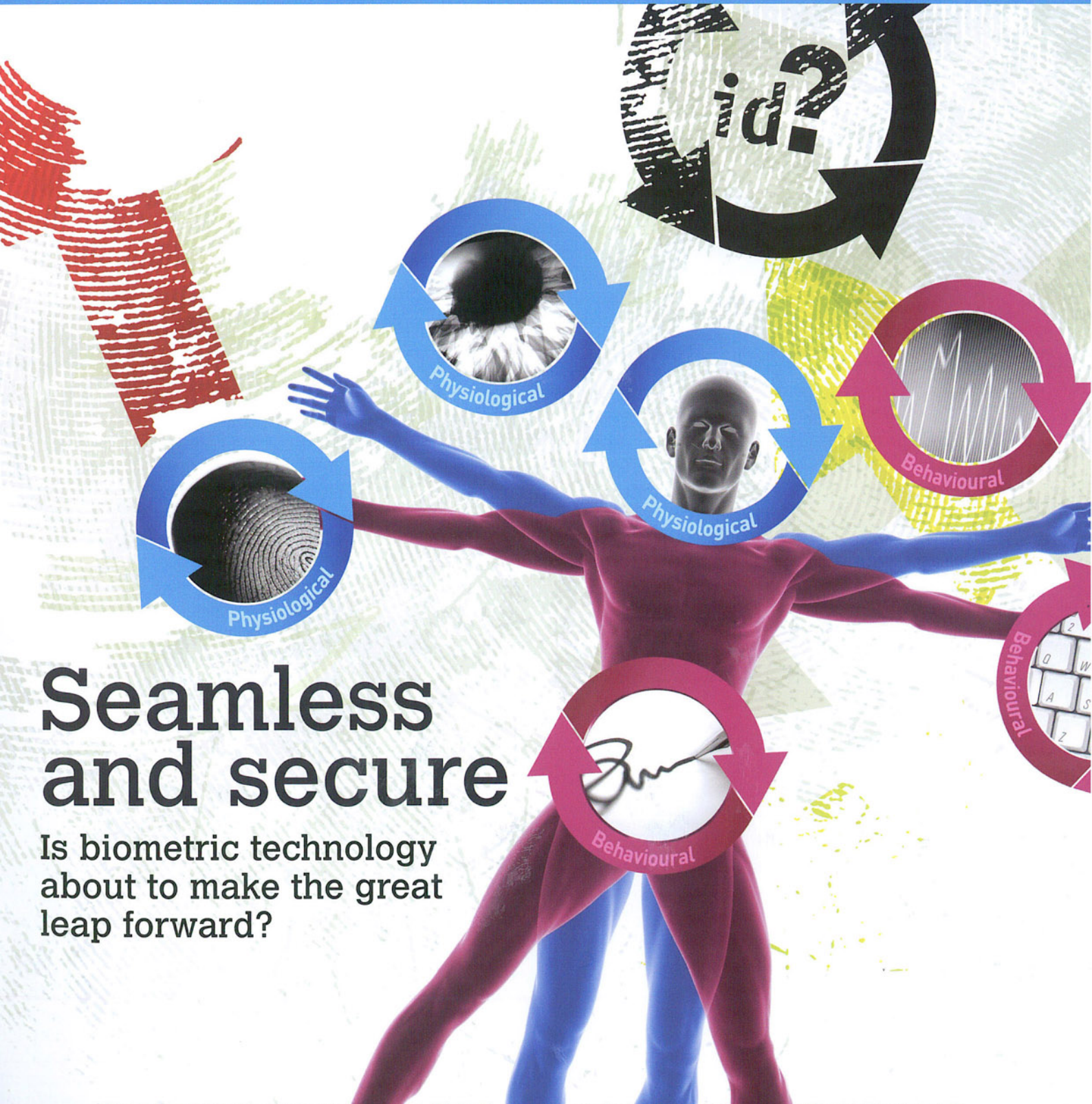


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Interviews
Thom Walsh
Dominique Chavanne
Eric Peterson
Johan Godin
Thomas Schmidt

PASSENGER TERMINAL World



Seamless and secure

Is biometric technology
about to make the great
leap forward?

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VOICE BOX

ARTIFICIAL VOICE SYSTEMS FOR THE AVIATION INDUSTRY



Managing director and co-founder of AviaVox, Johan Godin, is an accomplished pianist and guitar player. "Without exception everyone who works for us plays a musical instrument. We could build ourselves an orchestra. To work here, I think it helps to have a good ear," he says.

A good ear is certainly what Godin and AviaVox possess. As the world's leading provider of intelligent artificial voice systems for airport and airline announcements, the Dutch-based company has developed software that, incorporating unique phoneme technology, is able to generate high-quality 100 percent synthetic voices in a multitude of languages. "Rather than having pre-recorded messages, we make the computer speak," says Godin. "The quality is so good you cannot distinguish it from a human being. In fact it is better than a human because it is of a consistent quality."

The original software was developed by a colleague of Godin's in the late 1990s as a response to his inability to hear poor-quality announcements made at airports. It was first deployed in Amsterdam Schiphol in 1998 and is now used in many airports around the world including Moscow Sheremetyevo, Lisbon, Doha Qatar and London Heathrow's T5. More than 150 million passengers a year hear AviaVox's announcements in total of 14 languages.

The original AviaVox system was designed to generate automatic generic announcements to support the boarding procedures at airports by means of constantly retrieving information from the airport, predominantly via the flight information system. More recently AviaVox has started supporting airlines as well as airports.

"The generic AviaVox product makes announcements requesting people move from one location to another at the airport," Godin explains. "It could be a call for boarding flight KL1243 to Helsinki, asking passengers to go to gate 43. When people arrive at the gate the airline will start their own boarding procedures – which we have recently started supporting via our Airline Gate Client software. Due to the clarity, promptness and multilingual nature of the announcements, the boarding procedure is now faster with the help of our software, thus saving the airlines time and money. We have



Johan Godin – making his product heard over the competition

been running it at 130 gates in Amsterdam since March and airlines are already knocking on our door. This is because there is no one else who can do what we do on this scale. It's becoming a huge success. We are currently rolling the airline product out across Europe as well as India, the Middle East and Russia."

AviaVox and Godin are not resting on their laurels, however. In the next three years they are set to release a mind-blowing new piece of software that looks certain to become a must-have for every airport around the world.

Godin explains: "If you want to page a person at the airport you have to use their name yet there is no single system that can pronounce the names of people in a correct way. To give you an example, my name is 'Godin'. In the Netherlands they say 'Hodin', in England 'Godin' and in Norway 'Goodin'. But in fact it's a French name and should be pronounced 'Godan'. If your name is pronounced incorrectly you simply do not hear it. This is a huge problem, which until today has not been solved by any company in the world. We have done many trials and believe we have come up with a solution. Though it is more complex than our existing software and there is still development to be done, it is very likely we will extend our functionality with this new system in coming years."

When it comes to announcements – both airport announcements and those of a more newsworthy variety – AviaVox can clearly be heard over the competition.



More than 150 million passengers a year hear AviaVox's announcements in a total of 14 languages

***More than 150 million passengers
listen to AviaVox announcements!***

***Artificial Voice systems by AviaVox.
It's more than crystal clear!***

We integrate our speech system with your (existing) Flight Information System, Gates and PA-System, so that you can make announcements with high intelligibility in multiple native foreign languages. Contact us for a demonstration.



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