

Facial recognition on your phone: Wave of the future or waste in the future

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A Swedish based mobile software design company, The Astonishing Tribe, has **developed a smart phone program** called Recognizr which would enable you to use your camera as a means of identification through facial recognition. While this program's goal is to discover the individual's "name, schedule, profile and latest tweets," it could be seen as a step in the direction of facial recognition by phone.

Already in existence is software that can send a public safety official a mug shot and other information via email, text message and direct message, but this could be the next phase of that technology. Facial recognition via cell phone camera could facilitate the ability to take pictures of a possible crime suspect and to then text it to a police station via text message. This technology, which is already being implemented across the country is Next Generation 911, uses IP networks to allow police dispatch to receive text messages, pictures and other files.

Television stations often display suspect's pictures online, and **America's Most Wanted** displays their lists via the Web as well. The next logical step, with the Internet on phones, is to be able to view these pictures on a phone and enable a citizen to see that individual, take a picture which may recognize their status, and can immediately be forwarded to the police: A citizen arrest at its finest.

While this technology, via phone, is still in its early stages, it is something to consider as we move forward to more advanced forms of facial recognition software and hardware. As development occurs there could be casualties along the way: mobile automated fingerprint identification systems. Just as public safety agencies have moved from analog surveillance to digital and vehicle recognition, it will take time before this technology matures and becomes a viable product for vendors to create and citizens to have in the palm of their hands.