

# Tampa uses cameras to scan for wanted faces

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**TAMPA, Florida (AP) -- Tampa is using high-tech security cameras to scan the city's streets for people wanted for crimes, a law enforcement tactic that some liken to Big Brother.**

A computer software program linked to 36 cameras began scanning crowds Friday in Tampa's nightlife district, Ybor City, matching results against a database of mug shots of people with outstanding arrest warrants.

European cities and U.S. government offices, casinos and banks are already using the so-called face-printing system, but Tampa is the first American city to install a permanent system along public streets, The Tampa Tribune reported Sunday. A similar system was used at Super Bowl XXXV, which was held in Tampa last January.

"Tampa is really leading the pack here," said Frances Zelazny, a spokeswoman for Visionics Corp., which produces the "FaceIt" software.

The software has raised concerns over privacy, ethics and government intrusion.

"This is Big Brother actually implemented," said Jack Walters of the Tampa chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union. "I think this just opens the door to it being everywhere."

But Tampa Detective Bill Todd says FaceIt is no different than having a police officer standing on a street holding a mug shot.

At the Super Bowl, a Visionics competitor, Graphco Technologies, wired cameras around Raymond James Stadium and in Ybor City.

The computer spotted 19 people at the crowded stadium with outstanding warrants, all for minor offenses. But no arrests were made.

"During the Super Bowl, we got overwhelmed," Todd said. "That's the other thing: When you get a match, how quickly can you get to these people?"

Business owners have mixed emotions about the new technology.

"I don't know if I like it," said Vicki Doble, who owns The Brew Pub. "It may be a bit too much."

Don Barco, owner of King Corona Cigars Bar & Cafe, approves of the cameras but says they may not be as effective as the city hopes.

"Sometimes these high-tech toys, they tend to give a little too much credence to what they do," he said