



Going Deep with Social Login: A New Analysis

We looked at the data behind sign-ins across Auth0 and Okta to show the ins and outs of social login.



Contents

Summary and Key Findings	03
Introduction	04
Why choose social login?	05
What are some challenges with social login?	06
Observations from the data	06
Auth0 insights: Google tops the social login charts	07
Okta insights: employees use social login too	11
Making social login work	15
Final thoughts	16
Methodology	16

Summary and Key Findings

The way we login into websites and apps is changing. Instead of time-consuming, mandatory registrations, developers are now offering social login options. Social logins allow users to sign in with their existing credentials from social media platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter, or with companies like Google, Apple, or even Salesforce, instead of creating a new username and password. This streamlines user authentication, among other benefits.

Of course, there are always pros and cons. To better understand the shifting world of login options, we decided to look into a month's worth of logins worldwide across both Okta and Auth0, fully anonymized. How popular are social logins? Which types of social logins were used the most? What can this data tell us about user behavior? Future trends?

Here's what we found:

- **Google Sign-in was the most popular social login method by a wide margin.** Across the Auth0 and Okta platforms, Google accounted for more than 73% of social logins and more than 68% of monthly active users using social login.
- **Content and audience dictate preference and use.** For example, consumer applications tend to favor Facebook and Apple, while B2B SaaS applications tend to favor Salesforce. Developer-oriented sites tend to favor Github.
- **Social login also has traction in workforce identity scenarios.** Enterprises sometimes use social login as external identity providers or as a tool to migrate to different identity providers.

- **Users continue to choose social login.** Across the Auth0 platform, social login was used in 14% of logins, and 25% of monthly active users used social login at least once. Despite the emerging use of social logins, a traditional username and password login is still the most common choice with 62% of monthly user logins and 60% of monthly active users.

Introduction

Your newest user-to-be clicks the “sign up” button. They’re excited to start using your product. But what happens when they find a clunky and dated user interface during this first, crucial introduction? Rather than create yet another username and password to track, they may shift their attention elsewhere and a would-be user becomes a lost customer.

Making sign-up and account creation fast and frictionless gives your organization a better way to turn would-be users into engaged users. And one way to do that is via social login.

Social login is a form of single sign-on (SSO) that lets people use their existing social network login information to sign into third-party websites and applications. And it’s not just big social media brands; widely-used services like Apple, GitHub, and Salesforce have also adapted themselves to be social login providers, giving dozens of options. Social login simplifies login for end-users and provides reliable user data to web developers.

Why choose social login?

- **Reduce sign-up friction and increase registrations.** According to a Web Hosting Buzz survey, 86% of people report being bothered by having to create new accounts on websites.¹ Social login increases registrations and conversions by decreasing the number of usernames and passwords users have to manage.
- **Improve user-login experience.** Users often forget their usernames and/or passwords, especially when logging into infrequently visited websites. Social login makes the login experience easier and faster by allowing users to use familiar social logins. Social login is a frictionless method to access websites and apps.² Future logins become faster, too, taking only one-click if your users remain logged in to their social accounts.
- **Reliable demographic data.** People tend to keep their social networks more up to date than their application registrations, which means that getting data from their social connections strategically enriches their profiles. You're less likely to have people registering with "fake" or temporary email addresses. Less frequently, social network providers may share additional information like location, interests, birthday, and friends that you can use to target users with personalized content.³

1. <https://auth0.com/blog/improving-login-with-facebook-user-experience-with-native-login/>
2. <https://auth0.com/case-studies/arduino>
3. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_login

What are some challenges with social login?

- **Blocked social network sites can hinder access.** Social networking services may be blocked within certain libraries, schools, or workplaces for productivity reasons, or in certain countries due to censorship. That means these users also lose access to the third-party websites and apps that use social login.³
- **Fraud, security, and privacy concerns.** Social login opens the door to bigger damage if social network accounts are compromised. Some people may associate social login with social media's targeted advertising, or worry that social login shares too much of their data with limited user consent.³
- **Users may not remember how they signed up.** Like most of us, your customers use lots of different websites. One survey found the average consumer has as many as 100 different accounts.⁴ It's easy to forget which websites use which logins! Although social login means users get to avoid creating yet another password, it does mean they have to remember what social accounts they signed up with.

