



Trusted Digital Web Glossary (TDW Glossary): Self-Sovereign Identity (SSI) User Scenarios: *Erin Buys a Car in Sovronia*

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The publication of this document coincides with recent discussions (March-April 2021) about the definition of Self-Sovereign Identity in the TDW Glossary, and the need for a simple, practical, and easy-to-understand user scenario explaining Self-Sovereign Identity.

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CHANGE HISTORY

Version 0.1

1. First version of the Erin Buys a Car user scenario

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this document is to describe a simple, practical, and easy-to-understand user scenario explaining Self-Sovereign Identity as defined in the TDW Glossary¹.

The intended audience for this whitepaper is a broad range of professionals interested in furthering their understanding of Self-Sovereign Identity for use in software apps, agents, and services. This includes software architects, application developers, and user experience (UX) specialists; as well as people involved in a broad range of standards efforts related to decentralized identity, verified credentials, and secure storage.

The work documented here was performed under the auspices of the Trusted Digital Web project in the Hyperonomy Digital Identity Lab of Parallelspace Corporation.

This is neither a W3C, DIF, Sovrin Foundation, nor ToIP publication - unofficial, official, or otherwise.

CONTEXT

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to describe a simple, practical, and easy-to-understand user scenario explaining Self-Sovereign Identity as defined in the TDW Glossary².

The publication of this document coincides with recent discussions (March-April 2021) about the definition of Self-Sovereign Identity in the TDW Glossary, and the need for a simple, practical, and easy-to-understand user scenario explaining Self-Sovereign Identity.

More specifically, this user scenario document was inspired by Steve Capell in a March 20, 2021, W3C CCG mailing list message where Steve stated:

However, sadly, I don't think it will help the policymaker that is not used to reading meta models. I usually have more success with storyboards that contrast two architectures with real examples. Policymakers don't need to "understand the architecture". They need to be able to conceptualize how it works through examples so that they can understand the policy impacts and opportunities.

Hopefully, this user scenario description represents the beginnings of an acceptable response.

Goals

The primary goal of this document is to provide an everyday, easy-to-understand, written example of how Self-Sovereign Identity can be used to:

1. identify people,
2. identify things, and
3. facilitate the purchase of a Thing by a Person.

¹ TDW Glossary. *What is SSI?* (Credit: <https://hyperonomy.com/2021/02/01/ssi-unconscious-contractions/>)

² TDW Glossary. *What is SSI?* (Credit: <https://hyperonomy.com/2021/02/01/ssi-unconscious-contractions/>)

One of the specific non-goals is to introduce the concept of Verified Credentials. That being said, an informed reader will quickly identify where Verified Credentials can be used in addition to Self-Sovereign Identity.

Intended Audience

The intended audience for this whitepaper is a broad range of professionals interested in furthering their understanding of Self-Sovereign Identity for use in software apps, agents, and services. This includes software architects, application developers, and user experience (UX) specialists; as well as people involved in a broad range of standards efforts related to decentralized identity, verified credentials, and secure storage.

Organization

This whitepaper contains the following sections:

- Context (this section)
- User Scenario: Erin Buys a Car
- TDW Glossary: Digital Identity Neighborhood
- Conclusions
- APPENDIX A: Licenses

The structure for this whitepaper was inspired by and patterned after the Alice Buys A Car User Scenario³ in the HyperLedger Indy Getting Started Guide for Enterprise Architects and Developers (INDY GSG-EA) (https://github.com/mwherman2000/indy-gsg-ea/blob/master/python/doc/getting_started_enterprise.md#scenario-alice-buys-a-car).

³ Alice is Erin's sister.

USER SCENARIO: ERIN BUYS A CAR

The Erin Buys a Car Self-Sovereign Identity user story is described in the sections that follow.

User Scenario

1. Erin Amanda Lee Anderson is a fictional Person who lives in Sovron City in the province of Sovronia in Canada. Sovron City is a fictional city within the fictional Canadian province of Sovronia (province code SO).



