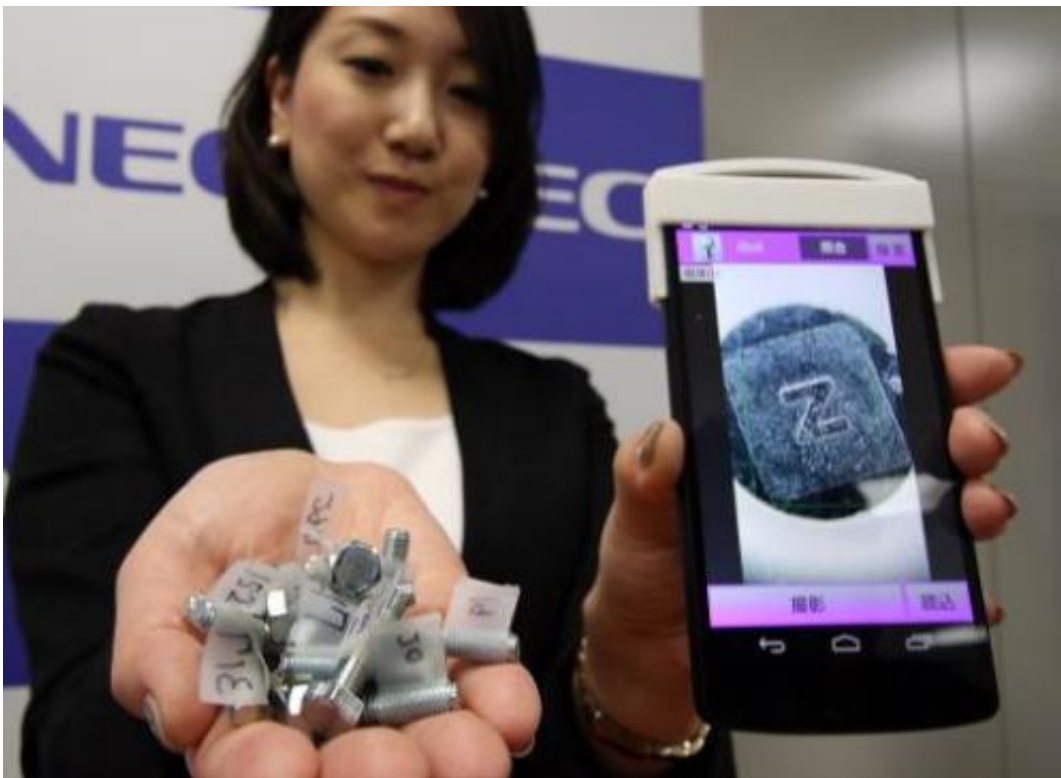


Japan's NEC rolls out counterfeit spotting technology

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An NEC employee in Tokyo on November 10, 2014 displays fake products detectable with its new smartphone system

Japan's NEC on Monday unveiled a technology that sniffs out even the most convincing counterfeits by reading microscopic patterns on everything from a luxury purse to a metal bolt.

The [technology](#) can be also be used to trace the origin of mass-produced offerings by reading so-called "object fingerprints", or three-dimensional surface irregularities, the firm said.

"You can identify offspring that come from the same parental mold," said Toshihiko Hiroaki, assistant general manager at NEC's Information and Media Processing Laboratories.

"If you take a close look, you can tell one child from another."

The technology could let a customs official, for example, snap a smartphone picture of a specific spot on an object which is then instantly matched—or not—to a manufacturers' pre-registered image.

A genuine article can be matched with the time and location where it was produced, NEC said.

Hiroaki noted that the trade in [counterfeit goods](#) is estimated to reach into the hundreds of billions of dollars a year, and that a fake or defective part could have serious consequences for finished products.



An NEC employee in Tokyo on November 10, 2014 demonstrates its new smartphone system for detecting fake products

The technology is currently in the testing phase and the firm plans to release a commercial version next year.

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