

Schwab Retirement Technologies

vidoopSecure™ customer case-study



“We had planned to build a proprietary solution ourselves. . . .For the money, the functionality Vidoop offers was far and away better, [because] it integrated into my existing product suite very quickly. It took our programmers less than a month to get it up and running. It was the easiest third-party software integration we’ve ever had, and we’ve had many.”

DARREN FREE, Chief Operating Officer, Schwab Retirement Technologies

Business Challenge

- Strong security to protect users’ retirement savings.
- Easy and intuitive login experience for retirement account holders.
- Cost effective solution that can be deployed to over 2 million users.
- Flawless integration into existing product suite.

Solution

- ImageShield technology layered with Schwab RT’s existing authentication solution to enable users to securely access their retirement accounts
- Customizable security to meet the changing needs of retirement plan administrators.
- Over 80 TPAs have access to the ImageShield technology to make it available for their users.

Benefits

- Strong usable security that protects retirement accounts from the prevalent forms for hacking.
- Improved user experience that is both convenient and safe.
- Cost effective security without the use of expensive hardware tokens.
- Schwab developers integrated the ImageShield easily into their existing authentication scheme.

Schwab Retirement Technologies® (Schwab RT), an operating unit of the Fortune 500 discount brokerage firm Charles Schwab, develops and licenses an advanced suite of retirement technology products and services for independent Third Party Administrators (TPAs). The clients that use Schwab RT’s sophisticated retirement technology products include TPAs, consulting firms, banks, trust companies, mutual fund companies, and insurance companies.

Business Challenge

Schwab’s retirement technology allows users to conveniently access their investment portfolio online and manage all aspects of their investments via the web. There is a real risk of identity theft associated with online bankingⁱ, however retirement accounts managed online have a greater exposure due to the high value of the funds

Identity theft and fraud are growing at an alarming rateⁱⁱ and financial services companies in particular are more vulnerable to attacksⁱⁱⁱ. In an important step towards governing financial institutions, the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC) in 2005 issued guidelines for stronger security beyond user names and passwords in online transactions. Schwab’s team recognized that as a leader in retirement technology products, they needed to take steps to fortify their login and be proactively engaged in protecting their customers.

Schwab RT was looking for multi-layered authentication security to effectively protect their users, without having to burden them. Usability is key and Schwab RT wanted strong security that was easy and convenient for their users. They looked at several technologies including hardware tokens for their 2.5 million users and were challenged to find a practical, cost effective solution that could easily integrate into their environment and be deployed on a large-scale.

The ImageShield Solution

VidooSecure's image based authentication, presents users with a set of images that represent categories. Users login by entering the alphanumeric characters that are overlaid on the images and this forms their one-time access code. The images, their positions and the alphanumeric characters change with each login, giving the user a secure login every time. Vidoo proved to be a good fit for Schwab RT and met their requirement for security and usability. As an innovator, Schwab RT successfully adopted the ImageShield technology and deployed the solution to protect some 2.5 million user accounts in 2007.



Over eighty TPA's that are Schwab RT's clients have the option to turn on the ImageShield technology to provide their users with a stronger login that is easy and intuitive. Once users have logged in to their Schwab retirement accounts with their existing login, they are presented with the ImageShield, which is an additional layer of security that users have to go through in order to access and manage their accounts.

Benefits to Schwab RT

Strong security: Online security is a grave concern and users expect the plan administrator to take appropriate steps to protect their retirement savings from online criminals. The ImageShield protects the login against prevalent forms of fraud like keystroke logging, phishing etc. so Schwab RT could address their customers' fears and take a bold and timely step towards earning their customers' trust and protecting their assets.

Easy on users: Users login to the ImageShield with their favorite image categories and this improves user experience across the spectrum of retirement account holders, giving them a safe and convenient login.

Customizable security: Vidoo worked with Schwab RT to customize various elements of the ImageShield including size, number of categories, character colors, length of access codes etc. to deliver a high level of security that was intuitive and convenient for their customers.

Easy & Quick integration^{iv}: Vidoo worked with Schwab's implementation team to integrate the ImageShield into their existing login scheme. The teams validated the technology integration during testing and prototyping, and in under a month had the solution up and running.

Cost effective: Schwab RT explored several authentication alternatives before choosing Vidoo. The ImageShield was an ideal solution and for a fraction of the cost, provides strong security that is easy on users.

i. [The cybercrime arms race](#): SC Magazine, September 23rd, 2008

ii. [Economic Bust, Cybercrime Boom](#): Forbes.com, November 19th, 2008

iii. [The cybercrime arms race](#): SC Magazine, September 23rd, 2008

iv. VidooSecure now offers the ImageShield as a hosted web service where customers can make calls to a RESTful API, thus making integration more straightforward.