Figure 1. Erin lives in Sovron City, Sovronia, Canada

(Credit: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Political_map_of_Canada.svg)

2. The province of Sovronia is the *local jurisdiction* for this user scenario.
3. Sovronia is a BYOSI province: *Bring Your Own Self-Sovereignty* province. Citizens of Sovronia are very accustomed to acquiring an additional Self-Sovereign Identity as required to use Sovronia's citizen services as well as acquire many high-value assets where the jurisdiction requires a formal transfer of title as part of the asset purchase; for example, buying a car, buying a boat, buying a house, etc.
4. Everything in Sovronia is officially identified by a Self-Sovereign Identity (or Delegated Self-Sovereign Identity): Persons, Organizations, and Things.
5. For example, Erin owns and has control over the usage of one or more (likely several) Self-Sovereign Identities where Erin is the Subject.
6. Erin is the Digital Identity Owner (and, by default, undelegated Digital Identity Controller) of these identities.

7. Each uniquely identifiable Thing (aka non-fungible entity (NFE)) such as a car, refrigerator, original artwork, a pet, a boat, a house, etc. has one or more Delegated Self-Sovereign Identities associated with it where a Person such as Erin is the Digital Identity Controller of these identities.
8. Because the Subject of these identities is a Thing (NFE), these identities only have a Digital Identity Controller; they do not have a Digital Identity Owner.
9. In Sovronia, there are several reputable providers of Decentralized Digital Identity Services.
10. One of these Decentralized Digital Identity Services Providers is SOVRON who issues Decentralized Identifiers using the well-known *SVRN* Digital Identifier Method.
11. A Digital Identity (and, in turn, a Decentralized Identity, and a Self-Sovereign Identity) is composed of:
 - a. A Digital Identifier, and
 - b. Associated Digital Identity Data (aka a collection of Claims aka name-value pairs)

User Story

12. Erin wants to buy a car - a baby blue Lotus Coupe - from Carter's Cars.
13. To purchase the car from Carter's Cars, Erin needs to:
 - a. Acquire a Driver's License valid in Erin's local jurisdiction (Erin doesn't currently have a Driver's License that is valid in Sovronia).
 - b. Purchase and accept possession of the Car.
14. To acquire a Driver's License valid in Erin's local jurisdiction, Erin needs to:
 - a. Acquire a Self-Sovereign Identity (SSI) to be used as part of her Driver's License – to relate or key the Driver's License to Erin personally.
 - b. Erin will serve as the Digital Identity Owner of the SSI credential used for Erin's Driver's License.
 - c. As a Person resident in Sovronia, Erin has the right to exclusively and permanently exert control over the usage of the SSI's Personal Digital Identifier and, independently, the usage of any associated Personal Identity Data associated with the SSI's Personal Digital Identifier.
15. Before taking the Driver's Tests, Erin needs to acquire and hold the Personal Decentralized Identifier (PDID) to be used when the province issues Erin's new Sovronia Driver's License. The Personal Decentralized Identifier is issued to Erin in the form of a Self-Sovereign Identity.
16. The Self-Sovereign Identity is composed of a Personal Decentralized Identifier (PDID) plus Personal Digital Identity Data associated with the identifier.
17. An example of a PDID issued by SOVRON for Erin (that conforms with the *SVRN* Digital Identifier Method specification) appears below.

`DID:SVRN:PERSON:04900EEF-38E7-487E-8D6F-09D6C95D9D3E`

18. Erin passes both her written and practical Driver's Tests and is issued a new Sovronia Driver's License⁴. Erin's PDID appears across the bottom of the Driver's License (Operator's License).



Figure 2. Erin's New Sovronia Driver's License (Operator's License)

(Credit: Government of Alberta, Canada)

19. To purchase a car, Erin needs to acquire a Delegated Self-Sovereign Identity for the car Erin wants to purchase.
- Because the car is not a legal entity, the car cannot exert control over the usage of the car's SSI Personal Digital Identifier and, independently, the usage of any associated Personal Identity Data associated with the car's SSI Personal Digital Identifier. Hence, the car cannot serve as the Digital Identity Owner of its own (delegated) SSI credential.
 - In place of this, Erin will serve as the Digital Identity Controller for the car's SSI credential.
20. Before closing on the purchase of the car and taking possession, Erin needs to acquire and hold a Decentralized Identifier (DID) to be used to uniquely identify the car when the province issues a new Sovronia Vehicle Registration Certificate to Erin binding ownership of the car to Erin as a person; that is, binding ownership ("controllership") of the car (via the car's DID in the car's Delegated Self-Sovereign Identity) to Erin (via Erin's PDID found in Erin's Self-Sovereign Identity). The Decentralized Identifier is issued in the form of a Delegated Self-Sovereign Identity for the car.
21. The Delegated Self-Sovereign Identity is composed of a Decentralized Identifier (DID) plus Digital Identity Data associated with the identifier.

