



**ELECTRONE EUROPE FORGES MAJOR PARTNERSHIP WITH
THE UNIVERSITY OF KENT**

- Custom-designed IT peripheral vendor Electrone donates high-tech fingerprint readers and sponsors annual academic prize -

26th September 2007: The University of Kent has signed a partnership agreement with custom-designed IT peripherals vendor, Electrone Europe. As part of the agreement Electrone Europe has donated two advanced fingerprint scanners and is providing a £2,000 annual prize to support students studying in the field of biometrics on the University's MSc programme in Information Security and Biometrics. This will provide a cash prize to the student carrying out the best project in biometrics, support for a Student Resource Centre in biometrics, and funding for a student bursary.

The two advanced subcutaneous fingerprint readers which Electrone has donated, provide a new technology which can examine the human fingerprint from beneath the skin, and will be used for technology evaluation and high-tech research projects within the UK Biometrics Institute (UKBI) at the University of Kent. Initiated by the Department of Electronics at the University of Kent and supported by Kent Enterprise, the UKBI aims to enhance the productive exchange of knowledge and expertise in the biometrics field in the UK.

The Memorandum of Partnership was signed by Stuart Thorn, Chief Executive, Electrone Europe and Carole Barron, Director of Enterprise, University of Kent at Canterbury on September 7th 2007.

Stuart Thorn, comments, "The continued lack of interoperability has slowed down development and extensive adoption of biometric systems. We want to work together alongside the University of Kent to increase the level of industry, academic and government co-operation that is needed to solve the problems that have thwarted the industry."

Thorn continues, "Our on-going technological and financial investment in the University of Kent will also encourage the students to strive for excellence and will hopefully produce some exciting developments in biometrics. I'm extremely pleased to be able to

hand over two experimental subcutaneous fingerprint readers to kick-off our new working relationship.”

Carole Barron, Director of Enterprise said, “We are delighted to be embarking on what we expect to be a very rewarding collaboration with Electrone. The development of this exciting collaboration is a reflection of the world-class reputation for the University’s research in the area of biometrics and identity management. The collaboration will bring Electrone into direct contact with the UK Biometrics Institute (UKBI) – a University of Kent initiative with the UK’s academic research base, industry, government agencies and the European biometrics community.”

Professor Michael Fairhurst, Head of the Department of Electronics at Kent and co-founder of the United Kingdom Biometrics Institute (UKBI), said: “I am delighted that a company with such experience in biometrics has made this investment in the University. We are very much looking forward to working with Electrone Europe both to increase the supply of skilled practitioners with a focused and up-to-date knowledge of biometric systems, and also, through UKBI, to address some of the issues which have so far held back developments in the biometrics industry.”

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ABOUT ELECTRONE

Electrone Europe is a subsidiary of the privately-held group, which includes US-based, IT hardware vendor Electrone Americas. The company specialises in custom-built, problem solving IT peripherals, for a broad range of vertical markets. The business was founded by Stuart Thorn in the UK in 1984 before relocating to Florida in 1996.

The company has customers in all parts of the USA, UK, Europe, Middle East, South America and Africa. Electrone’s experts design and build more than 100 products in more than 15 distinct product lines and in-house staff can also develop specialist software applications where the client requires them. The majority of Electrone’s customers are IT resellers and systems integrators.

ABOUT UKBI

Initiated by the Department of Electronics at the University of Kent and supported by Kent Enterprise, UKBI aims to enhance the productive exchange of knowledge and expertise in the UK across all stakeholders (including University researchers, the biometrics industrial sector, government agencies and potential end-users) and to provide leading-edge solutions to emerging and future market needs.

Its members include the University of Kent, the International Association for Biometrics, the Security Knowledge Innovation Network, Cranfield University, and the European Biometrics Forum.

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