Promoting privacy for camera-based assistive tech

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There are significant privacy concerns surrounding the use of smart phones with camera-based assistive technology. The primary concern being that visually impaired users relying on such technology for facial recognition and object identification purposes may be exposing themselves and others to compromise through liberal software permissions on their device or should their device, connections, or the software be breached in some way by third parties.

Writing in the *International Journal of Human Factors and Ergonomics*, Hyung Nam Kim of North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, North Carolina, U.S., discusses user perspectives and the state of digital privacy issues in this realm. He has carried out a small-scale survey of users with visual impairments who use this technology and associated software.

The survey revealed that very few users had much knowledge of the privacy policies and potential risks of using assistive technology and were generally unaware of the potential issues that might arise with privacy and security breaches of personal information. Kim has developed the research to help form a conceptual framework that could be used to help researchers and professionals in this field to provide better support and education for those with visual impairment relying on this technology in their everyday lives, whether at work, in public, or even in the home.

Given that a significant proportion of people with visual impairments in the U.S. are just as likely as fully sighted people to use and engage with social media sites such as Facebook, there is a pressing need to improve and enhance their privacy awareness given the additional layer of risk

they must face in using extra software to interact and engage online and so remain independent.

More information: Hyung Nam Kim, Digital privacy of smartphone camera-based assistive technology for users with visual disabilities, *International Journal of Human Factors and Ergonomics* (2022). DOI: 10.1504/IJHFE.2022.10051733

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