Observations from the data

When you build websites and apps, you have several options for authenticating and authorizing users: traditional email/password only, email/password and one or two social sign-in methods, or the full range of social logins.

4. <https://tech.co/password-managers/how-many-passwords-average-person>

Let's take a look at the choices that were made on both Auth0 and Okta to glean unique insights into login preferences. Broadly speaking, we found the content and audience dictated which types of social login providers were favored.

Auth0 insights: Google tops the social login charts

We pulled Auth0 data from March 2022. While username and password login is still the most common login choice, accounting for 62% of monthly user logins and 60% of monthly active users. Social login was used in 14% of logins. Across the board, 25% of monthly active users used social login at least once.

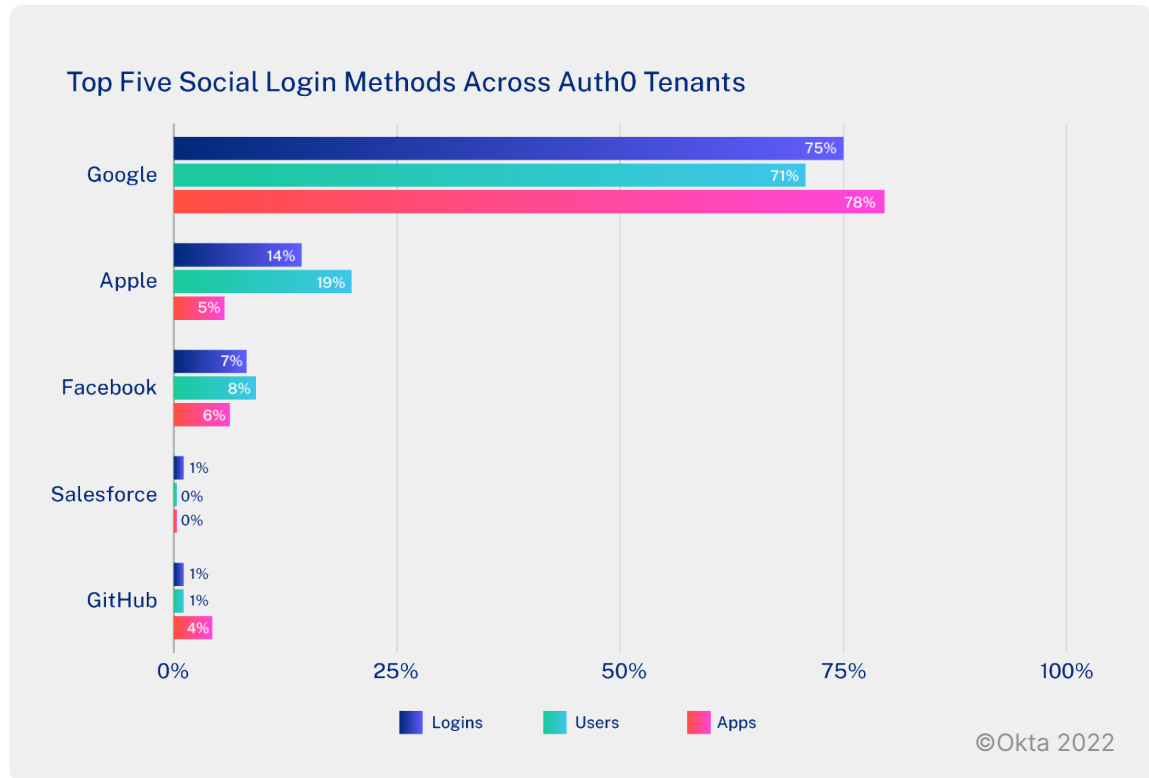
Auth0 offers **more than 50 types of social connections** as well as **generic OAuth2 authorization servers**. As shown in the Auth0 tenants graph below, Google was the most popular social login method by a wide margin. Google accounted for 75% of social logins, 71% of monthly active users using social login, and 78% of apps using social login.

Apple was the second most popular social login method. This is significant considering sign-in with Apple was just released in September 2019, with the note that Apple requires apps using any third-party social logins to also offer sign-in with Apple as an option in order to be listed in its App Store.⁵ Sign-in with Apple's privacy-conscious design may also help with the adoption.

