

Esondre Christian

Future of Facial Recognition in Aiports

From checking a bag to boarding a plane, travel in airports may start to change.

Just recently, through some testing stages at La Guardia's New York's Airport by Delta Air Lines and the Transportation Security Administration, some travelers got an opportunity to use a Kiosk that takes a picture of the person. Within seconds after the picture is taken, it matches the picture to a photo from government databases. No physical ID necessary. No boarding pass required.



Benefits:

- All photos taken by the kiosk are deleted at the end of the day
- Facial recognition shaves more than a minute off bag drop, to roughly 30 seconds, and reduces the security interaction from 25 seconds to about 10 seconds, said Greg Forbes, Delta's managing director of airport experience. While a "simple change," the time savings add up, making the line noticeably faster, Mr. Forbes added.
- This type of technologies could possibly mean enhanced security but also faster processing for passengers as well

Concerns many travelers will have with facial recognition:

- How are the systems being trained and evaluated?
- Would opting out of the biometric system be considered a red-flag?
- What if the documents don't match a person's current appearance?

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- TSA WOULD like biometric recognition to be mandatory?
 - National Institute of Standards and Technology study found that Facial recognition is up to 100 times more likely to improperly identify those of Asian and African descent

More Considerations:

- To ensure an efficient integration of the biometric technology in airports only applicants/ travelers who are determined to “low risk” can apply for TSA’s PreCheck program requires an inperson appointment to show documents and give fingerprints, and biometric verification by Clear (a private screening company) to apply for this facial recognition system in airports
- Members that pay for the Clear travel services yearly subscription will be moved to the new technology free of charge
- Melissa Conley, a T.S.A. the executive director overseeing checkpoint technologies, said that biometric technology is better than human agents at matching faces rapidly and accurately. “People are not good at matching faces. It’s just known,” Ms. Conley said. “Machines don’t get tired.”
- True for both Clear and the TSA’s facial recognition practices, it might not feel like a viable option to travelers.
- When Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore) declined to have his photo taken by a TSA facial recognition machine, for example, he faced pushback and was told that opting out would cause a delay, according to his spokesperson.
- This process raises questions about consent, as people who are worried about missing their flight due to long security lines may feel coerced to sign up.

Overall facial recognition is seemingly to be a more popular use in society and now in airports, though is also a controversy. There are many views and feelings on this technology being a primarily used system. How do you see where this biometric technology goes in the future?