

Intelligent 3-D image technology could enable targeted out-of-home advertising

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(Phys.org)—Directed advertising is common in online shopping and in social media but is not currently an option in the out-of-home digital environment due to the technical challenges involved.

A new government funded link-up between UWE Bristol's Machine Vision Lab and Aralia Systems Ltd could enable adverts to detect information from passers-by and select the type of advert they are most likely to be interested in.

Professor Mel Smith, director of UWE's [Machine Vision](#) Lab said, "This is an exciting opportunity to use the 2D and 3D [image recognition](#) technology that we specialise in to analyse and measure consumer demographics and behaviour. We are working on a prototype that embeds image [recognition technology](#) in 'smart' ads.

"The aim is to detect basic human demographic information such as age and gender, together with behaviour such as head movements, and how long people are looking at an advert, for use in targeted [marketing campaigns](#).

"This technology will not recognise individuals, and all image data will be treated as metadata – this means it will be used for analysis but not stored. This project is ahead of the current state-of-the-art – but is timely in addressing a market where technological changes are rapidly taking place."

UK company Aralia Systems produces [image analysis software](#) using innovative algorithms. Prior to starting the company, founder Dr Glynn Wright led developments in image analysis and display for the first commercial [MRI scanner](#).

Eleanor Wright from Aralia explained, "This collaboration will develop and test a basic prototype to establish the feasibility of using information to assess people's interest in and engagement with adverts. The longer someone looks at an ad, the more information pops up.

"For example, the technology could look for groups of young people who might be interested in nightclub ads or families who would like to find out about local attractions.

"Consumers won't be pestered – this automatically gathered information would be used to intelligently adapt advertising content to something relevant to them and so reduce the existing barrage of irritating irrelevant advertising."

Aralia would also be able to provide statistical feedback on the levels of interest produced by adverts to companies' marketing teams. The 18 month project is funded by the Technology Strategy Board.

Provided by University of the West of England

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