The third, fourth, and fifth most popular social login methods were Facebook, Salesforce, and GitHub.

5. <https://developer.apple.com/app-store/review/guidelines/>

Top five social login methods across Auth0 tenants



Next, for each social login method, we analyzed the top 10 websites or apps within the Auth0 dataset to understand social login preference and use by the types of websites or apps. Here's how that broke down:

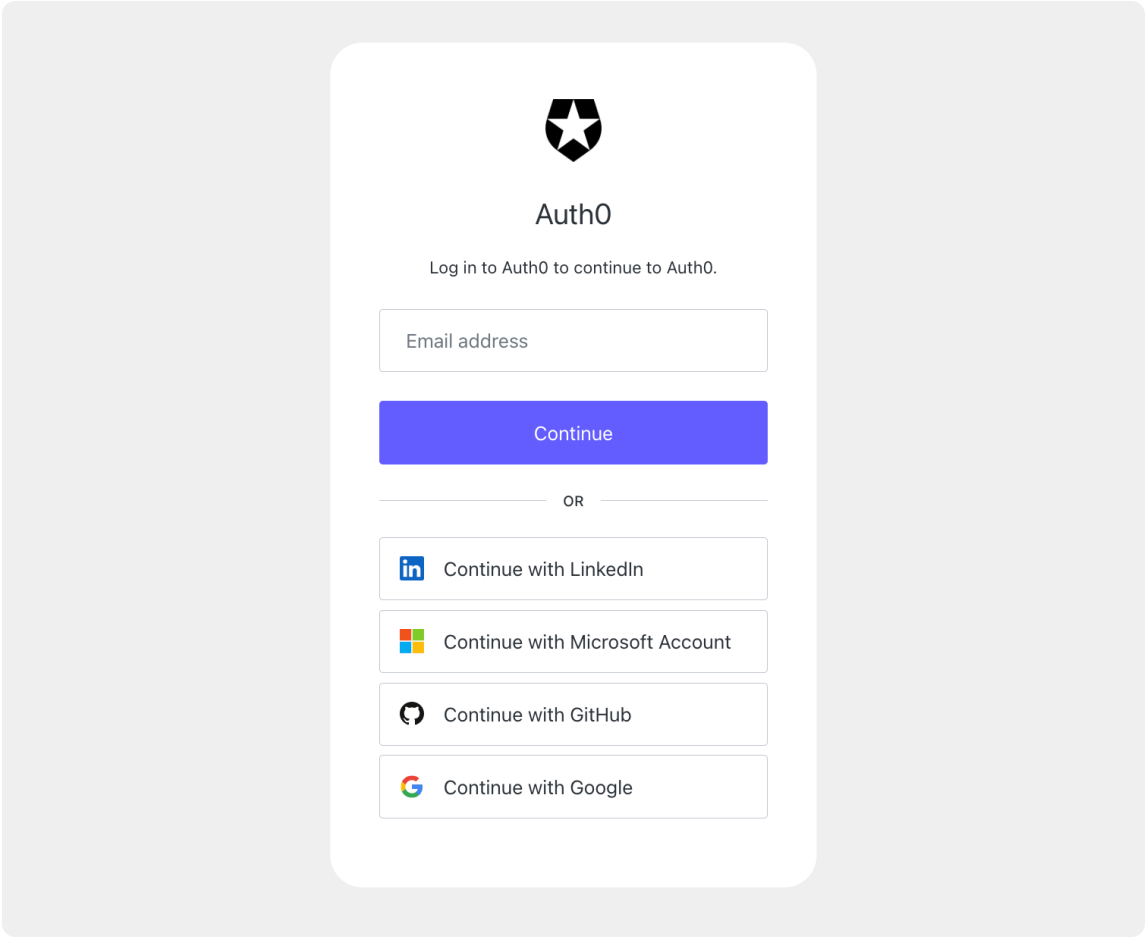
- Google sign-in was a popular social login choice for almost any type of site or app. Fewer than 6% of websites or apps that offered social login and had monthly active logins didn't offer a Google sign-in option.
- Facebook login and sign-in with Apple were mainly offered by consumer websites or apps.

