

Demand for technology to decrypt SA drivers' licenses increases

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During the Covid-19 lockdown, there has been an increased demand for technology solutions that make it easy to decrypt South African drivers' licenses.



According to Luke Dunstan, Executive Head of Sales of [Bidvest Mobility](#), providers of SA drivers' license and other mobile computing solutions, there has been an increase in security measures throughout SA due to lockdown, and this has spiked the need for technology by authorities and commerce to confirm the identity of people. "Coupled with this, the SA driver's license has become a key local identification verification document," he added.

"The SA driver's license stores a great deal of data in the barcode, such as initials, surname, identity number, driver's license number, date of issue, expiration date, etc. Also included in the barcode is the photograph of the bearer. The signature and biometric fingerprint are however not stored in the current version of the card," he explained.

The barcode on the reverse side of the South African driver's license is an encrypted barcode, which contains two keys: a private one to encrypt the data and store it in the barcode, and a public key which decrypts the barcode.

Dunstan explained how it works: "To decrypt the barcode, you require a copy of the public key which is linked uniquely to the serial number of the mobile device on which it is installed. This unique link generates an activation code that is loaded onto the device via a cloud-based server account and only needs to be done once. A mobile device with the relevant software application is required to decrypt the barcode."

There are varying models, but the most common method is for the decryption to be handled independently on the mobile device. "Breaking out to a server is not desirable in areas where connectivity is poor and as a result, this approach is recommended," said Dunstan.

“If you have a solution that is scan-intensive, or doesn’t allow for poor response times, then a good 2D imager or scanner is necessary,” he added. “An example of this would be an access control or guarding application, where you simply can’t afford a user to struggle to scan the barcode. Imagers are designed to scan barcodes and have better motion tolerance and depth of field than regular cameras found in phones and tablets.”

Mobile and desktop solutions comprising scanning hardware and software are necessary for [SA driver license decryption](#), and most devices used today are Android-based and come in varying IP ratings for specific deployment environments. A scanner preloaded with the driver’s license decryption algorithm can be connected via a USB port, or can be embedded into kiosks or boom gates, etc., or installed in its desktop stand. The PC software suite supports the scanner and it is ideal for over the counter applications.

In addition, biometric fingerprints can be linked to the driver’s license records or other security cards can be scanned, and the round-format vehicle license disks can also be linked to the vehicle’s driver.

About Bidvest Mobility

Bidvest Mobility, part of the Bidvest Group, has years of expertise in providing mobile computing and barcoding solutions that harness the power of mobile technologies to meet the most demanding business challenges whilst driving transformation throughout the supply chain.

By combining the best-in-class enterprise mobility components – the right mobility platform, application software, mobile technologies and a range of support services - Bidvest Mobility ensures the seamless planning, development, integration, implementation, and management of mobile applications to world-class standards. Their solutions are deployed across the supply chains of leading FMCG, retail, transport & logistics and industrial organisations throughout South Africa.

Bidvest Mobility is an authorised service and repairs centre for global brands of mobile and barcode computing technology that they deploy, with a national helpdesk to ensure that mission-critical solutions are always up and running.

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