



Success Stories



Researchers' Success Stories / September 2010

Making smart phones smarter

To shop online with a mobile phone, you usually have to enter at least a username and a password. But why does that phone not just recognize you by your voice, your face, or both? Well, thanks to MOBIO, it may soon will.

The project MOBIO (Mobile Biometry) is developing a technology for mobile phones that will be able to identify a user by his or her voice, face, or by the interplay of both. This is not only easier for the user than passwords and PIN's, it is also an additional level of security.



MOBIO is coordinated by Sébastien Marcel from the Idiap Research Institute. He likes being a coordinator, although (or because) it is anything but easy.

Be persistent

Sébastien Marcel submitted a first proposal for MOBIO in 2004 to FP6. It was rejected. He submitted a similar project to a Swiss funding agency. It was rejected. He then

improved the first proposal and submitted it again in 2006 to FP7. Finally, it was accepted.

Have a plan B

"Obviously I was very happy when the project was accepted", says Sébastien Marcel, "but soon I had the first negative experience." Just as the project was accepted, one of the partners wanted to leave the project. Fortunately, he had a

backup plan and found a new partner. In

"The international experience and networking is invaluable."

2009, though, the new partner discontinued all mobile projects due to the economic crisis. Again, Sébastien Marcel had a backup plan and found a new partner.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

MOBIO (Mobile Biometry) aims at developing a technology for mobile phones that recognizes people by their voice, face or the interplay of both. Namely the use of this interplay is innovative.

Researchers have systematically collected sound and video recordings with mobile phones at several sites in Europe. Based on these recordings, they developed algorithms that are able to recognize voice and face even if illumination is not optimal and even if there is background noise. Finally, they adjusted these algorithms so that they are sufficiently accurate and at the same time can operate with the limited resources (CPU, memory and speed) provided by mobile phones.

Believe in your idea

Now that smart phones are fairly popular, the idea of MOBIO does not sound very visionary. But in 2004, they were not so popular. Therefore, Sébastien Marcel had to have an idea and work for it. "When you prepare a proposal, you have to know what you want and where you want to go, do most of the work yourself and then contact people to participate and contribute", says Marcel.

He already has submitted another project under FP7, and it was accepted. Apparently, he likes being a coordinator. And he has good reasons for it: "Without the project, I would not have been able to employ more people, and the international experience and networking is invaluable."

FACTS AND FIGURES

Project Name:	Mobio - Mobile Biometry
Research Area:	ICT-2007.1.4 Secure dependable and trusted infrastructures
Coordinator:	Dr. Sébastien Marcel
Coordinating Institution:	Idiap
Number of Partners:	9
Start Date - End Date	2008/01/01 - 2010/12/31
Duration:	36 months
Project Cost:	3.99 million Euro
Project Funding:	3.99 million Euro
Contract type:	FP7: collaborative project (generic)
FP7 Reference Number:	214324

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