

New Technology Stops Virtual Crime!

NEW TECHNOLOGY STOPS VIRTUAL CRIME!

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"I scan my eye when I want to use my cell phone. No one else can use it but me!" – Fumio, a Tokyo teenager

Teenagers (and adults) in Japan don't use cash, debit cards or credit cards to buy items in stores. Most Japanese use their cell phones instead. The cell phones that they carry contain a microchip that gives information about how much money the person has.

When the person goes into a store to buy, for example, a pair of jeans, she/he just gives the store her/his cell phone and the store **swipes** it over a machine that reads information just like for a credit card.

This system is useful because it means that the person doesn't have to carry a bag to hold a wallet, cell phone, camera, keys, MP3 player: everything is contained in the cell phone! The problem, of course, is that if the person loses her/his cell phone (or it gets stolen) she/he can lose a lot of money.

Technology has an answer for this. There are now new cell phones in Japan that **allow** their owners to scan the iris (the coloured part) of their eyes. Why would they want to do this? Because everyone's iris is unique, just like your fingerprint. If the person scans her/his eye with her/his cell phone, no one else can use her/his cell phone for phone calls, to listen to music or to buy things! The cell phone will not work for anyone else but its **owner** and so it becomes **useless** to criminals.

"I love my new phone!" Japanese teenager Kumiko exclaims. "It is so beautiful and it has everything I need on it. I don't **worry** that someone will steal it because it won't work for them: it will only work for me!"

"Someone stole my old phone," her friend Fumio adds. "At first, I was very sad because I had to call my bank, my cell phone company and the police. The criminals stole five hundred dollars from me using my phone."

But then, I was very happy because the bank gave me the money back and I bought my new phone. Now, I scan my eye when I want to use my cell phone. No one else can use it but me! I feel safe."

There is a demand for eye-scanning phones in North America, but no one knows for sure when they will be available.

Smart

Words

scan = when a machine gets information by reading an image

swipe = to move a piece of plastic over a machine so that it can read the information

allow = permit

owner = the person to whom an object belongs

useless = having no use

worry = to keep thinking about a problem