



LOCAL STARTUP IS ON CUTTING EDGE

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In a way, Cognitive Big Data Systems has done the easy part. Stephen Thaler, Ph.D., one of the Pensacola startup's three partners, has created artificial intelligence software with a wide range of potential applications.

When used in video surveillance, for example, it's far more than facial recognition or motion detection. In a workplace it could potentially learn to identify employees by their appearance, walk, voice and other characteristics, then sound an alarm if someone who doesn't fit enters.

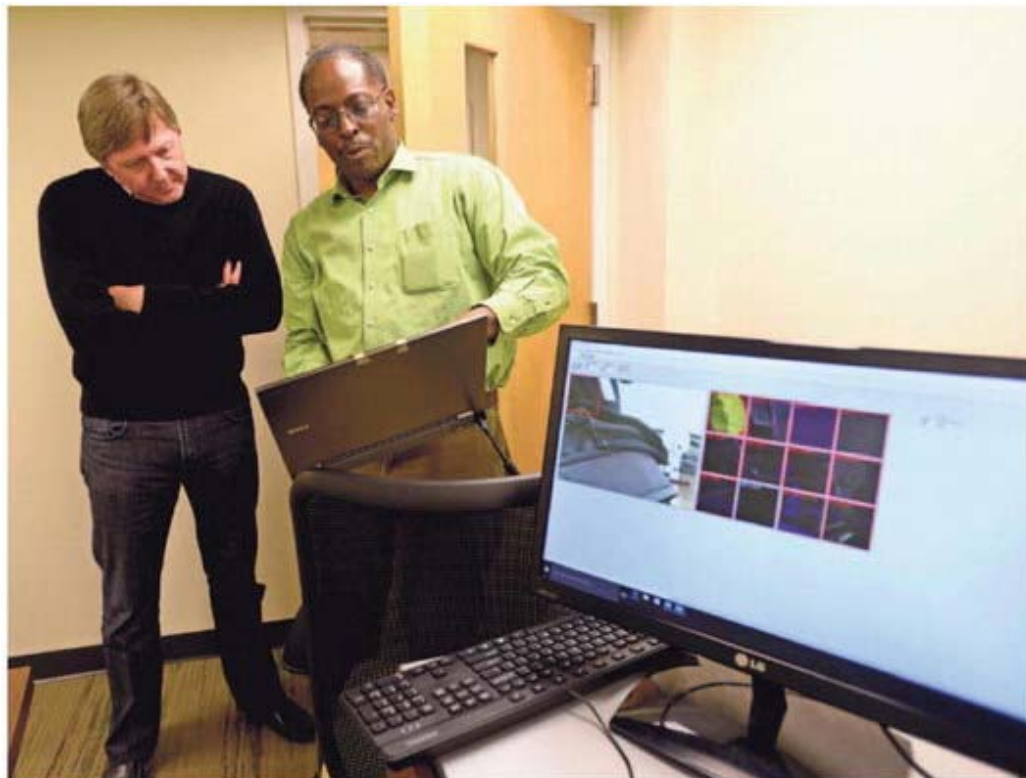
It can take video, sonar, radar and

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Lloyd Reshard pitches his intelligent sensing systems to potential investor Vernon Niven on Friday during an open house at Cognitive Big Data Systems.

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Lloyd Reshard pitches his intelligent sensing systems to potential investors Vernon and Evelyne Niven on Friday during an open house at Cognitive Big Data Systems.



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Surveillance

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even web traffic data, pick out patterns and send an alert when something out of the ordinary happens.

No, the hard part for Cognitive Big Data Systems will be narrowing down those possibilities for Thaler's patented technology, focusing on a market and growing its customer base within that one area.

Its software might one day find itself in a service robot or an agricultural drone, but for now, video surveillance is a direction the company will take.

CEO Lloyd Reshard, who spent 26 years working in the Air Force's research laboratory, recently completed a three-month accelerator program in Fort Walton Beach through Miami-based Venture Hive. Zeroing in on your customer's pain points was an emphasis of the program.

"You validate that there is a need for your product and service," he said Friday afternoon from a conference room in the DeVilliers Square Building. "Then you go back and see where the best fit in the market is for your product."

Reshard, Thaler and Vercell Vance are partners in the venture. They recently partnered with OnSSI, a video surveillance firm, seeing that field as the quickest path to commercialization. They are looking to hire a developer to integrate their software with OnSSI's to be used for loss prevention, real-time video analytics and to sense and track threats.

They have also secured a partnership with Haddington Dynamics to create a vision system for the company's robotic arm. A potential application is to identify defective parts in manufacturing. The system can learn what a correct part should look like and then identify defects down to the pixel level.

"For a small startup, it's hard to gain traction," Reshard said. "One way to get traction is to ride someone else's coattails."

Reshard held demonstrations Thursday and Friday for video surveillance companies and for potential investors. Among Friday's visitors was Vernon Niven, an investor in Flipboard and a member of the board of Pensacola-based Accountingfly with 25 years of software and online services experience.

One application he saw immediately was in drones, which are now limited because each drone needs its own pilot. An application that could make real-time decisions and make

notifications would solve a major pain point in the drone industry.

"It would be perfect for looking for forest fires using a drone," he said. "It can figure out what has changed (in the landscape) and what it should do."

Another potential partnership is in the works with Aldebaran Robotics to develop a sensing system for a humanoid robot. The company is at a stage where they need seed money to grow.

"I am definitely willing to take seed capital but I would prefer to identify early adopters," Reshard said.

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CEO LLOYD RESHARD



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