

How to bypass authentication for specific user agents?



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Contributed by Josh Wolfer and Siddharth Rajpathak, Cisco TAC Engineers.

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Question:

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How to bypass authentication for specific user agents on Cisco Web Security Appliance (WSA)?

Environment: Cisco Web Security appliance (WSA), All AsyncOS versions 7.x and above

Bypassing authentication for a particular application using its user agent, is a two step process.

Step 1: Determine the user agent string used by the application

Determine the user agent used by an application

1. For standard applications, you should be able to find the user agent string on the below websites

<http://www.user-agents.org/>

<http://www.useragentstring.com/pages/useragentstring.php>

<http://www.infosyssec.com/infosyssec/security/useragentstrings.shtml>

2. You could also determine the user agent string from access logs on the appliance. Please follow the steps below:

- Browser to *GUI* -> "*System Administration*" -> "*Log Subscription*" -> '*Access logs*'
- Add *%u* in the Custom fields
- Submit and commit the changes
- Grep or tail the access logs based on client IP address
- The user agent string should be located at end of the access log line

Example: For Chrome browser, you could see the user agent string as Mozilla/5.0 (Windows; U; Windows NT 5.1; en-US) AppleWebKit/525.13 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/0.X.Y.Z Safari/525.13.)

Step 2: Configure WSA to bypass authentication for the user agent strings

Bypass Authentication for user agents

1. Choose "*Web Security Manager*" -> "*Identities*" and click on "Add Identity"
 - ◆ Name : User Agent AuthExempt Identity
 - ◆ Insert Above : Set to order 1
 - ◆ Define Members by Subnet : Blank (or You could also define a IP address range/subnet)
 - ◆ Define Members by Authentication: No Authentication Required
 - ◆ Advanced -> "User Agents" : Click on "None Selected" and under Custom user Agents: Specify the User Agent string
2. Choose "*Web Security Manager*" -> "*Access Policies*" and click on "Add Policy."
 - ◆ Policy Name : Auth Exemption for User Agents
 - ◆ Insert Above Policy : Set to Order 1
 - ◆ Identity Policy : "User Agent AuthExempt Identity"
 - ◆ Advanced : None

The above configuration should exempt authentication for the specified user agents.

Please note that the access policies would still filter (based on URL categories) and scan (Mcafee, Webroot) traffic as per the access policy setup.