Solving the RETS Credential Re-Use Conundrum

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Background

- MLS Staff: brokers charged for unused feeds – terminate the feed?

- Vendor: only using 1 credential of many provided. Why download same data multiple times, 1 for each credential? Terribly inefficient for everyone!

- Issue 1: If MLS Staff turns off the 1 credential being used (subscriber inactive or other reason) other Vendor customers disrupted.

- Issue 2: Credential re-use contrary to most data license agreements. (Why?)

MLSs: Don't Like Re-Use

1. Credential re-use takes **authorization control** out of the hands of the MLS. Vendor may accidentally service inactive MLS subscriber using data obtained using another subscriber's credentials.

2. May defeat **opt-outs** for individual uses.

3. Vendor may accidentally use superset data download inappropriately (VOW field in IDX).

4. Credential re-use partially defeats the use of **data seeding**, i.e., trying to figure out where exactly there's a data leak.

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Options for Addressing the Authorization Control Issue

- Vendor logs in using each credential each day to check validity of use – but downloads data just once. *Doesn't solve the disruption issue (one credential used being deactivated)*

- MLSs give vendor limited roster access to check for validity of use for each customer. *Doesn't solve the disruption issue.*

- RETS server implementation: one : many relationship of vendor : subscriber login credentials. If no MLS users are active and related to a vendor credential, the vendor credential will not provide data access.

  - RETS standard change: function to return list for all authorized specific MLS users and uses based on a vendor single login credential. Note: This will directly reflect the kind of master agreements and addendums that many MLSs have with these vendors already.
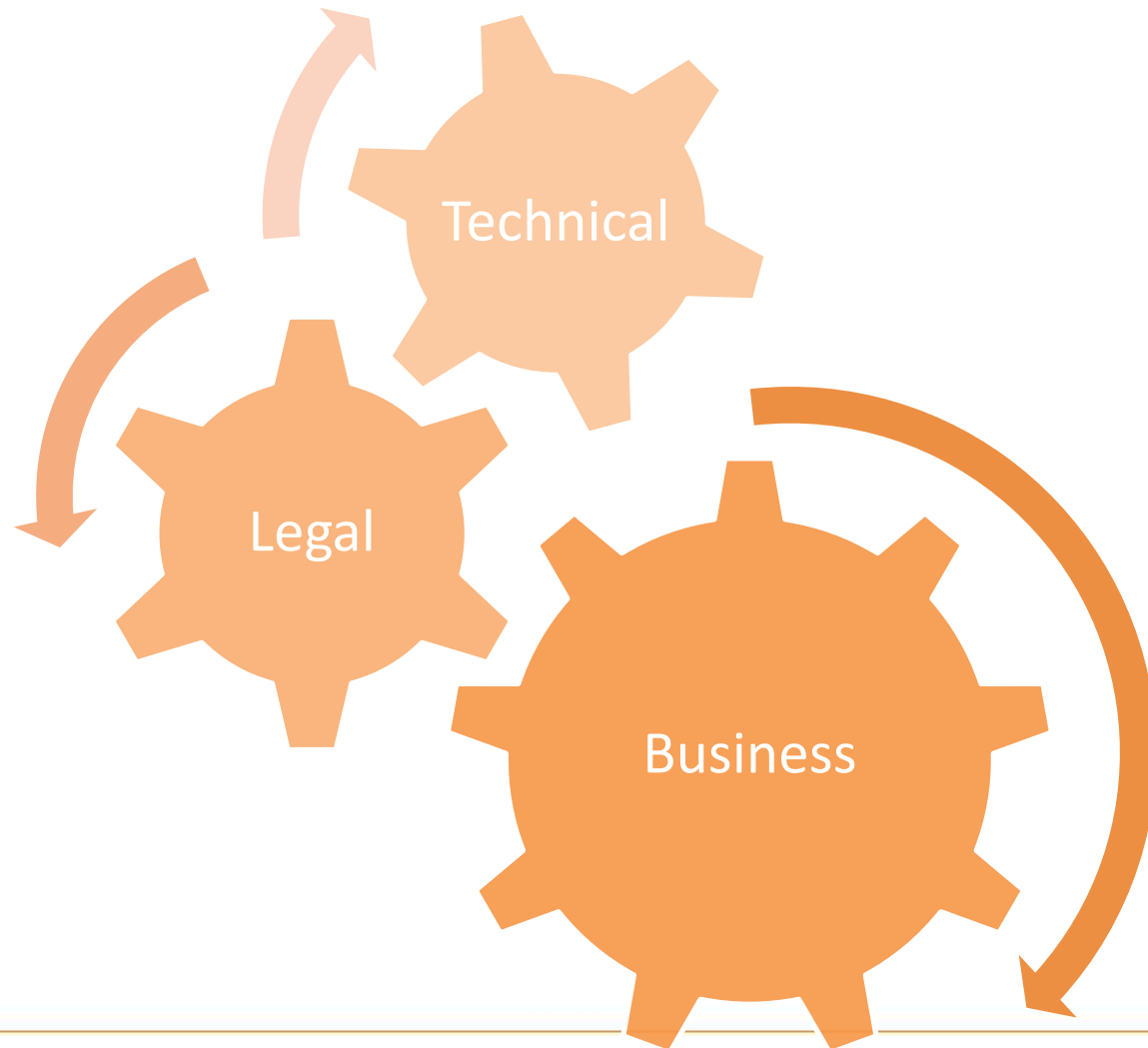
Superset misuse / opt-out misuse Issue

a. Vendors just 'take care' and MLSs audit implementations?
b. RETS standard and server-side function enhancements.
    a. Additional usage opting information can be passed to vendors (i.e. no AVM use)?
    b. Server-side function could be created to efficiently determine whether several credentials provide different data for a query – without downloading and comparing the data to the data on the client side. Knowing that different credential use would provide different data may make it easier for a vendor to know whether re-use is appropriate or not.

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Seeding issue

Data seeding is only of use in a very limited subset of illegitimate use detections.

No way to *fully* resolve issue the data seeding issue while allowing credential re-use, but tracking an issue down to who received the feed is still possible. Vendors just need to cooperate with any seeding investigation to help figure out what specific usage is involved.

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RETS Credential Reuse is Not Just a Tech Issue

Discussion?

THANK YOU!