- Almost all the top 10 websites or apps with the most active Salesforce logins were B2B software companies, some with significant product integrations with Salesforce.
- All top 10 websites or apps with the most active GitHub logins were either developer-focused services, like Auth0.com, or developer learning websites.

Our quantitative findings are consistent with previous qualitative observations that social login methods that fit the needs and preferences of the websites get the most adoption.^{6,7,8,9}

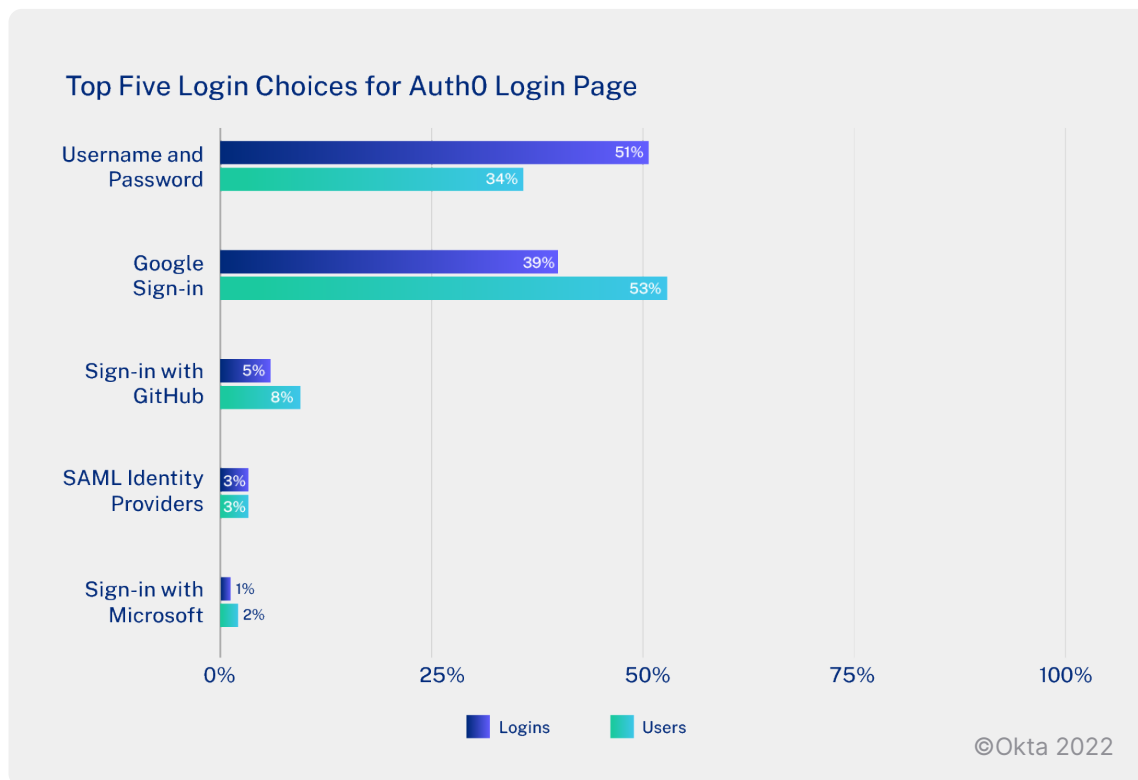
The Auth0 login page offers username and password login, LinkedIn sign-in, sign-in with Microsoft, sign-in with GitHub, Google sign-in, as well as enterprise identity provider login.

6. <https://www.indiehackers.com/product/startday/google-login-vs-regular-email-almost-50-used-g--LzVsMo61s3b85ZRAfLf>
7. <https://www.indiehackers.com/forum/is-including-an-option-to-sign-in-with-google-worth-it-for-saas-companies-d61e785d0b?commentId=-LEbNqBz11JuTdv39Pra>
8. <https://www.indiehackers.com/post/social-login-do-users-prefer-google-twitter-or-facebook-here-is-what-we-ve-learned-on-cruip-com-9e98cc9bbc>
9. <https://www.indiehackers.com/post/social-login-do-users-prefer-google-twitter-or-facebook-here-is-what-we-ve-learned-on-cruip-com-9e98cc9bbc>



We analyzed the top five Auth0 login choices as shown in the Auth0 login page graph. Username and password login had the most login activity, with those users logging in an average of 3.7 times during the month. Google sign-in had the most monthly active users. On average, the users who used Google sign-in logged in 1.8 times during the month. GitHub was the #3 login method since Auth0 is a developer-focused identity platform, and those users logged in an average of 1.8 times during the month.