⁴ Side Note: Is the photo of a Driver's License a Subject or a Credential? As pictured, it's a Subject; that is, a Thing. The digital analog/representation of a Driver's License is a Digital Subject. The attributes of the Driver's License can be used as Claims. These claims can be composed into one or more Credentials.
(Credit: <https://twitter.com/mwherman2000/status/1191361058167853056>)

- 22. One of the Claims (name-value pairs) that makes up the car’s Digital Identity Data identifies Erin as the Digital Identity Controller using Erin’s PDID.
- 23. An example of a DID issued by SOVRON to Erin for the car (that conforms with the SVRN Digital Identifier Method specification) appears below.

DID:SVRN:VEHICLE:SCCLHHSC6ZHD20331

- 24. Erin purchases the car and is issued a new Sovronia Vehicle Registration Certificate. The Vehicle Registration Certificate verifiably binds the car’s DID from its Delegated Self-Sovereign Identity to Erin’s PDID from Erin’s Self-Sovereign Identity.

VEHICLE DESCRIPTION VEHICLE MAKE Lotus		SECTION 2 YEAR 1962	VEHICLE ACCESS CODE (VAC) 02332-1508	Sovronia Validation Number 86030661615		VALIDATION NUMBER APPEARING ON YOUR TAB
MODEL OR SERIES Exige Coupe	BODY COLOR M. Blue	FUEL Gas	Vehicle Registration Certificate			
VEHICLE STYLE 2 door	LICENCED MASS kg	SECTION 1				
VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (VIN) SCCLHHSC6ZHD20331	UNIT NUMBER	LICENCE PLATE NO. ABCD1234	CLASS 3	LICENCED MASS kg	EXPIRY DATE (Y/M/D) 1986/04/30	
PRO-RATE NUMBER	REGULATIONS	REGISTRATION NUMBER 044-457158	TYPE OF OPERATION Passenger			
SPECIAL CONDITIONS	BUS CAPACITY	IF LEASED VEHICLE, LEASING COMPANY NAME AND MVID **ISSUED**				
MOTOR HOME SUPERSTRUCTURE / MODEL OR SERIES	SECONDARY PARTS DESCRIPTION	NAME & ADDRESS OF REGISTRANT(S) ANDERSON, Erin Amanda Jane		TYPE: INDIVIDUAL CLIENT'S MVID 0095-23341		
SERIAL NUMBER	LICENCE PLATE NO. ABCD1234	CLASS 3	3 Floor Brownlee Bldg			
YEAR	EXPIRY DATE (Y/M/D) 1986/04/30	10365 97 St NW				
SIGNATURE(S)		MOTOR VEHICLES DIVISION ISSUING OFFICE		Sovrin City, SO T5J 3W7		
THIS CERTIFICATE TO BE SIGNED BY THE REGISTRANT(S) AND MUST BE CARRIED IN THE VEHICLE AND PRESENTED ON DEMAND OF A PEACE OFFICER.		0000-00521		VALIDATED		
Sovronia		1985/06/26		DID:SVRN:VEHICLE:SCCLHHSC6ZHD20331		
REGISTRAR MOTOR VEHICLES DIVISION				DID:SVRN:PERSON:04900EEF-38E7-487E-8D6F-09D6C95D9D3E		

Figure 3. Erin’s New Sovronia Vehicle Registration Certificate

- 25. Erin drives off in Erin’s newly acquired Baby Blue Lotus Coupe. Below is a photo of Erin’s new Baby Blue Lotus Coupe.



Figure 4. Erin's Baby Blue Lotus Coupe

(Credit: <https://www.classic.com/veh/1962-lotus-elite-1318-LWYXrkn/>)

TDW GLOSSARY: DIGITAL IDENTITY NEIGHBORHOOD

The following TDW Glossary neighborhood lists all of the key terms used in this user scenario and depicts all (or most) of their inter-relationships.

