

In a World First, Yoti's Facial Age Estimation Technology Provides Accurate Real Time Age Assurance for Under 13s

The privacy-preserving technology launched to help social networks and other businesses protect children from harms

Adults and children can simply look into a camera to pass an age check using their face - there's no need for an ID document and no personal data is held or shared

LONDON - 26/10/2021 - Global digital identity provider Yoti has today announced that its Facial Age Estimation technology has been extended to children under 13. This will open new opportunities for social networks, gaming brands and other businesses to protect children online and comply with regulations from online safety regulators, such as the ICO with the Age Appropriate Design Code, Childrens' Codes and online safety regulation.

The privacy preserving, AI powered facial analysis solution has been growing in accuracy since launching in 2018 - estimating people's age to within 1.5 years in the key age checking range of 13-25. Today's announcement is a major step forward in helping businesses tailor their content and service for each audience. This allows children to thrive as well as be protected online. The technology is now accurate to an average Mean Absolute Error of 1.3 years for the years between 6 and 12 and 1.5 years for the years between 13 and 18.

When using Yoti's Facial Age Estimation, businesses can set an age threshold - i.e that someone is 18+ or under 13 to use a service or purchase an item. Customers simply look into their camera to prove their age with their face - there's no registration, no personal details stored, and the technology "always forgets a face". All information is instantly deleted once the site receives an estimated age.

Trained to work fairly across all skin tones, genders and ages, Yoti Facial Age Estimation has already performed over 550 million age checks for social networks, charities, retailers and more. Yoti built the solution with a strong ethical framework and principles to protect consumers and businesses alike:

- Facial analysis estimates age without identifying or recognising any individual person
- It can support billions of people who do or do not own an ID document and so promotes social inclusion
- Yoti openly states the accuracy for skin tone, age and gender in its [whitepaper](#)
- Privacy preserving to help people remain safe from surveillance
- No personal information is stored
- Promotes data minimisation in line with GDPR
- Speeds up, simplifies and secures the customer experience to reduce friction
- Compliant with PAS Online Age Checking 1296:2018, the national standard for Age Verification
- Builds trust between customers, businesses and society

Yoti's Age Estimation using Facial Analysis has previously received regulatory approval from the BBFC, KJM and FSM in Germany and was recognised by the UK's Age Check Certification Scheme (ACCS) for Challenge 25 retail sales, with its technical report stating:

“Yoti Age Estimation has been certified ACCS 0:2020 Technical Requirements for Age Estimation Technologies as fit for deployment in a Challenge 25 policy area and is at least 98.89% reliable.”

Robin Tombs, CEO of Yoti said: “The threats that children face online sadly continue to grow so I’m proud to introduce Yoti’s Age Estimation for under 13s. This technology will help businesses and regulators better protect young people with low friction while preserving privacy. We’ve now made it easy for platforms around the world to design services ‘age appropriately’. Yoti’s facial Age Estimation will help many different businesses comply with changing age regulation such as the new Children’s Codes.”

Yoti Facial Age Estimation can be used online via devices such as a smartphone, tablet or laptop. It can also be integrated into terminals to support sales on the high street. It is already used by social network Yubo, healthy eating app SMASH! and integrated into the flow of global self-checkout leaders NCR, Diebold and StrongPoint’s self-service technology. The technology can be integrated within less than one day, meaning there’s no costly or lengthy development needed.

For people that don’t want to use Yoti Age Estimation, the free Yoti digital ID app gives people a safe, convenient way to prove their age and identity online and in person. Individuals add their ID document and facial biometrics in a few minutes and have a verified, reusable digital ID that protects their data. This makes it simpler and safer to share sensitive personal details and allows people to prove their age without sharing any personal details.

We would like to thank the many organisations and people who have supported this work including:

Lorin LaFave, Founder Breck Foundation: *“Keeping children safer online is a collective priority for all of us, from the developing tech solutions to the education of children, parents and schools. By parents safely sharing their children’s photos today for Yoti to create better age verification techniques, children will have a safer and healthier online future.”*

John Carr, Online Safety Expert: *“We need tech solutions which enable people of all ages to be able to prove their age safely, not just people with ID documents. Yoti’s work through the ICO Sandbox could support many platforms to meet their obligations.”*

For more information, [please read the white paper](#).

===ENDS===

Notes to editors

About 'Mean Absolute Error' - Yoti Facial Age Estimation can make both positive and negative errors when estimating age (that is, it can estimate too high or it can estimate too low). By taking 'absolute' values of each error, we mean ignoring whether the error is positive or negative, simply taking the numerical size of the error. We then take the average (or 'arithmetic mean') of all those absolute error values, producing an overall 'MAE'. The average MAE can be measured as i) the average of each age year's MAE, ii) the average of each summary age range MAE or iii) the average of all the images in the training data. However, this data may be skewed towards certain ages with more training data.

About Yoti

Yoti is a digital identity and biometric technology company that allows organisations to verify identities and trusted credentials online and in person. Yoti's products span identity verification, age verification, document eSigning, access management, and authentication. Over 10 million people have downloaded the free Yoti app globally. Yoti is available in English, Spanish, French, German, Portuguese and Polish. Yoti is certified to ISO/IEC 27001:2013 for ID Verification Services, ISAE 3000 (SOC 2) Type 2 certified for its technical and organisational security processes.

For more information about Yoti, please visit: www.yoti.com

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