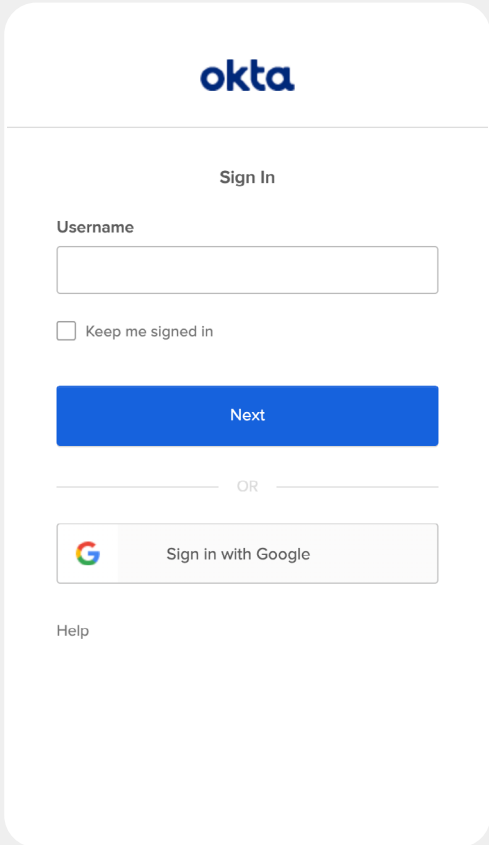
Top five login choices for the Auth0 login page



Okta insights: employees use social login too

We analyzed social login usage data from Okta products from March 2022 as well. The Okta identity platform serves individual customers and large-scale workforces. Although social login is often thought of as an option for consumer sites and applications, our data showed that social login also has traction in workforce identity scenarios.

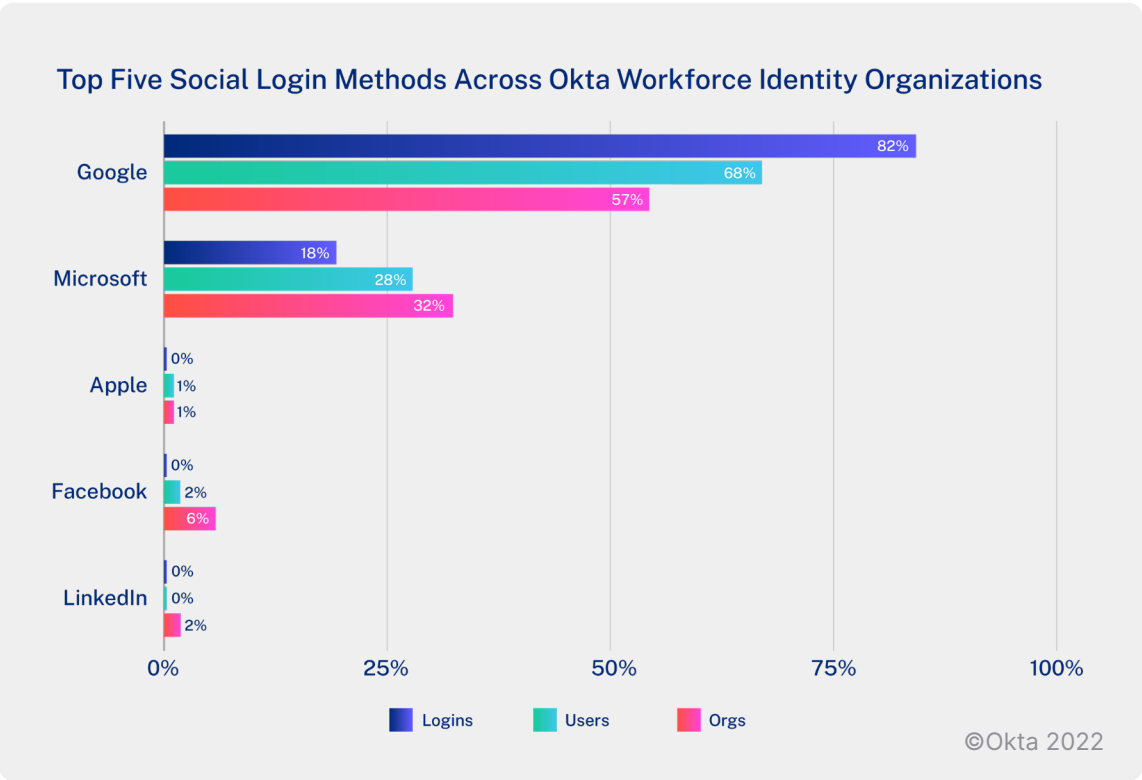
Enterprises sometimes use social login from external Identity Providers (IdPs) to allow employees, contractors, and partners to access corporate resources. Workforce social login can also be used as a migration tool. Some Okta customers start with social login-type IdPs to provide SSO solutions. As they grow bigger with more complicated workforce identity use cases, they decide to choose Okta as their IdP. By enabling third-party social login for our customers, Okta offers an easy migration path from the third-party providers to Okta as their primary IdP. In both cases, admins can easily add social login options to Okta login pages:



