Biometrics May Allow Us to Get Back To Normal Sooner, but Many are Concerned About Privacy

The coronavirus pandemic has changed the way we live everyday life drastically, so it's no surprise that as we try to return to some semblance of normal, many people are questioning how that will work.

One of the current questions is how to get crowds to return to professional sporting events safely. A soccer game in Europe in February of 2020 was considered one of the first "superspreader" events in which 7,000 of the more than 40,000 attendees contracted covid-19.

In March of 2021, a poll by the Washington Post/University of Maryland showed that only 42% of those surveyed would be comfortable attending a sporting event.

The solution for many people may lay in biometrics, the digital analysis of fingerprints or faces, designed for contactless ordering of food and drinks. Technology like this was already being worked on for sporting events, covid-19 has only pushed the timeline forward. Similar technology is being used already around the world.

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The use of biometric technology like this raises concerns about privacy for many people. Biometric technology gathers and stores our personal data. States in the U.S, Texas, Washington, Arkansas, New York, and California have passed biometric legislation. The European Union's privacy watchdog called for a total ban on biometrics.

Donnie Scott, IDEMIA's vice president of public safety, says his company allows fans to opt out of the use of their biometric data during a game — and automatically purges that data from its servers after the game is over.

Biometrics will get sports fans back in stadiums