

THE HANSEN REPORT ON AUTOMOTIVE ELECTRONICS

Editorial Notes

Dear Readers,

According to NXP, a leading supplier of vehicle access and immobilizer technology, such systems have reduced car theft by more than 90 % since they were first introduced more than two decades ago. However, in the USA the downward trend in vehicle thefts appears to have stalled. Car thefts were up by roughly 10 % in 2020, according to preliminary data from the National Insurance Crime Bureau. The economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic almost certainly factors into the car theft problem. But according to a New York Times piece earlier this year, "Police say forgotten fobs and keyless entry have contributed to soaring stolen car cases." Cars are getting stolen with the key fobs left inside the vehicle.

Keyless entry systems are wonderfully convenient. Drivers can enter and start their vehicles without having to search through pockets or possessions for their keys. But some drivers bring their keyless fobs into the vehicle in their hands and set it down somewhere, maybe in the cup holder. It appears too many of them are leaving the fob behind when they exit the vehicle.

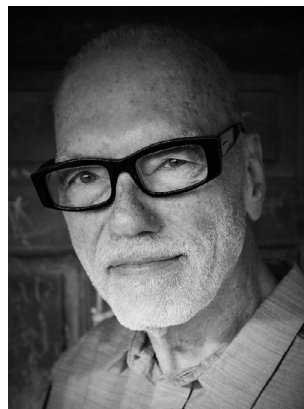
Answers to the key fob security problem are on the way. Carmakers have for years been exploring the applicability

of fingerprint, voice, facial and other biometric identification systems, not only for car access but to adjust vehicle settings, depending on who is at the wheel. Indeed, last fall General Motors introduced to the Chinese market its 2021 Cadillac XT4 with an optional unlocking and starting feature that uses Apple's Face ID technology. Since 2017 Apple has been using Face ID facial-recognition technology on its iPhones. More carmakers are sure to follow Cadillac's lead.

Sincerely, Yours



Paul Hansen
Editor



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