Laws of Relationships

Axioms of Relationships

**Scalable**

Clearly the future holds more of everything for identity management. Relationship management much be scalable in terms of the number of actors, relationships, and attributes. But those three axes are insufficient, we must also keep in mind scalability of administration.

**Actionable**

Relationships must be able to carry authorization data. This can enable a “thing” to act without having to go back to its back-end server to determine the context in which it can operate.

Types of Relationships

**Immutable**

Obviously, there are some relationships that do not change. A specific widget can only be manufactured once and immutability of the relationship between the widget and the manufacture provides useful contextual data.

**Contextual**

Some relationships aren’t active and usable until conditions are met. For example, my Canadian SIM card only works when I am physically in Canada.

**Transferrable**

Some relationships can be delegated to others on a temporary basis and, in some cases, one party in a relationship can be replaced with another.

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**Provable**

There must a way for different combinations of parties to prove that a relationship exists. In some cases, a single party is all that is required. In other cases, a 3rd party separate from the relationship will be needed to prove a relationship exists.

**Acknowledgable**

I believe that all parties must be able to acknowledge they are in a relationship. This is a form of consent management. I’m guessing this will be one of the more contentious parts of my presentation.

**Revocable**

There needs to be a way for a relationship to be revoked. This naturally raises the question of what happens to data that was shared within the context of the relationship. We, as identity professionals, need to get ahead of this narrative before Right to be Forgotten/Deleted becomes solely the domain of lawyers.

**Constrainable**

Participants in a relationship need a way to constrain the relationships and connected parties. This is needed so that parties can describe what is acceptable behavior within the relationship.