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"Biometrics are quite useful in pharma industry"

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Q: What is Iris technology? What is its relevance in context of biotech, medical and pharma industry?

Iris recognition technology uses random textures that are visible in the eye, using the eye to confirm someone's identity. Unlike voice, fingerprints & facial structure, iris patterns have far more random patterns. IRIS recognition technology holds the highest CAGR due to highest accuracy. A study by Ernst & Young says that the Indian biometric market will grow to $748 million before 2018. Compounded annual growth for biometric market will be somewhere around 27 percent globally and 47 percent for India and that's purely because Indian government has adapted to the biometric modality.

The technology is quite useful in an environment where there is continuous use of PPE - Personal Protective Equipment. A

PPE would ideally include a mask or a respirator along with a head cap, hazmat suit and gloves. A gloved hand cannot be used on a finger print reader. Similarly, a masked face will not be detected on a face reader. Thus even when an individual is geared in a full PPE, all he needs to do is to scan his iris and get access. Moreover what is important to note here is the fact that even if someone decides to don a PPE and disguise and choose someone else's identity to breach security and get access, it won't work as the iris scanner will only grant access to the actual person and not the counterfeit intruder.

Q: What are its benefits vis a vis other biometric solutions available presently?

Most of the biometric methods used for security systems are outdated. Voice, fingerprint and facial recognition methods are easy to fake and have very low accuracy rate compared to iris recognition technology. Speaking in terms of the software, accuracy rate of the iris recognition technology is 1:15 lakh, thumb print - 1:10,000, Apple touch pad - 1:50000, which means the chances of error are 1 in 1.5 million.

Now let's look at the current biometric trend. Between finger print and iris technology, the government would prefer the later over the former due to a number of factors. The government had performed a pilot run on finger print technology and the results were dissatisfactory. Since 70 percent of the population in India is labor class and most of them use their fingers to do any form of field or manual work finger print authentication does not really pass the test. More over finger print patterns also tend to change over a period of time.

However in comparison, the irises in the eyes remain untouched and hence their patterns remain unchanged throughout life. This area of the eye is non contactable and does not require any special maintenance. So let's say someone who has just finished work has to scan his fingers on a finger print scanner, in such case he will have to touch his bare fingers on the reading pad. Now in an attempt to touch the scanner the person soils the reader, thus making it difficult for next person to scan his finger as the reading pad is already damaged.

Now consider iris. Iris readers are non contact and tamper proof and there is no possibility of any foreign material coming in contact with the scanner as the eyes can be scanned from a distance of two meters. Why iris? Because from birth to death the iris patterns in a human eye would remain unchanged. What is interesting is the fact that earlier cost was an issue with this technology, however with the change in times Biomatiques have made this technology available at the cost of finger print technology making it affordable with better security control and identification assurance.

Q: How are offerings from your company better than others in competition?

Not every player in this segment is able to comprehend the importance of this biometric modality in the way Biomatiques Identification Solutions does. Our technology goes well with "Digital India" programme of GoI. Where internationally there are 12 companies already in the global market, our products were designed after keeping in mind the Indian demography. In India, nearly 70% population belongs to the labour class and the remaining 30 per cent is the office class category. Very few people know about the technology, so to introduce a simple, easy to understand and operate product was the main challenge. Secondly, India is a cost effective nation and the Indian consumer believes in value for money. Thirdly, India has a different topology across. So over every 100 kms, people change, the climatic conditions change, their lifestyle changes, even knowledge and education levels change. Understanding this is very essential. Hence, the way the people will adapt to the product will also change depending on region to region.

In terms of price, Biomatiques offers the technology at a cost effective rate compared to other companies. The actual market price is Rs 9,999/-, however we are offering it at a promotional price of Rs 4,500/-. Other companies on the other hand won't be selling their products for anything less than Rs15,000. Moreover manufacturers from overseas only have their vendors in India who lack knowledge about the product in terms of integration or providing technical support for that matter. While Biomatiques has their own R&D and support team, hence reaching out for integration or technical support is much easier. In short you are getting a product which is three times lesser the price and you also get an end to end solution with local maintenance and support.

Q: Which kind of market exists here in India for this technology?

The market in India is huge. A household consumer can mount the iris scanner outside his door and have keyless entry or even connect it to his personal computer or android phone and use it as an additional measure of security.
It can also be used in offices and schools to capture attendance accurately negating the nuisance of proxy attendance. The

technology can also be synced with debit and credit cards. Along with just PIN the card won't work unless iris is verified. Every digital or online payment will be connected to AADHAAR database.

The biggest market is the government itself because there are a lot of services offered by the government like EPDS, AEPS and rural employment schemes. Data centers which keep secure data which are at a high risk of security breach, research and science centers where individuals are required to wear gloves and masks and other protective equipment, paint factories where workers have paint on their fingers most of the times are some other places where the technology can be useful. The technology can also be used at border and airport to ensure that only the actual citizens get entry in the country.

Q: With such advancement of technology what are growth opportunities as such?

The growth opportunities are tremendous. In India, the AADHAAR will be used as a means of identification every citizen in India. The unique AADHAAR number will be allotted to every individual and thus eradicating the need of KYC documents. Banks, utility centers and even telecom industry will be some of the places where this technology can be implemented. Earlier to get a SIM card or to open a new bank account the process would take ideally anywhere between 48 hours to 2 weeks. Tomorrow, if someone wants any of these, all they have to do is scan their iris on the iris scanner which will be linked to the AADHAAR database. Once verified, it will be simple to issue a new SIM card or a new bank account. Considering the population of India, since this technology is very new, it has a huge market scope across sectors.

Q: What is the future of this technology?

The pressure on today's C-Level executive's to have secure business systems is ever increasing. With the rapidly changing computing landscape in making passwords and other legacy authentication methods obsolete and why biometrics is gaining traction as the preferred choice of authentication of users and devices for commercial as well as enterprise use-cases.
One area where security can be improved is in strong authentication of human & devices, which is interacting with the various high-end security technologies where biometrics authentication find greater applicability today includes Enterprise Mobility Management (EMM) suites, Identity and Access Management (IAM) and Internet of Things.

This need comes from security-conscious consumers, employees, and more importantly, institutions such as banks, finance & insurance (BFSI), retailers, and other tradespersons and employers, who are uptight to prevent financial frauds and vulnerabilities, privacy abuses, and theft of corporate / users' personal information, which can be addressed through use of biometrics authentications solutions having security portfolio and products that helps in controlling access to enterprise resources with greater accuracy, efficiency and user-convenience in a distributed environment displacing traditional detection tools.

The increasing significance of digital identity has taken the process of authentication to a level where the concerns for strong identification can best be addressed only through the use of biometrics. Although the opportunity for revenue associated with deployment of every biometric modality is becoming evident, the one which looks most promising is the Iris Recognition Technology.

The factors which are catapulting this technology to the forefront of biometrics applications are its ease of use and being independent of environmental conditions. Iris recognition, a biometric, provides one of the most secure methods of authentication and identification thanks to the unique characteristics of the iris.