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# Bay Area Surveillance System May Help Track Terrorists

*Sue Kwon*

High tech is an important tool in fighting the war on terror, and some Bay Area companies are at the forefront.

On September 11th, airport cameras captured pictures of the suspected terrorists. But the problem is that security experts didn't notice them before they boarded the planes. In San Jose Tuesday, Floyd Kvamme -- one of President Bush's technology advisors -- explained the need for new technology that can identify and track suspected terrorists.

"We got the tape. It was late," he said. "We can track a lot of things. But we have to be able to track them in real time when we have suspicious characters."

That's where Ron Buck comes in. His Palo Alto firm has created a surveillance system that can track individuals, even in crowded areas. Like no other system, it does it with 3D images in real time.

Unlike a traditional camera, the Tyzx has two lenses, or eyes, and a brain -- a supercomputer chip that can process 20 times more operations per second than a PC. So it can consistently track one's movements.

"Where are they coming from? Where are they going? Where have they spent time?" Buck asked. "These are tasks that we assign to security guards looking at monitors. What our system can do is automate that."

The two lenses act like your two eyes. If you hold your thumb in front of your face, and look at it with your left eye, and then your right eye, the image shifts, telling your brain how far away it is. The image is translated into millions of pixels, each containing information on the subject's distance. This data can be viewed at any angle, even from overhead, regardless of where the camera is positioned.

The system cannot identify a person's face. Biometric cameras can do that. But used together, the two technologies may help security detect and capture suspected terrorists before it's too late.

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