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To whom it may concern

This document is the english translation of the article on Semantic System in the newspaper Tages-Anzeiger of 28 May 2009.

Translation

Software for tracking crimes

The success of the small company Semantic Systems located in Glattbrugg is based on a new software which can match patterns - for example shoe tracks.

By Andrea Söldi

Opfikon - Whoever passes through the passport control at the airport, his or her name is checked against a security list. Since 2007 this is carried out by a system developed by a small company based in Glattbrugg. "It is difficult to check passengers with an exotic name", Walter Diggelmann, CEO of the company Semantic Systems, explains. The lists can have mistakes and be inaccurate, because foreign names are written in characters, that western keyboards can not type. In the past, lists of names were checked manually, now the software of Semantic Systems matches the name in a matter of seconds.

The "Swissport" contract was concluded with the Semantic Systems, which was founded in 2002, because both companies are located in the same building in Glattbrugg. "I met the CEO of Swissport by chance in the lift and we started talking", Diggelmann recounts. Meanwhile, the same system is also used at the Frankfurt and JFK airports in New York.

On the way to the USA

The company could demonstrate their system to the FBI already five years ago and consists only of the three founding members and six freelancers. Manfred Hoffleisch, 59 years old, had the idea for the new algorithm and advanced it with the 25 year old Thomas Diggelmann. His father Walter Diggelmann is responsible for representing the company. That such a small company can roll out major products worldwide, is because Semantic Systems collaborates with other IT companies - for example with Pic Systems which is also based in Glattbrugg. Another programme is in use since five years: The department store Manor uses it to check the data in payment transactions of the in-house and external credit cards.

Walter Diggelmann just returned from San Diego, where he is planning a subsidiary. Recently Semantic System was named one of the 100 up-and-coming European start-ups by the American magazine "Red Herring" and they could present at the event. Actually, to expand abroad was not planned as yet. In the meantime the company senses great opportunities: "The security market in the US is gigantic", says Diggelmann. What the company still requires to make the breakthrough are investors, who believe in this new technology. However, they are difficult to find in these times.

Burglars wear always the same shoes

Semantic System's basic software can very rapidly match recurring patterns. This opens a wide field of applications: The software can match finger prints, signatures, skin changes and financial charts - or shoe tracks.

The Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) Wiesbaden was interested in the technology, that could match shoe sole tracks, back in 2003. In at least half of the crime cases the police finds tracks, that they can match with other crime scenes. Semantic Systems has developed a system which accomplishes automatically this complex and time-consuming task in the shortest time. The technology should arouse interest in all police stations worldwide, Diggelmann hopes. "Burglars are most of the time males, and they mostly only have one pair of shoes."

Caption: The programmes of Thomas (left) and Walter Diggelmann identify burglars with the help of shoe tracks.