



connective**touch**
secured and simplified™



Prince Edward Island
Canada

A Living Lab Case Study for Connective Touch



**UK COMPANY MAKES
SOFT LANDING
IN SUMMERSIDE
TO PURSUE NORTH
AMERICAN EXPANSION**



INTRODUCTION

Over the past two years, Connective Touch, a highly innovative UK technology company, has been preparing to launch into international markets by establishing in North America, and they have chosen to make Summerside, PEI their home.

Summerside Living lab, which allows companies, researchers, and developers to work with the community and its unique infrastructure to further product development, program applications, and product testing in a real-world setting, was embraced by Connective Touch. In doing so, they reduced the risks of expansion by establishing cost certainties, improving returns, and easing the start-up transition. For Connective Touch, it's been a story of determination, focus, supportive partnership, and success.

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THE BACKGROUND

Connective Touch has changed the landscape of security and independence through their entry systems with a technology-leading series of low-cost, reliable, and easy-to-use systems that have literally put everyone in touch with a safer world. It provides a simple and straightforward security solution for dwellings, schools, workplaces, and more.

Conventional security systems can fall short, locks can be picked or forced, and passwords can be stolen, forgotten, or lost. Even a modern system of keycards and fobs comes with an inventory that must be managed. With fingerprint biometrics, Connective Touch combines the highest level of encrypted protection with the most user-friendly control system on the market, thus making security simple.

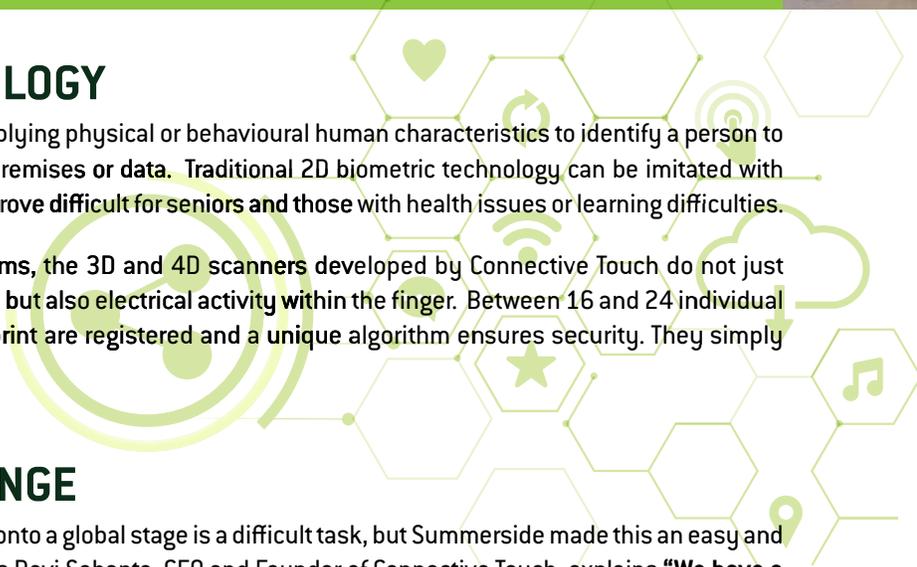
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THE TECHNOLOGY

“Biometrics” means applying physical or behavioural human characteristics to identify a person to grant them access to premises or data. Traditional 2D biometric technology can be imitated with fake imprints and can prove difficult for seniors and those with health issues or learning difficulties.

Unlike these 2D systems, the 3D and 4D scanners developed by Connective Touch do not just read optics of the print, but also electrical activity within the finger. Between 16 and 24 individual read points for every print are registered and a unique algorithm ensures security. They simply cannot be faked.



THE CHALLENGE

Taking this technology onto a global stage is a difficult task, but Summerside made this an easy and streamlined process. As Devi Sohanta, CEO and Founder of Connective Touch, explains “**We have a world-beating technology with accumulated intellectual property that is scalable, transferable, and versatile. We are the sole provider of our standalone biometric system which fits 90% of all institutional doors, but there is always just a small window of opportunity for disruptive innovations from smaller businesses before major names look to compete.**”

Devi continues by saying “I knew our future lay in rapidly exploiting the global opportunities for our products, starting with North America. It was recommended to look at how Summerside could be the answer by providing a manufacturing and marketing base.”

THE JOURNEY

September 2018 marked the start of the investment journey for Connective Touch. While visiting the UK on business, Mike Thususka, Director of Economic Development for The City of Summerside, met Devi for the first time and visited her office in Wales.

In November 2018, Devi visited Summerside to investigate our Living Lab program, understand doing business in North America, and meet with those interested in her offering. She visited two more times since to meet funding agencies, future customers, marketing professionals, manufacturing partners, local electricians, and to interview for her staff position.

“Seeing how the City could test out the products was a real eye-opener for me and demonstrated the effort Summerside was prepared to make to de-risk the product on this hugely diverse continent. I also had a series of strategic meetings and briefings with legal, financial, and institutional agencies that would play a pivotal part in supporting Connective Touch,” remarked Devi.



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THE PILOT

Through our networks, we approached three places to test out Devi's door systems. These locations were chosen to highlight how biometrics can benefit buildings of varying sizes, security levels, purposes, and occupants. The participants included the sectors of protective services, utilities, and social assistance. For two of the three participants, there are dozens of people accessing the door locks. In those cases, the accompanying software makes a significant difference since users can be added or subtracted instantly. Also, there's no need to track and manage a collection of keys or fobs.

