

No Keyboard

StrikeForce Technologies Inc., an Edison, N.J., software vendor, is offering an identity verification product that lets users enter passwords without a computer keyboard.

Centralized Out-of-Band Authentication System, introduced Thursday, asks customers logging on to a Web site to give their passwords over the phone by voice, the phone's keypad, or a PDA. The system helps users dodge some of today's most popular methods of identity theft, StrikeForce said.

One is "phishing," in which a culprit posing as a bank sends authentic-looking e-mails in bulk that steer customers to impostor Web sites where they are tricked into entering such personal information as account numbers, passwords, or Social Security numbers.

Out-of-band authorization can thwart phishing by shifting the log-in process away from the computer, StrikeForce said. It has been used by some corporations but has not been widely adopted at the consumer level, the company said.

StrikeForce said users are also protected from a popular identity-theft technique that uses a "keylogger," a program or device that records and transmit keystrokes, such as passwords.

StrikeForce was formed in December 2002 through the merger of Netlabs.com and Strike Force Technical Services Inc.