TDW Glossary 0.17: Erin Buys a Car Neighborhood

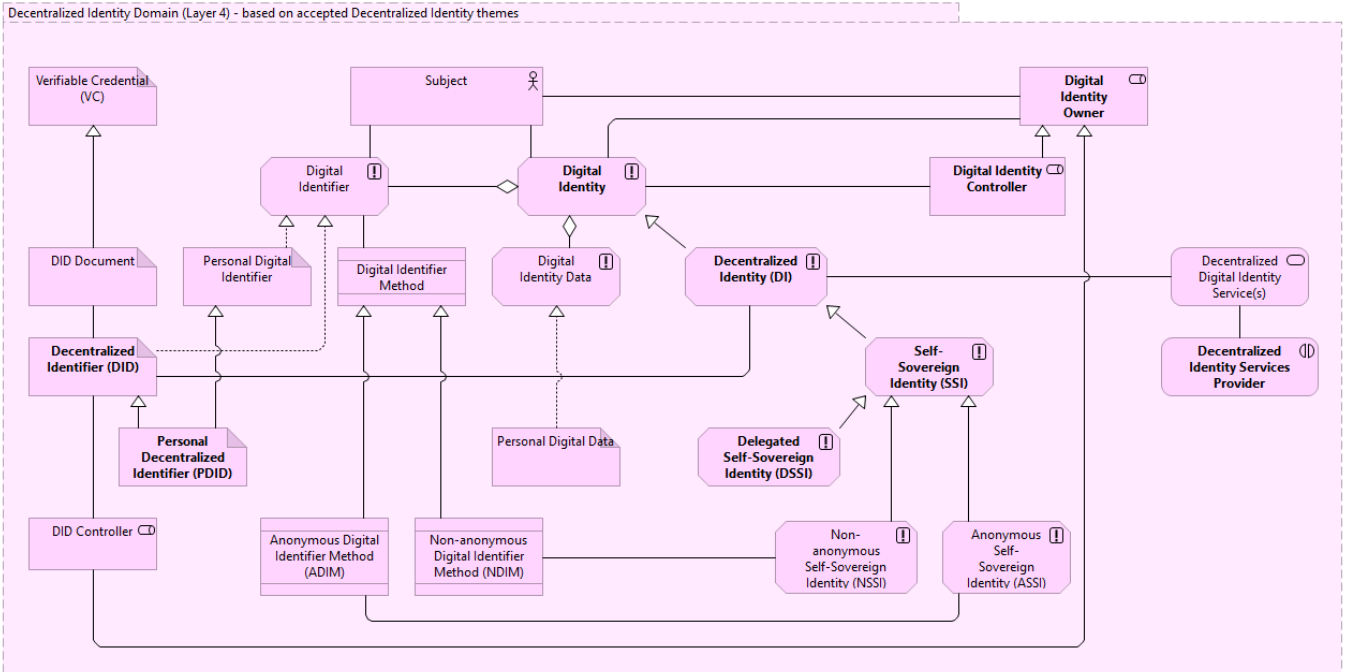


Figure 5. TDW Glossary: Digital Identity Neighborhood

CONCLUSION

If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants.

[Issac Newton, 1675]

The purpose of this document is to describe a simple, practical, and easy-to-understand user scenario explaining Self-Sovereign Identity as defined in the TDW Glossary⁵.

The next steps are to publish this user scenario for broader distribution, feedback, and refinement.

Acknowledgments

This user scenario document was inspired by Steve Capell in a March 20, 2021, W3C CCG mailing list message where Steve stated:

However, sadly, I don't think it will help the policymaker that is not used to reading meta models. I usually have more success with storyboards that contrast two architectures with real examples. Policymakers don't need to "understand the architecture". They need to be able to conceptualize how it works through examples so that they can understand the policy impacts and opportunities.

Hopefully, this is the beginning of an acceptable response.

The responsibility for any errors or omissions lies with me alone.

⁵ TDW Glossary. *What is SSI?* (Credit: <https://hyperonomy.com/2021/02/01/ssi-unconscious-contractions/>)



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