

API Products in Action

Aton International Teams With Mentalix To Cut Time To Market For Fingerprint Products

Aton International, Inc. provides integration, design and consulting services for OEMs and business

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**Charles Wilde,
Aton International**



clients in several industries, including biometric imaging, physical access control and consumer software. Established in 1981, the Silicon Valley-based Aton International is located in Los Altos, California.

One of their customers is Identix, a large biometrics solution provider. Identix makes fingerprint scan systems -- including both live scan and card scan products.

In order to transmit fingerprint data to the FBI for comparison, both the software and the scanning device must pass certification tests issued by the FBI. Every time the software is updated or a different scanner model or operating system is used, certification testing must be performed again. Only those solutions that pass the rigorous testing procedures may be used to submit data for

comparison against the FBI’s electronic database, the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System (IAFIS).

Originally, Identix performed its own in-house development and went through the IAFIS certification testing process. However, for the Aton International consulting project, Identix needed to port its fingerprint scan systems from IBM OS/2

Warp to Microsoft NT and Windows 2000. In addition, the Hewlett-Packard desktop scanner model that had been IAFIS-certified was about to be discontinued by the manufacturer. As a result, IAFIS certification testing would have to be conducted again. Identix was also looking for a solution that would alleviate the possibility of having to re-certify its systems every time a scanner model was discontinued.

Charles Wilde, principal and founder of Aton International, says he looked at several options for answering his customer’s needs. Aton International considered doing the certification itself, but then discovered Mentalix’s Fingerprint Scan API Toolkit. Mentalix regularly submits its Toolkit software for IAFIS certification testing to keep pace with changing technology -- such as new scanning devices -- which means users do not have to worry about conducting time-consuming development work every time a scanner model is taken off the market. Instead, Toolkit customers can simply get a software upgrade.

“By using Mentalix’s solution we could solve two of our customer’s issues -- time to market and scanner obsolescence,” Wilde says.

Aton International integrated Mentalix’s Toolkit into the Identix ten-print card scanning system. During that process, Wilde contacted a Mentalix product manager about correcting a problem that was unique to a particular scanning device.

“Mentalix did an outstanding job of working with the scanner manufacturer in this case,” Wilde states. “My credibility was on the line, since I had recommended Mentalix to my customer. I was impressed that: a) I could easily get in touch with Mentalix’s support team, b) the competence level was high, and c) the problem was resolved in a very short amount of time. We were pleased with the result, and I highly recommend Mentalix as a partner for systems integrators and developers.”