The image shows a screenshot of the Okta Sign In page. At the top is the Okta logo. Below it is the text "Sign In". There is a label "Username" above a text input field. Below the input field is a checkbox labeled "Keep me signed in". Below that is a blue button labeled "Next". Below the button is a horizontal line with the text "OR" in the center. Below the line is a button with the Google logo and the text "Sign in with Google". At the bottom left is a link labeled "Help".

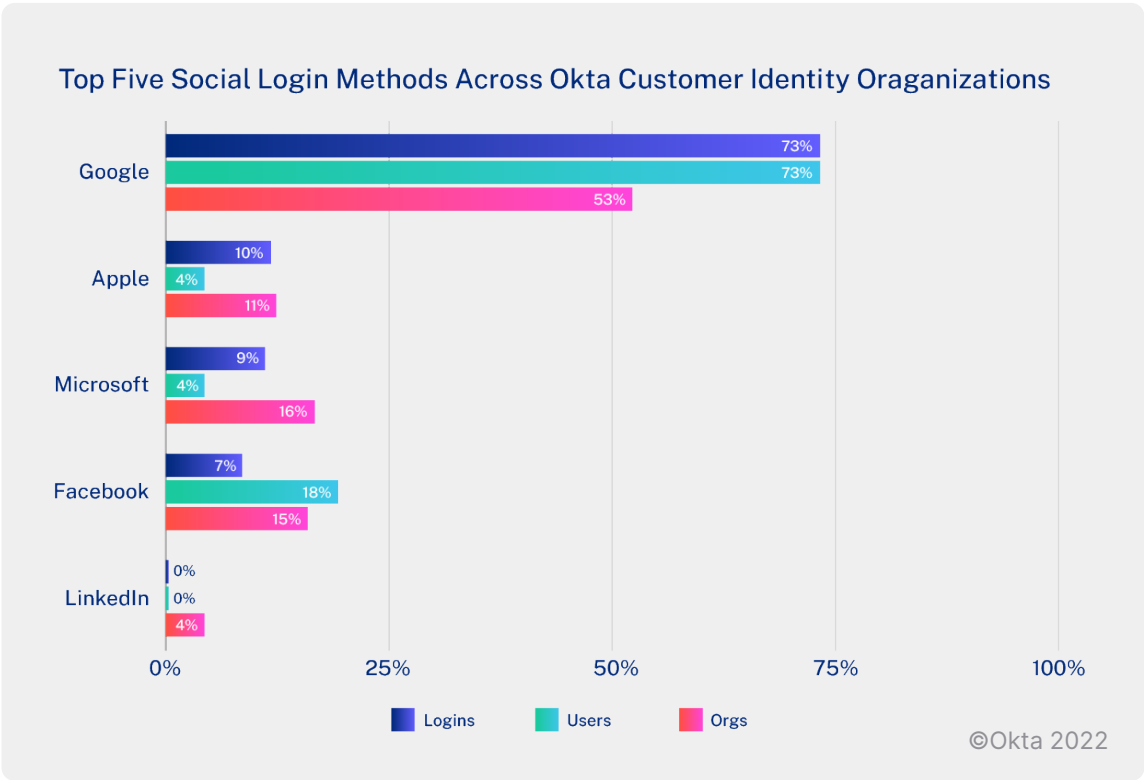
Okta workforce social login data shown in the Okta workforce identity organizations graph indicates that Google sign-in was the most popular social login provider. Google accounted for 82% of social logins, 68% of monthly active social login users, and 57% of orgs with monthly active social logins. The second most popular social login option is sign-in with Microsoft.

