

NOVEMBER 2014

HELLO WORLD



Many people think up great ideas, but the creative people at SRI International actually make them work! For example, Ajay Divakaran, Program Director with SRI International, Princeton, NJ, leads a research and development team that develops computer vision and multimodal systems. One of their projects is Ceres — an application for smartphones that allows you to take a picture of food and learn its nutritional value, including calorie count.

With Thanksgiving on the way, I asked Ajay if Ceres would be able to take a picture of a typical Thanksgiving dinner plate and provide an analysis. He explained, “Our algorithm does not have X-ray vision, so it cannot sense what is inside a turkey. But it can certainly recognize a typical Thanksgiving dinner plate.” Ajay has demonstrated the food recognition system at many places, including Congress. To do so, he takes food samples with him in a big cooler called “wheelie cool.” He has a long list of wisecracks that people make about the cooler, especially when passing it through the security X-ray machines. Once, food was stored overnight in the demo room at NIH only to find out in the morning that the cleaning staff had thrown it out. Luckily, Ajay was able to run to the cafeteria and get food for the demonstration at the last minute. To test food recognition, the team puts together some truly ghastly combinations, such as chicken and cheerios, chicken and strawberries, and salad and fries. They will not admit to eating any of these combinations. In his travels, he is known for his “sedate” driving style that drives all his colleagues crazy when they ride with him — only to be utterly shocked that he got a speeding ticket, ironically on the way to a teleconference with the Federal Highway Administration.

Ajay is thankful on Thanksgiving and throughout the year. He and his wife are thankful for having a smart and lovely daughter who brings them joy. He is also thankful for having a job that has him working on so many interesting projects with so many smart people, and for all the kindness he has received from so many people all his life.

Thanksgiving — a day to pause and to give thanks. I would like to give thanks to my family, my co-workers and all the members of the credit union. Thank you to the vision of the ten SRI International employees who came together in 1957 to start the credit union — a great idea!

Steve Bowles
CEO/CFO

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Holiday SWEEPSTAKES

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Holiday HOURS

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Thanksgiving

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