

# Strengthening Password-based Authentication

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# Problems with Passwords

## POOR SECURITY AT THE SERVER

- Servers have access to password plaintext
- Users trust that servers salt+hash before storage
- Many servers are vulnerable to password theft

## VULNERABILITY TO PHISHING

- Web pages have access to password plaintext
- Phishers impersonate legitimate site
- Credentials immediately vulnerable

Password re-use compounds both problems

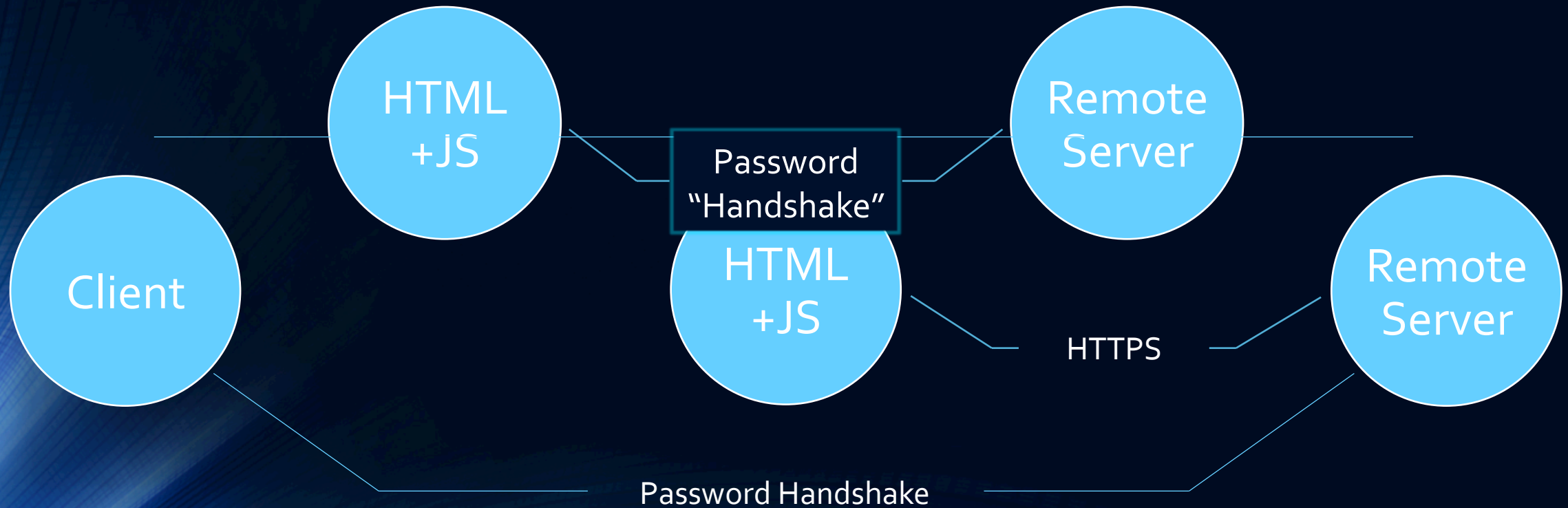
# What can be done?

STRONG PASSWORD  
PROTOCOLS

SAFE PASSWORD  
ENTRY



# Strong Password Protocols



# Safe Password Entry

- Spoof-resilient password-entry interfaces
- Interfaces that indicate they are privileged
  - Position on screen
  - OS features
  - SiteKey

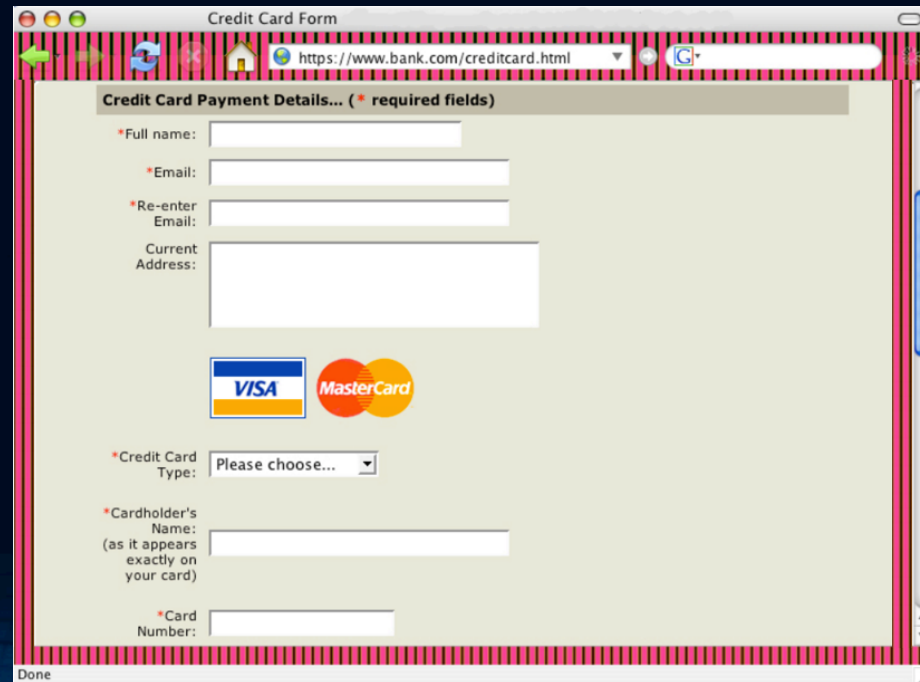
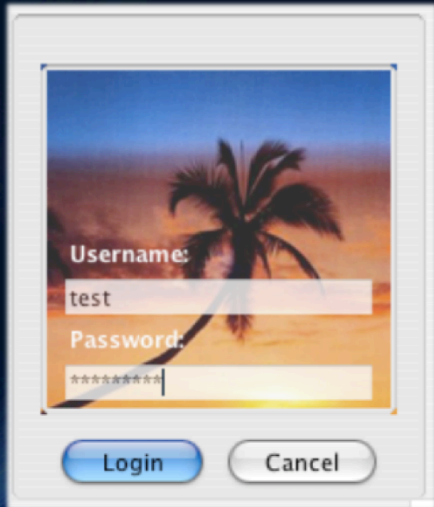


