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Apunix Introduces New PhotoID System for Sun Workstations

Apunix Computer Services has completed the installation of a new PhotoID system for Sun Microsystems. The system is the first PhotoID system to run on Sun Workstations. The Apunix BadgeMaker system includes state-of-the art hardware and software to produce high quality employee ID badges directly on plastic cards.

Apunix BadgeMaker brings a new powerful approach to the badge making process. The live video from the camera is displayed on both a window on the operator's workstation and also on a monitor facing the subject. This gives the subject a virtual mirror which they can use to adjust their appearance to their liking. The operator selects the Apunix BadgeMaker image capture button causing four snapshots to be be sequentially captured. The four views are displayed on the viewing monitor and the subject can personally select the best image. If none of the images are satisfactory, four additional images can be easily captured. Once selected the operator clicks on the desired image and a preview badge is displayed on the viewing monitor for the subject's review. The system results in photoID badges which personnel are pleased to wear and avoids the driver's license syndrome of having a picture no one likes.

The image is printed out using a state-of-the art, photographic quality, full color plastic card printer. The credit card sized plastic cards are produced in a single step from blank white stock. The printer prints both the background and subject image at the same time. Since blank stock is used in the printer, backgrounds can be custom designed and changed as needed based on employee status etc. Standard PostScript files are used for printing so backgrounds can be designed using any number of tools running on the Sun Workstation, such as Adobe Illustrator and Adobe PhotoShop. The system eliminates the need to cut, paste, and laminate pictures. Using the plastic card printer produces high quality badges with a significant savings in time and labor. The complete process takes less than five minutes.

Images are stored digitally. This allows the operator to search and retrieve a subject's image at any time. This makes it easy to reissue lost or worn badges. A passport photo printer allows personnel to obtain prints for passports and visas at the badging system.

Apunix Badgemaker Software is designed for the most security conscious companies. It includes both operator security and employee verification features. BadgeMaker can be interfaced to either a Sybase database or a flat file database. The application can be customized for other databases. The software also includes extensive report generating capabilities with ability to choose filters which give supervisors information about number, kind of badges made, operators, etc.

The BadgeMaker Software is designed to be full featured and user friendly. The software also includes state-of-the art features such as ABA magnetic stripe encoding, barcode printing and Debitek encoding. The Debitek encoding permits employees to use their cards with Debitek for cashless transactions.

The Apunix BadgeMaker System is modular. The complete system comes configured with a Sun SPARCstation, a Parallax XVideo board for live video input and output, high quality CCD camera, lights, and plastic card printer. Options to the system include an interface to Apunix's scanner for scanning in prints, and a photographic quality dye sublimation printer for passport photos. The system also includes the ability to automatically archive the images onto 8mm or 4 mm tape. This badge making system makes generating employee badges easy and very cost effective. Because of the network design BadgeMaker can scale from a small company to large company requirements simply by replicating the image capture and printing stations. The image database is maintained both locally and in a central image server by Apunix BadgeMaker.

Apunix's Vice President Sylvia Berens states that the Sun Workstation is ideal for implementing a PhotoID system. Sun's built in networking is perfect for interfacing remote systems to a server and for sharing information across the network. The multitasking features of the Sun make it ideal for video capture, printing and database update to occur at one time.

Steve Kruschke, Advanced Technologies Specialist for Sun's Security Department indicates that the state-of-art system exceeds Sun's original requirements to have a networked digital system which produces high quality PhotoID cards. The ability to interface to the Human Resource Database, security system and cashless transaction system is unique to Apunix.

Apunix Computer Services is an authorized Sun Value Added Reseller. Apunix was founded in 1981 by Drs. Peter and Sylvia Berens. Apunix has been writing UNIX drivers and software to interface peripherals to UNIX workstations for the past twenty years. Apunix areas of focus include imaging, backup and archiving, and multimedia. The BadgeMaker System is a perfect combination of Apunix's areas of expertise.

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