



COST ACTION CA22104
Behavioral Next Generation in Wireless
Networks for Cyber Security
(BEING-WISE)



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You scan the QR code. But do you know where it leads?

Every day, millions of people scan QR codes without a second thought. This carousel will change how you look at them.

 BEING-WISER AWARENESS SERIES

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

After this, you'll scan differently.

01

How QR codes work

What happens the moment you point your camera

02

Why they hide information

The destination is invisible until it's too late to pause

03

How to verify before you trust

Practical habits that take just a few seconds



You've scanned these. We all have.

 **Restaurant menus**

 **Parking meters**

 **Event badges**

 **Product packaging**

Familiar places make scanning feel routine. Routine makes us stop asking questions.

THE MECHANISM

A QR code is just a door. You can't see what's behind it.

A QR code encodes a destination; usually a URL. That destination is **invisible to the eye**. You only find out where it leads **after** your device follows the link.

1

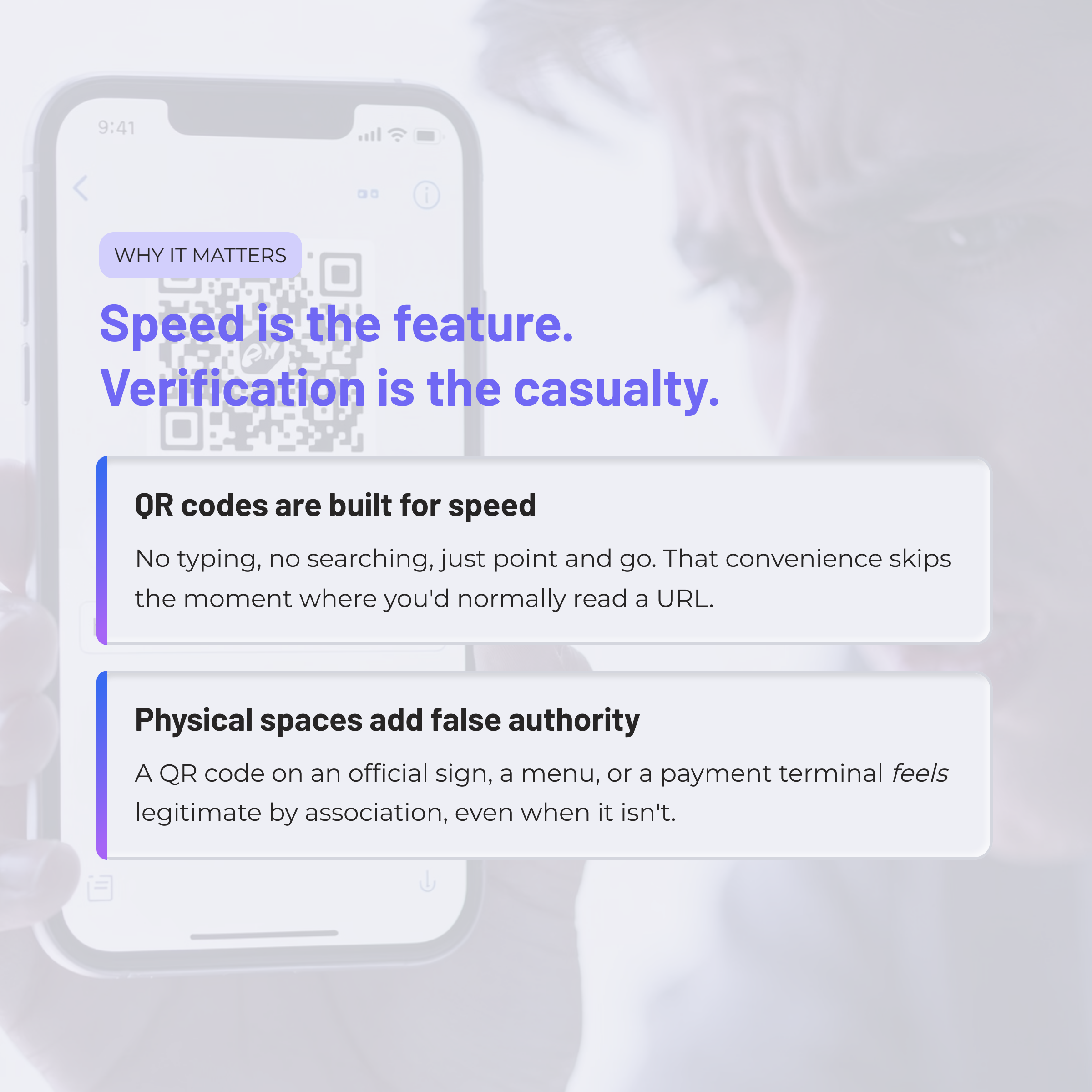
You see a square pattern

2

Camera decodes a URL

3

You land somewhere unknown



WHY IT MATTERS

Speed is the feature. Verification is the casualty.

QR codes are built for speed

No typing, no searching, just point and go. That convenience skips the moment where you'd normally read a URL.

Physical spaces add false authority

A QR code on an official sign, a menu, or a payment terminal *feels* legitimate by association, even when it isn't.



REAL-WORLD EXAMPLE

Same machine. Different destination.

A small sticker placed over a legitimate QR code on a parking meter. It looks identical. It feels official. But it leads somewhere else entirely.

- ❏ The QR code didn't change. The destination did. You couldn't tell by looking.

PAUSE & THINK

Would you scan this?

A QR code on a public poster. No logo. No brand. No explanation.
Just a code and a promise.

Most people would scan without hesitation. **What information do you actually have before you do?**

What you see

A square code in a familiar place

What you don't

The destination, the source, the intent

Five seconds before you scan.

1

Where is it placed?

Does the location make sense for this type of code?

2

Is it altered?

Look for stickers, damage, or anything placed on top

3

Does the preview URL look right?

Check the link your scanner shows before tapping

4

Are you being rushed?

Urgency is a manipulation tactic — slow down

5

Does the context add up?

Official sources, real brands, and trusted places leave clear signals



A QR code is easy to scan.

That doesn't make it easy to trust.

The code itself isn't the risk. **Blind trust is.** Pause for five seconds. Check the context. Read the preview. Awareness costs you nothing, and protects you from a lot.

"If you don't know where it goes, pause before you scan."

What makes a QR code feel trustworthy to you? Share your answer below and tag someone who scans without thinking. 📱

SAVE THIS POST. SHARE IT FORWARD.