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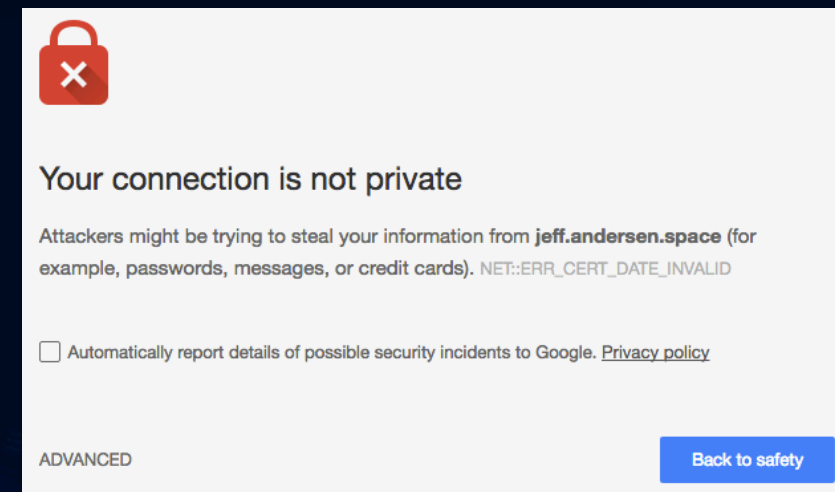
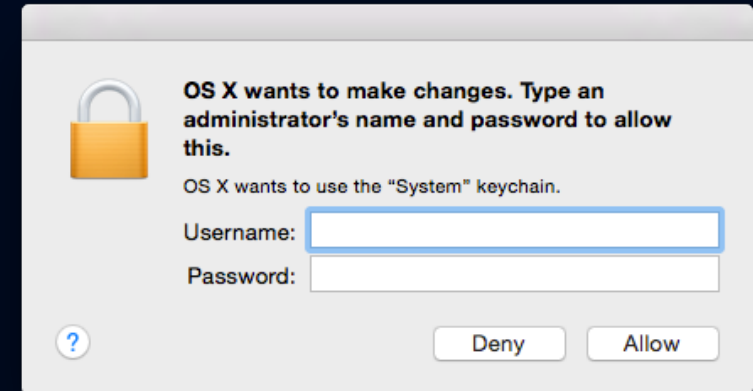
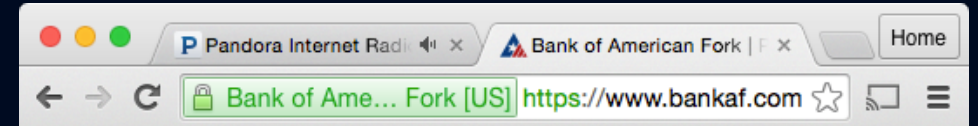
# Dynamic Security Skins, Dhamija [2005]

- Over 500 citations
- Strong password protocol
- SiteKey
- Visual hashes provide site authentication

A screenshot of a web browser window titled "Credit Card Form". The browser's address bar shows "https://www.bank.com/creditcard.html". The form is titled "Credit Card Payment Details... (\* required fields)". It contains several input fields: "Full name:", "Email:", "Re-enter Email:", "Current Address:", "Credit Card Type:" (with a dropdown menu showing "Please choose..." and logos for Visa and MasterCard), "Cardholder's Name: (as it appears exactly on your card)", and "Card Number:". The form is framed by a red and white striped border. The status bar at the bottom says "Done".

# Our Ideas

- Safe Password Entry
  - Browser chrome
  - Operating system prompt
- Site Authentication
  - Browser detects handshake failure





# Next Steps

1. Build our systems
2. ~~Design user study~~ good methodologies

# Improving User Studies

## PRESENT METHODOLOGY

- Too short
- Occurs in a lab
- Participants are primed
- Lab-assigned credentials

## PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

- Long-term
- “Take-home”
- Deception
- Personal credentials

# Preliminary Study Design

- Assign user to one safe password entry tool
- Playtesting a new game suite
  - Access via BYU Single Sign-On
- Daily testing, over 10-day period
  - Game links delivered over email
- On day 7, users are phished for their SSO password

## Work Needed

- Introduce safe password entry without priming for security
- Ensure study is safe for participants

# Points of Discussion

- Where should safe password entry be implemented?
  - Browser window, browser chrome, or operating system
- How can safe password entry effectiveness be accurately evaluated?
  - Ensuring both deception and safety for users