Summerside Police Services: This is a highly secure building, and we selected the office door of the Chief of Police since it must be locked several times per day. With a Connective Touch system in place, he can come and go effortlessly. The Chief's office is one of the most secure rooms in the entire City, so our aim was to demonstrate the door system's benefit to other places that are both restricted and heavily travelled, such as hospitals, airports, universities, and government buildings.

♥ For Summerside Police Services it was installed in 1 door system.

Summerside Electric: This is a secure building that hosts a few dozen employees. These workers frequently come and go and oftentimes are carrying equipment. With Connective Touch readers in place, they simply scan a print. In this case, there are multiple installs within the main building that are collectively managed by the software. That is, any worker can be granted access to any of the installs from a central program. Demonstrating the technology in this setting makes an argument for others such as factories, wastewater plants, farms, and industrial settings.

♥ For Summerside Electric it was installed in 8 door systems.

Community Connections: This is an NGO that provides a range of services to adult persons with disabilities. Installs were done at their main building and a residential property. Connective Touch was founded to aid places like this, so including them was important to the company mandate. Some users from Community Connections have memory or motor problems, so not needing keys is an overt benefit. Testing the systems here shows their versatility and use for places like rest homes, psychiatric institutions, and residential properties.

♥ For Community Connections at the main building it was installed in 2 and at their residential property in 6 door systems.

THE FEEDBACK

Here is what the pilot participants had to say.

"I first met Devi in 2018 through the Department of Economic Development to trial a biometric door lock on my office door. It is still in use today with absolutely no issues. I found Devi to be a very likeable person and have nothing but praise for both her and her company. I would certainly deal with her again should the need arise." – **Dave Poirier**, Chief, Summerside Police Services

"The Connective Touch print readers have been a great asset to our building because they allow fast access into the building by staff without needing keys. With the network solution, we can scan fingerprints and deploy to all doors at once. Their technical support was also very responsive and helpful anytime we reached out." – **Gerald Giroux**, Electrical Engineer, Summerside Electric

"Devi's readers are reliable and suit our MacEwen Road residential property. Our tenants have special needs, and the readers provide them with a dependable and secure access to their apartments. There is less concern with keys being forgotten or misplaced. They simply come and go using only their prints." – **Frank Costa**, Executive Director, Community Connections



THE ADVANCEMENTS

Connective Touch places great emphasis on client feedback, including comments from the Summerside pilots. Devi is proud to report several improvements to their systems:

- ① Sensor now includes a protective hood and a heater to cope with Canadian winters
- ① Sensor has been upgraded to allow both wet and dry finger scans
- ① Security levels have been increased to determine the use case of each door access
- ① New antibacterial coating to eliminate the transmission of germs
- ① The registration and deletion of prints can now be done with an Android smartphone
- ① Build cost has reduced by 30%, which can be passed to the customer

THE FUTURE

After a partnership of two years between Connective Touch and Summerside, significant strides have been made. Devi claims **“We can harness the enormous potential of Canada’s trade agreements with over 40 markets, including the EU and North America.”**

Steady progress has been made in Vancouver, BC as more than 600 electricians have been contacted, with 50-60 weekly calls to raise product and business opportunities awareness. Property developers and distributor networks are being targeted for collaboration and engagement.

On the technical side, testing is underway to allow registration and deletion of prints with an iPhone. Also, new facilities management software is being developed. Last, a new system is in progress that uses facial recognition and takes the temperature of the person wanting access. This will be completely touchless and is particularly timely given the global pandemic.

She continues **“Funding streams have been established; manufacturing capability, premises, and key personnel identified; the product rigorously tested; potential outlets earmarked; a website is ready to roll; and we have the marketing muscle in place.”** Signing off, Devi concludes **“Breaking into new markets is never easy, but this has been a collective effort with the Summerside team alongside me every step of the way.”**

ABOUT LIVING LAB

Summerside’s Living Lab is a platform for industry to collaborate with government in exploring real-world issues and demonstrating how innovation can provide solutions. The overarching goal is to advance innovation and create export development opportunities in partnership with early start-ups or established enterprises, while assisting the City’s growth.



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TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CONNECTIVE TOUCH, CONTACT:

Devi Sohanta,
CEO and Founder
devi@connectivetouch.ca
www.connectivetouch.ca

Want to validate your technology for North American markets? We can help with that:

CONTACT:

Mike Thususka Ec.D.
Director of Economic Development

ph.: +1 (902) 432-0103
mike@summerside.ca
www.bigpossibilities.ca

In Summerside, we understand:

THE PROBLEM: A business faces challenges validating its technology through rapid testing, prototyping, and commercialization. Providing product credibility presents a major barrier.

THE SOLUTION: A municipality devoted to reducing development time and validation in a fail-fast/fail-cheap environment provides a unique opportunity for rapid commercialization. We make smart landing possible.

THE BOTTOM LINE: Summerside provides a robust and sophisticated environment with a unique range of empowering assets including its own electrical company, renewable energy, and fibre optic network. It operates in a completely open and mutually beneficial manner.

Come and grow with us!



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