

Swedish company receives 5.1 million US dollar investment and focus is drawn to venture businesses that implement online image search technology

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Synopsis

Face recognition technology at Polar Rose transforms a two-dimensional picture into a three-dimensional model.

Swedish venture company Polar Rose AB received a \$5.1 million US dollar investment from Northern European venture capital firm Nordic Venture Partners, to develop an online image search service that implements technology that recognizes a face inside an image (see www.polarrose.com). Polar Rose Founder and CTO Jan Erik Solem has developed a face recognition technology called "Bloom" based on research on three-dimensional models and pattern recognition, and is now petitioning for a patent.

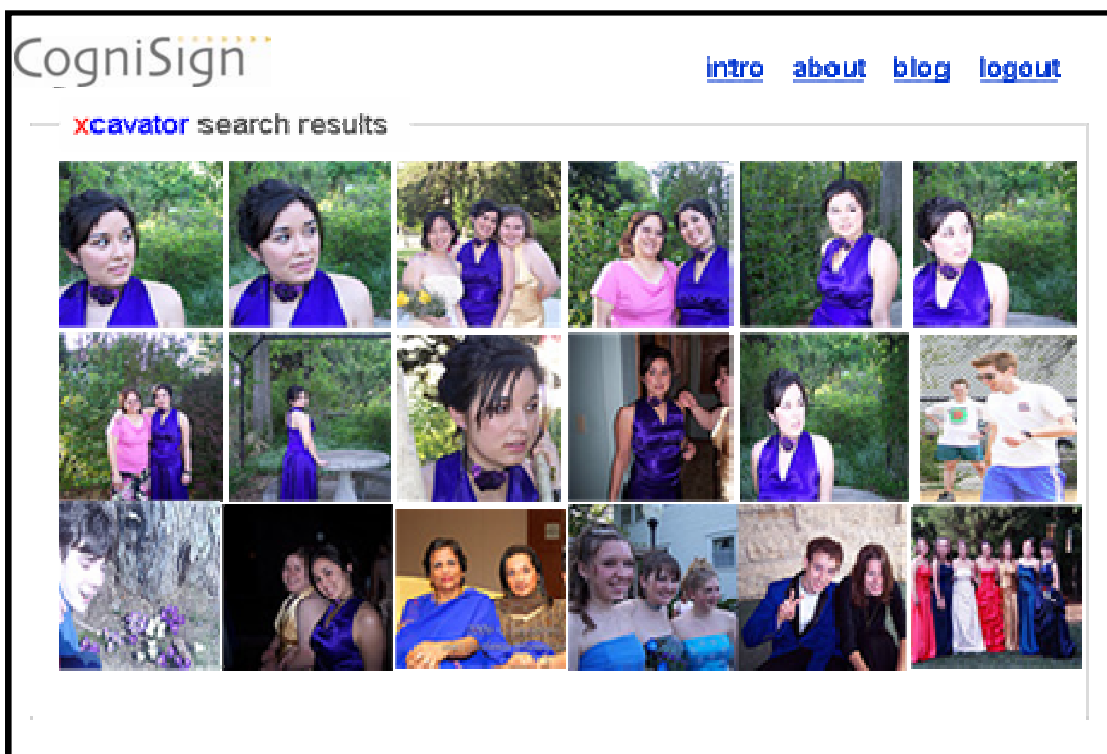
Polar Rose plans to announce the details of the service by the end of 2006. The company intends to enhance the service based on feedback received from users. "We will try to provide services that can be used regardless of which website is being used rather than services that can only be accessible only through certain sites." (Polar Rose Co.) The company plans to apply their technology to both image and video. Polar Rose has scheduled a release the service's Beta version in the first quarter of 2007.

Other companies besides Polar Rose that provide technology related to image recognition are also making strategic moves. For example, Riya (see www.riya.com), a developer of image search technology, released on November 11, 2006 the Alpha version of their online fashion store Like.com (see www.like.com) that incorporates their in-house image recognition technology. At Like.com, for example, if the user selects clothing that a celebrity figure is wearing in a magazine, the user can search for similar clothing of their favorite colors. Riya was founded in August 2004 and has already received investments totaling 19.5 million US dollars.

Another venture company that is drawing attention for image recognition technology is CogniSign LLC. At "Consumer Technology Ventures 2006" which was held in San Jose, USA on November 7-8, 2006, this company

announced that their online image search technology called "Intelligent Image Recognition Technology" will be not only deployable for computers but also for cell phones. CogniSign's technology, based on cognitive psychology research, imitates the human image recognition process. They have implemented this technology as software called a "Recognition Kernel" and released a server product called **imageMATCH Search System** in October 2005 that can search both images and video. They also released in July 2006 software called **xcavator** that can search for images online and inside computers. According to the company, they also plan to incorporate this Recognition Kernel technology into individual cell phone units. CogniSign plans to start licensing this software in the first quarter of 2007 and open an e-commerce website that incorporates this technology in the second quarter of 2007.

An example of the "xcavator" technology. After you select a face picture, it searches for similar pictures.



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