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Mobiles to become the new 'maps'

A new mobile phone service is being developed which could soon help people who have become lost on their travels.

Engineers at Cambridge University are creating a system which uses photo-recognition software to find a person's location to within one meter.

Users can take a photo of the nearest building on their mobile handset and send it to the service along with details of where they should be.

Software recognises the building and sends directions via a text message.

Lost in Japan

The system was the idea of Roberto Cipolla, professor of information engineering at the university.

He decided it was a necessary tool after getting lost on his way to meetings in Japan.

His team has now developed a program which matches a photograph of a building with images on a database.

Tests have already been carried out using buildings on Bridge Street and Market Square in Cambridge.

Now the team is building a physical prototype which they hope will attract interest from mobile phone companies.



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