

Amazon One: Palm scanner launched for 'secure' payments

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5 Amazon has announced a new payment system for real-world shops which uses a simple wave of the hand.

Its new Amazon One scanner registers an image of the user's palm, letting them pay by hovering their hand in mid-air "for about a second or so", it says. [...]

10 "In most retail environments, Amazon One could become an alternate payment or loyalty card option with a device at the checkout counter next to a traditional point of sale system," it said. [...]

15 "Palm-based identification is based on capturing the vein patterns of the palm," explains Dr Basel Halak of the Electronics and Computer Science School at the University of Southampton. [...]

Dr Halak said the level of security was roughly¹ similar to a fingerprint scan, but could be used at a distance of a few inches, making it much more practical. [...]

20 Amazon [...] said one of the reasons it chose palm recognition was that it is "more private" than some other options. [...]

Amazon said other reasons for the choice included the "intentional gesture" of holding a palm over a sensor, and the contactless nature. [...]

But privacy group Big Brother Watch criticised the development.

30 "Amazon continues to fill the market with invasive [...] technologies that solve non-existent problems," its director Silkie Carlo said. "No one should have to provide biometric data in order to buy goods or services." [...]

¹Roughly = more or less