Age ID™ App Testing with Counterfeit IDs

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Disclaimer

This testing and subsequent review was conducted and prepared by Mark Baxter in his personal capacity. The opinions expressed in this review are the author's own and do not reflect the views of any government agency or organization.

Background

Through numerous discussions regarding capabilities and actual testing, the Age ID™ app shows immense potential for use in both enforcement/regulation activities and in the retail industry. There are a few key capabilities that stand out with regard to enforcement/regulation.

- Accuracy rate
- Ease and speed of use
- Nominal cost
- Partnerships to conduct testing and certification with AAMVA and ID card manufacturers
- Verification of barcode format, not just its data
- Ability to review scanned data for reporting purposes
- Ability to notify developer of false-negatives for database inclusion

Background

As far as retail use goes, this product also has the potential to make age verification more seamless, as it allows for efficient and less cumbersome ID scanning. In the case of age-restricted entry into a bar, club, or casino, the app can be set up to alert the user if the same ID is used within a specified time period. When underage persons pass around a valid ID of an of-age person to gain entry into an establishment, this would effectively eliminate the human error of recognition.

Background

As with many technologies, there may be some noted deficiencies when introduced into the field by different end-users.

In general, and not related to the performance of the Age ID™ app, there are concerns with use of a barcode scanner, primarily in the retail industry.

- Still necessary to confirm that the information on the ID matches the scanned information
- Must confirm the photo matches the person presenting the ID
- Still need to verify authenticity of the ID (presence of security features, composition, etc.)
- Use of the scanner could elicit a false sense of security

Methodology

- Utilized known-counterfeit driver's licenses from various states[1]
- All were confiscated in Maryland in 2017
- Scanned 2D barcode of each license using the Age ID™ App, v. 3.22.0, as well as the top competitor's apps
- Thirteen (13) individual counterfeit driver's licenses from different U.S. states

Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Nebraska, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, West Virginia

[1]All thirteen (13) of the subject driver's licenses were confirmed counterfeit by Mark Baxter, who is recognized by the District Court of Maryland as a subject matter expert on fraudulent documents.

Verification Accuracy Rate

0%	0%	8%	15%	100%
Verification Accuracy Rate	Verification Accuracy Rate	Verification Accuracy Rate	Verification Accuracy Rate	Verification Accuracy Rate
Tokenworks AgeVisor	**Checkpoint**	**SafeSurv**	**Bar & Club Stats**	**SureScan AgeID**
				

Conclusion

As a recognized expert in the area of counterfeit identification, I have visually verified thousands of identifications from all over the country. While I believe visual verification is the most accurate method to confirm the authenticity of identification, it also is not 100% accurate. Visual verification can also be problematic in that if done adequately, it can be time consuming. It also requires a specialized level of knowledge. In my years of training law enforcement, government enforcement agents, and retailers, this level of knowledge is not easily obtained or evoked on an impromptu basis. Therefore, a tool would be helpful in supplementing any knowledge already possessed, so long as this tool is not exclusively relied upon in determining the authenticity of identification. For those who do not have access to verify identification through official state databases such as METERS or NLETS, the preferred method of checking IDs would be an aggregate of visual inspection and automated verification.

Provided the above conditions are supported, the Age ID™ app is a valuable tool to supplement enforcement efforts when combined with visual examination. This can allow enforcement agents to quickly scan identification cards and promptly ascertain the veracity of suspicious documents. However, I would be remiss if I failed to mention that the app should not be relied upon alone for those documents it scans as “OK.” Similar to the notion of how the absence of any one security feature is not a certain indicator of a false identification, use of this app alone should not be a certain indicator of a genuine document.

Conclusion

When it comes to use by retailers, this app is an unrivaled tool so long as users do not become complacent and acquire a false sense of security in the documents they are verifying. Use of the app can quickly identify a suspicious identification with the hope that the employee would use the “Alert” or “Warning” provided from the app as an indication that they should not accept the document without further examination. For protection from false-negative scans, training should be conducted to demonstrate testing procedures, and require that retailers not use an “OK” indication from the app as the be-all end-all of their ID verification efforts.

Overall, the Age ID™ app is exemplary based upon its efficiency, ease of use, and the ability to report false-negatives for inclusion into their proprietary database. Use of the Age ID™ app should obviously be a no-brainer and a positive strategy for success. This app will identify the fake documents that could be overlooked by manual verification alone and, so long as attentiveness is used for all the other scans which indicate “OK”, this has no other conclusion but to lead to greater detection of these false documents.