

Raven Authentication (v3)

6th April 2014

Main Website

Hosting Web Application Agent (WAA)

Raven Authentication Server

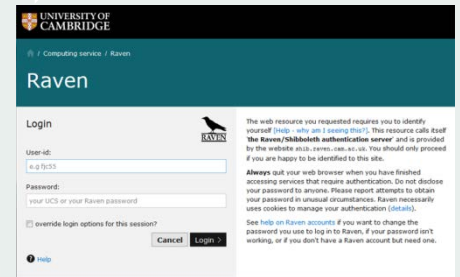
Acting as Web Login Service (WLS)

Authentication Request

Param	Req'd	Sample value
ver	✓	3
url	✓	https://example.com/account.aspx?user=4&ret=status
desc		Example.com Account Page
aauth		Pwd
iact		Yes
msg		External authentication required to access info.
params		ID9832329, user=4, misc client-specific parameters
date		20140406T093323Z
fail		no

Parameters encoded into the URL redirect:

https://raven.cam.ac.uk/auth/authenticate.html?ver=3&url=http%3a%2f%2fexample.com%2faccount.aspx%3fuser=...



1

User tries to access authenticated page on website. If no session cookie is found to indicate user is authenticated, redirect to Raven server using special "Authentication Request".

2

If the Raven server does not recognise the user as valid (typically using a cookie), it prompts the user for login information and attempts to verify their identity.

3

Following attempted Raven authentication, the user's browser is redirected back to the main website with a signed 'WLS-Response' GET variable.

Authentication Response

Param	Req'd	Possible value
ver	✓	3
Status	✓	200 (Success)
msg		
issue	✓	20140405T231805Z
id	✓	1396739885-13347-12
url	✓	https://example.com/account.aspx?user=4&ret=status
principal	✓	xy123
ptags		current
auth	✓	pwd
sso		(required if 'auth' empty)
life		3600
params	✓	ID9832329, user=4, misc client-specific parameters
kid	✓	2
sig	✓	jtZz5JqIovilEnAu-XGqoSiKQK4SHeWR6ArV130EnM0...

Parameters encoded into the URL redirect:

https://example.com/account.aspx?user=4&ret=status&WLS-Response=31200!!20140405T231805Z!1396739885-13347-12!...

4

Validate WLS-Response, set local authentication cookie and reload original page.

Assuming there are no errors, eg. login cancelled or timeout, the main website checks the validity of the 'WLS-Response' variable. If it's valid and the status code is '200' (Success), the user is considered to be authenticated. An authentication session cookie can then be set and the initial page reloaded. The original page can now go on to display authenticated content.

