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Maybe you really can't hide lyin' eyes

New system pitched to Trump's team tracks involuntary movements to reveal the truth in half the time of a polygraph



L.E. BASKOW

Excalibur Consulting's J. Patrick O'Burke speaks about EyeDetect, the world's first noninvasive lie detection technology that accurately detects deception in 30 minutes by analyzing involuntary eye behavior in the Business Center at The Golden Nugget on Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2016.

By Ricardo Torres-Cortez (contact)

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"I hope you're going to pull out more than that \$5 bill," the man said with a laugh. So Neal Harris grabbed \$20, then \$40, then \$60. The man interrupted: "I see the hundred."

Harris was so certain of the accuracy of a new lie-detecting system he showcased at the Golden Nugget on a recent afternoon that he actually bet on it. That system is EyeDetect, which purports to identify liars by the movement of their eyes.

The test participant going for the \$100, Joe Delia, was a Southern California polygraph expert of 38 years. All he had to do was write down a number on a small piece of paper, show it to the audience and lie about it to the machine.

He wrote down "5," and later said he'd concentrated on "3" in an effort to deceive the system. But his tactic didn't work, and a few moments later, he saw "5" flash on the screen and Harris' \$100 go back into his wallet.

EyeDetect was presented to President-elect Donald Trump's transition team, said Harris, vice president of sales for the technology's developer, Converus. Trump has championed "extreme vetting" for immigrants and refugees. "The vast, vast majority of refugees are not a threat to America, but it only takes one," Harris said.

The EyeDetect system for identifying such outliers is a tablet, an eye scanner, a camera, a keyboard, a mouse and a chin rest. It scans the eyes and detects dilation or involuntary eye movements, indicators that a lie is being told. Harris insisted that the test's quick, noninvasive nature was a way to treat refugees humanely and not "traumatize them any further, but (it) gives you data on whether or not they've engaged in terrorism in the past."

The meeting with Trump's team was "very positive," Harris said. "We are very hopeful that the government agencies will give the technology serious consideration."

In Las Vegas on Dec. 13, Harris presented EyeDetect to about a dozen law enforcement representatives, including Metro Police.

The true-or-false line of questioning was done "rapid-fire," and Harris said the tests typically were completed in under 40 minutes, compared with the 90 minutes it takes for a standard polygraph exam. EyeDetect data are uploaded to a drive, and results are returned in a few minutes.

The accuracy of both tools stands at about 85 percent, although EyeDetect's rate can increase as more tests are administered and more data collected. Eventually, the company wants the results to be admissible in courts.

"It's a different tool," Harris said about how EyeDetect compares with a polygraph. It's like asking if a Phillips-head screwdriver is better than a flathead, he added.

"Converus believes that both technologies have been scientifically validated to detect deception. Both useful tools — extra-useful when used together," Harris said, though he pointed out advantages of EyeDetect, such as cost, the fact that operators could be trained in about an hour and that the science was independent of the inadvertent filters of human test administrators.

Tips on how to deceive the classic polygraph test are widely available online, while countermeasure techniques identified on the newer technology are easier to patch through the software.

The technology also is adaptable.

Software for clients in other countries with different languages and cultures is customized. Although some in the polygraph field have been hesitant and skeptical about EyeDetect, Harris said the technology has been embraced by others in the industry and the scientific community.

While he believes humans have gotten really good at lying to each other, Harris said, "Humans are not good lie detectors. The general population thinks CIA, FBI investigators, these guys are really good at telling if someone is lying to them. The science disproves this notion."

EyeDetect by Converus



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