Top five social login methods across Okta workforce identity organizations



Okta customer identity social login data shown in the Okta customer identity organizations graph indicates that Google sign-in was also the most popular social login IdP. Google login accounted for 73% of social logins and 73% of monthly active social login users. The second- and third-most popular in terms of logins were sign-in with Apple and sign-in with Microsoft.

Top five social login methods across Okta customer identity organizations



It’s clear from the data that even in a workforce- or employee-setting, social login has its uses, allowing employees, contractors, and partners to get easy access to corporate resources.

Making social login work

If all this data is making you think about implementing social login, there are considerations:

- **Allay privacy concerns.** When providing social login options, organizations have the ability to include privacy-forward features, such as adding consent forms that explicitly describe what data your sites or apps collect.¹⁰ Consent forms help ease user privacy concerns, and in some cases, consent is required both by government regulations and the social login providers' own developer policies.^{11,12,13}
- **Enhance privacy even more.** You can also introduce privacy-conscious elements to your social login flow. Sign-in with Apple can authenticate users to apps while sharing pseudonyms with third parties through features such as "Hide My Email."¹⁴
- **Offer some non-social login options.** Social login shouldn't be your only login option. A combination of social login, password login, passwordless login, and/or enterprise login¹⁵ will ensure your sites or apps are accessible through various methods. The right balance will depend on your product and user preference. Offer choice without creating a "NASCAR problem", i.e., a login form with too many sign-in buttons, which makes users feel distracted and overwhelmed, a reference to a covered-in-decals race car.¹⁶

10. <https://support.google.com/googleapi/answer/6158849#zippy=%2Cuser-consent>

11. <https://developers.google.com/terms/api-services-user-data-policy>

12. <https://developer.apple.com/app-store/user-privacy-and-data-use>

13. <https://developers.facebook.com/terms>

14. https://www.apple.com/privacy/docs/Sign_in_with_Apple_White_Paper_Nov_2019.pdf

15. <https://auth0.com/docs/authenticate/identity-providers/view-connections>

16. https://indieweb.org/NASCAR_problem

- **Take the burden of login management off your users.** User account linking allows people to connect accounts from different identity providers, so that they can authenticate from their linked accounts and be associated with the same user profiles.^{17,18} People can also opt to use a browser extension to remember their information.¹⁹

Final thoughts

Our latest dive into the data shows that social login is a preferred login choice for customers, employees, partners, and contractors.

By eliminating the account creation burden, social login can streamline onboarding, signup, and return visits. After all, happy users who feel like their needs are acknowledged and met are more likely to become long-term customers.

Methodology

We looked at social login data across both Auth0 and Okta products for the month of March 2022. During the month, Auth0 and Okta enabled millions of users to log in with social login, and supported thousands of websites and apps with a wide range of social login methods. Our analysis was based on the anonymized and aggregated data from countries around the world.

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17. <https://auth0.com/docs/manage-users/user-accounts/user-account-linking>
18. <https://developer.okta.com/docs/concepts/identity-providers/#account-linking-and-just-in-time-provisioning>
19. <https://techengage.com/how-to-remember-social-login-details/>



Auth0 provides a platform to authenticate, authorize, and secure access for applications, devices, and users. Security and development teams rely on Auth0's simplicity, extensibility, and expertise to make identity work for everyone. Safeguarding more than 4.5 billion login transactions each month, Auth0 secures identities so innovators can innovate, and empowers global enterprises to deliver trusted, superior digital experiences to their customers around the world.

For more information, visit <https://auth0.com> or follow [@auth0](https://twitter.com/auth0) on Twitter.

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