Avatar may soon be keeping your safe in the skies

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Lie detection is coming to a whole new level. Soon we will not have to rely on the work of individual agents to figure out who is just trying to get on a plane and who is a criminal mastermind in the making.

Researchers at the University of Arizona are working on a deception detection machine that will eventually be put into airports. The machine, which hast been dubbed the Automated Virtual Agent for Truth Assessments in Real-time, or Avatar for short, is about the size of an

standard ATM.

Avatar's job to is to see the things that the border agents can't. The Avatar machine features a high definition camera equipped with infrared sensors and a microphone. This set is designed to capture and measure the facial expressions and voice of the subject. The machine looks at facial features, with a specific emphasis on the eyes. The infrared sensors are designed to detect eye dilation and movement, two signs of untruthfulness, while the microphone assesses not only what is said, but how it is said.

The accuracy of the scans could, of course, be effected by a number of medical conditions, prescription drugs that effect the users sensitivity to light and a number of other factors, so it will have to be paired with a human agent to ensure accuracy.

The Avatar machine is currently in its testing phase. The project will require some fine tuning, and possibly a new version of the prototype before you see it in an air port near you. Avatar is part of the Department of Homeland Security Center of Excellence in Border Security and Immigration project.