The View from the EEMA Chair

In many ways 2016 was a milestone year for EEMA and its members. We launched the European Trust Foundation in The Hague, and our new High-Level Fireside briefings have proved very popular in both Brussels and London. EEMA was also delighted to announce its involvement in two EU-funded projects – LIGHTest and FutureTrust, as well as its ongoing work with Cloud for Europe, all of which you will hear much more about in 2017.

At our 17th ISSE conference, which took place in Paris in November, we were delighted to introduce new event supporters Darktrace and Cryptomathic. We also had the pleasure of signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Kantara Initiative, that will give members from both organisation great opportunities to collaborate and share knowledge.

EEMA is always delighted to welcome new members and in 2016 we were joined by BeCyberSure, LuxTrust and B.EST Solutions. We also added new expertise to our Board of Directors with the appointment of world-renowned digital identity experts, David Birch and Tony Fish. As well as acknowledging the huge contribution that Ronny Bjones has made to EEMA with the presentation of its Lifetime Achievement Award.

So, what does 2017 hold?

This year promises to be an even more exciting year for EEMA and plans are already afoot for the 30th anniversary of our annual conference, which this year takes place in London, as well as ISSE (watch this space for details coming soon!). For those of you in the UK, a date for your diary is Thursday 16th March when Atos in London will be the generous host of our first event of the year ‘Just how many passports do you need?’.

Looking across Europe, we are undoubtedly living in interesting times. The plot surrounding the UK’s BREXIT is certain to unfold in the coming 12 months. Meanwhile, organisations will be either springing
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in to action, starting to panic, or hiding their heads in the sand, as the deadline to be GDPR compliant (May 2018) creeps ever closer.

I also expect (should that read hope!) to see a gradual improvement in password behaviours, driven in part by guidelines drawn up by the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) in the US. It is likely that this document will soon be a reference guide that is treated as the de-facto standard for best practise globally.

Another, theme I expect to see in 2017 is the growth in identity aggregation, whereby a common identity is used to access applications and services. There is a growing realisation of the similarities between identity and Know Your Customer (KYC), as used by the likes of retail banks. As such there is work being done to discover ways of utilising and of course monetising KYC for identity. Meanwhile, I expect to see the use of Attributes Based Credentials (ABC), which have been with us for some time (albeit underutilised), to come to the fore for small scale use cases, such as age verification.

On behalf of the EEMA team, I wish you a very Happy New Year and look forward to welcoming you at many of our events and initiatives taking place throughout Europe in 2017.

Chair of EEMA, Jon Shamah