

TECHNOLOGY CORNER

Biometrics: Unlocking The Future

(NAPSA)—Biometric technologies are making the way people do many things more secure, from unlocking doors, to paying for groceries, to going on a trip.

This technology uses certain unique physical characteristics, such as a fingerprint or a retina scan, to identify an individual. This automated process means you no longer have to memorize a PIN or carry a key to prove your identity. Now, instead of having to remember your password to access your computer, biometrics provide you access with a touch of your finger. Several grocery stores allow customers to register with payment companies that allow them the convenience and security of making purchases at the store by touching a screen that reads their fingerprints. And at some airports, travelers can enroll in a program that lets them bypass lines by submitting a biometric identifier.

Even the federal government is following suit, using this identification technology to enhance security. The Department of Homeland Security's US-VISIT program collects information, such as digital, inkless finger scans and a digital photograph from visitors when they enter the United States. Customs and Border Protection officers use this information to ensure that visitors are who they say they are, and to make sure that a visitor is not a wanted



It can be virtually impossible to claim the identity of someone else, thanks to such innovations as digital finger scans and photographs.

criminal. It is part of the enhancements the U.S. government is making to better protect our citizens and visitors.

As a matter of fact, biometrics have helped the Department of Homeland Security apprehend more than a thousand criminals and immigration violators since the US-VISIT program began. In addition, biometric identifiers protect our visitors because they make it virtually impossible for anyone else to claim their identities should their biometrically enhanced travel documents (such as a visa or passport) be stolen or duplicated.

For more information on how biometrics are keeping Americans safer, visit www.dhs.gov/us-visit. *Content provided by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.*