

# IT Security: security so good, you can't have it

Ricoh Americas, the US subsidiary of Japanese electronics company Ricoh, has developed a smart-card authorisation system. But you can't buy it, because it's only for the US Military.

It's a very cool concept: documents are encrypted and attached to a container that specifies approved recipients. Only by a two-factor authentication process, which includes a physical card, can the document be opened.

Common Access Card (CAC) Authentication Solution V2.0 is now available for exclusive use by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD).

Ricoh says "latest update to the smart card technology solution, developed in response to Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12) that requires strong and substantial evidence of an individual's identity to access the DoD's vast global computer infrastructure including connected multifunctional products (MFPs), now adds an enhanced Scan-to-Email feature.

"The Scan-to-Email feature comes fully integrated into many Ricoh MFPs with 20 to 90 page-per-minute output speeds and requires users to insert their CAC into a reader on the MFP at walk-up. When a user selects Scan with Digital Signature, their user credentials are automatically embedded in the scanned document's file properties. A token encrypted with the sender's private key is then sent with the document to the recipient who confirms the authenticity using the sender's public key. This verifies the sender's signature, thus providing assurance of document integrity and accountability."

Ricoh says that the product is designed to counter a problem that digital imaging has exacerbated if not actually created - including the increasing use of personal desktop devices and centralised processing of large quantities of documents. "Digital imaging systems have become the great enabler for sharing knowledge across an enterprise. However, advances in digital technology have now led to the unauthorised collection of confidential, classified and proprietary documents and data."

So that's good then.

If you're in the US Department of Defence.

And no use at all for the rest of us.

Nice idea, though.