the Service Desk for Password Resets

✦ 86% of users tried online before calling the Service Desk
✦ 30% of employees could not get through online security questions
  ✦ User must answer from 4 to 20 security questions
  ✦ All questions must be answered correctly to “pass”
  ✦ Case-sensitive
  ✦ No hints for answers
  ✦ Cultural bias for security questions
✦ 56% of users got through security question but still had locked accounts
Our Company’s Problem

Over 86% of users prefer to reset their passwords online, without calling the Service Desk.

...How do we fix this process?
Thanks.