

# BANK SECURITY NEWS

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## VENDOR GOES FACE-TO-FACE WITH PIN CODES

The human brain is hardwired from birth to recognize faces with astonishing speed and accuracy.

A fast-growing company is banking on this neurological know-how, using it as the basis of a newly patented authentication solution it has rolled out to the financial services industry.

Annapolis, Md.-based Passfaces Corp. has developed an authentication platform that eliminates the need for personal identification numbers, which provide ample targets for profit-driven hackers.

The system, called Passfaces v3.0, displays a group of passport-sized headshots that users must memorize to authenticate themselves.

The company signed up its first banking customer in April, Paul Barrett, the vendor's chief executive, told *Bank Security News*.

"They're not huge, but people will know them," Barrett said of the unnamed bank.

To log into a secure site, consumers must spot one of the five faces from a line-up of nine images.

The company found its models by installing photo booths at universities in the U.K.

The lineup can be masked to prevent "shoulder surfing," Barrett said.

The odds of someone correctly guessing another user's Passface code are 1 in 59,049, compared with the 1-in-10,000 chance of nailing a four-digit PIN, he said. —G.M.