



Verifone's Biometric Finger Scanner Could Stop Taxi Hijackings

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Verifone Systems, one of the U.S.'s largest [makers](https://www.inverse.com/topic/makers) <https://www.inverse.com/topic/makers> of taxi meters, is giving the cab a 21st-century makeover. The company is preparing to release a new in-car system this year with a number of upgrades, including a [biometric finger scanner \(https://www.inverse.com/article/19125-galaxy-note-7-iris-scanner-attempts-to-fix-the-fingerprint\)](https://www.inverse.com/article/19125-galaxy-note-7-iris-scanner-attempts-to-fix-the-fingerprint) that checks the identity of the driver at the start of every shift.

“When you think about the technology before, it was never part of the business to design (<https://www.inverse.com/topic/design>) the user experience,” Jason Gross, global head of product and marketing at Verifone, told *The Verge* (<http://www.theverge.com/2016/9/26/13035642/nyc-taxi-cab-android-touchscreen-tablet-verifone>) in a report published Monday. “It was a box with a bunch of buttons on it. This gives us an opportunity to make it beautiful.”

The scanner, placed next to the steering wheel, complements a number of other security upgrades. A new panic button gives drivers and customers added peace of mind, while security cameras could help police forces identify criminals after incidents have occurred.

The high-tech system is technically two distinct products. The passenger-facing system, known as “Ryde,” will provide customers with wifi, USB charging, and a 10-inch touchscreen for running apps (<https://www.inverse.com/topic/apps>). The driver-facing system, “Dash,” introduces a new seven-inch touchscreen to replace the fare meters of old.

It’s a major upgrade for an industry that has faced heavy competition from ride-sharing (<https://www.inverse.com/topic/ride-sharing>) services like Uber (<https://www.inverse.com/topic/uber>) and Lyft. The former has been focusing on improving its technical capabilities, slowly building out its self-driving fleet (<https://www.inverse.com/article/19898-uber-self-driving-cars-passengers-pittsburgh>) that could potentially serve major cities and provide an alternative to human-based drivers. Replacing the human driver would mean fingerprint-scanning traditional cars could be obsolete before a wider rollout.

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An Uber driverless Ford Fusion drives down Smallman Street on September, 22, 2016 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Verifone has tested the driver-facing components in New Orleans, Chicago, and Boston, and production is expected to increase next year. Uber may be occupied with driverless vehicles and long-term dreams of flying machines (<https://www.inverse.com/article/21396-jeff-holden-uber-could-use-flying-cars-within-a-decade>), but these are a long way off. Verifone's efforts may bring new life to a service many simply tolerate rather than enjoy, giving the yellow cab a fighting chance against Uber and the like. And hey, USB chargers are handy, right?

Hello! You've made it to the end of the article. *Nice.* Here's a related video you might like: "The Otto Self-Driving Semi-Truck"

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