Can FirstSearch perform user authentication?

Applies to
- FirstSearch

Answer
FirstSearch does not contain an authentication component. However, some libraries authenticate users when they enter the library's environment.

Library patrons sometimes request access to library services from remote locations. Libraries need to be able to authenticate and authorize access to their services for these remotely located patrons. Proxy servers and similar mechanisms allow libraries to perform these functions, but not without intensive resource commitments (time spent on setup and maintenance, money invested in equipment, etc.). Circulation system patron authentication for the FirstSearch service, through the use of the NISO Circulation Interchange Protocol (NCIP), allows library patrons to gain appropriate access to the FirstSearch service from any location. NCIP is an approved NISO standard that defines messaging between circulation systems, ILL systems, or broker applications. NCIP has many applications, only one of which is authenticating patrons for access to an online service.

The FirstSearch service currently allows manual logon, IP address recognition, scripted access, IP referer, and Athens authentication, none of which provides a complete access solution for all remote users. The NCIP-based patron authentication feature, while it does not replace these existing authentication methods, complements and supplements them.

For more information on NCIP authentication, see NCIP access.