

Questions & Answers

FROM THE TOP

A conversation with Iuval Hatzav

TIME is money, or so the old cliché goes. To reduce the time employees typically spend handling ID cards, photocopying, flatbed/sheet-feed scanning, rescanning and formatting, a product is on the market that can enhance productivity. Manufacturers of this product say the time-savings can be more than 60 seconds per card. In a busy office or hospital, this could translate into more than an hour of recaptured productivity per employee, per day. This month's conversation is with Iuval Hatzav, vice president of marketing for Card Scanning Solutions.

Q. Please explain the workings of your ScanShell product. How does the ScanShell product set new standards?

A. First of all, ScanShell solves some productivity issues. On average, it takes about 10 minutes to type in all the information on an identification card into a database. The first thing we do is eliminate the time it takes to manually put information into a database. We make it an automated process.

The technologies available for reading ID cards are PDF417 and magnetic strips. Both technologies pose problems. For example, magnetic strips get demagnetized, which can cause unforeseen problems. Unlike credit cards, which are replaced often, driver licenses are kept for up to five years. This means that when a magnetic strip gets demagnetized, it is virtually unreadable until it's replaced.

The problem with bar codes is that they get smeared. The information on them, as with magnetic stripes, can get lost from wear and tear. Another important issue is that only 25 states have magnetic-strip en-

coding; the other 25 states have bar codes. When you combine these two technologies, only about 28 states contain either or both of these technologies. This means that many states don't have any encoding containing pertinent information.

ScanShell revolutionizes the industry because it is the only driver license-reading system that, outside of reading the card, creates a high-quality image that can be used for archiving or for security demands that require copies of driver licenses or creating audit trails by an actual picture of the person. Furthermore, because ScanShell is using optical character recognition (OCR) technology that isn't limited to magnetic strip or bar-code reading, ScanShell not only can read all 50 states, but Canadian licenses, military cards and hundreds of other different types of IDs, including passports as well.

ScanShell is the only device that can read all three technologies—bar codes, magnetic stripes and images. Because it can read all three technologies, the user can compare the printed information on the card to the encoded information to en-

sure that the card read is authentic and has not been altered.

Q. Your systems are based on OCR technology. How was this technology developed, and what are its prospects for the future?

A. Our team of engineers has developed high-level DSP (digital signal processing) algorithms to filter and clean difficult images, such as driver license images, from non-uniform background colors and text that are covered with stamps and holograms. This is the core technology that differentiates Card Scanning Solutions' technology from other OCR readers.

While other readers on the market scan at 50- to 70-percent accuracy, using our digital image processing technology, we manage to achieve up to 99-percent accuracy for some states, but no lower than 97-percent accuracy for all states. As far as the prospect for this technology goes, we are working on supporting other types of document reading related to this industry with plans to expand the technology to ID authentication capabilities.

Q. Your company also has two other products that branch out in different fields, including the automotive industry and healthcare industry. What are the identifying features of idScan and MedicScan?

A. IdScan gives automotive dealers two major benefits. In the automotive market, insurance companies require dealers to copy the driver license of each person who test-drives a car. IdScan gives dealers a high-quality image

of the card without wasting time photocopying and getting poor image quality. The second benefit is in regards to lead management and follow-ups. Using our product, the dealers can basically create a database of customers so they can send marketing materials, birthday cards, etc.

MedicScan can scan and read not only driver licenses, but also medical insurance cards. This can save 10 to 20 minutes in client registration as well as allow insurance companies to have copies of the insurance cards. It also facilitates the sending of patient information to the insurance companies.

Q. “Consumer-friendly” is a key phrase in today’s marketplace. Are your products able to meet the customer’s demand quickly, and do the images produced by them offer high-quality resolution for identification purposes?

A. Our products now automatically scan the card upon insertion. The orientation of the card also is detected automatically—automatic insertion, automatic state detection and automatic

orientation. Our consumer-friendly end-user products feature a fully automatic mode, allowing them to run completely without any human intervention. Furthermore, the images produced can be up to 600 dpi in two colors.

Q. On your Web site, you talk about scanning a driver license with ease, but what if a customer has a thicker card? What would he do to ensure this process works? And, can your scanner process both sides of a card?

A. In the medical market, a need exists to scan both sides of a card and scan it automatically. TWAIN interface allows you to scan both sides and create separate images. With our MedicScan software, the card is automatically scanned once it is inserted, and the second side is scanned automatically once it is flipped over and reinserted. The software creates one image with both sides on each page rather than two images that need to be printed separately. MedicScan OCR offers the ability to read the text off the card and eliminate the need to type in all of the pa-

tient’s registration information.

Q. My EMR/PM software allows a direct scan through TWAIN interface. What advantages does your software have over this?

A. We recently introduced a new ScanShell 1000 Passport scanner that is able to read driver licenses, passports, PDF417 and medical cards. We also introduced Swipescan, which is a magnetic reader and that enables driver license verification. Future plans are to increase reading support for ID cards and driver licenses from all over the world, improve and increase image-capture speed, introduce ID authentication features and read other types of documents that are not ID cards.

Iuval Hatzav is vice president of marketing and director of business development. He can be reached at iuval@card-scan.com.

