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## Biological Signal Acquisition Tiers

by [Nick Clark](#) | Published March 27, 2026 | [PDF](#)

Biological signals vary enormously in quality depending on how they are acquired. The architecture defines three acquisition tiers, contact, semi-contact, and non-contact, each producing signals with characteristic fidelity, noise profiles, and operational constraints. Understanding these tiers as a structured hierarchy rather than competing alternatives enables identity systems that adapt their acquisition strategy to operational requirements.

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### What It Is

The three acquisition tiers define a structured hierarchy of biological signal quality. Contact tier involves direct physical interaction between the subject and a sensor, producing the highest-fidelity signals. Semi-contact tier involves proximity-based sensing without direct touch. Non-contact tier involves observation at a distance or through passive behavioral monitoring.

Each tier has characteristic signal-to-noise ratios, environmental sensitivity, and throughput limitations. These characteristics are not limitations to overcome but parameters to govern. The architecture treats signal quality as a first-class input to identity confidence computation.

## Why It Matters

Most biometric systems are designed around a single acquisition tier. A fingerprint reader is a contact system. A facial recognition camera is a non-contact system. When the system's tier is inappropriate for the environment, the system fails. A fingerprint reader fails outdoors in rain. A facial camera fails in darkness.

Tier-aware acquisition enables the system to select the most appropriate modality for current conditions and to explicitly account for signal quality when computing identity confidence. A low-quality non-contact observation contributes less to the trust slope than a high-quality contact observation, and the system knows this quantitatively.

## How It Works

Each acquisition event is tagged with its tier and a quality metric reflecting signal fidelity. The feature extraction pipeline applies tier-specific normalization to account for the characteristic noise profile of each tier. The trust slope accumulation function weights observations by their quality-adjusted contribution.

Tier transitions are governed by policy. Escalation from non-contact to contact requires consent. De-escalation from contact to non-contact occurs naturally when contact sensors are unavailable. The system maintains identity continuity across tier transitions by ensuring the underlying trust slope is tier-agnostic even though individual observations are tier-specific.

## What It Enables

Tier-aware acquisition enables identity systems that operate across diverse environments with explicit quality accounting. A single identity framework can govern entry to a building using contactless observation at the door, contact verification at a security checkpoint, and passive behavioral monitoring throughout the facility, all contributing to the same trust slope with appropriate quality weighting.

[Biological Identity All 21 steps →](#)

Identity from behavioral continuity. No stored templates. No keys.

Primary Technical Disclosure

[◦ Continuity-Based Biological Identity Using Trust-Slope Validation](#)

Secondary Technical

[◦ Biological Trust Slope Construction: Identity Through Behavioral Continuity](#)[◦ Contact, Non-Contact, and Passive Resolution Modes for Biological Identity](#)[◦ Biological Hash Generation With Domain Separation](#)[◦ Biological State Inference From Continuity Baseline](#)[◦ Cross-Modal Biological Hash Fusion](#)[◦ Biological Continuity as Handoff Verification](#)[◦ Relational Trust Trajectories: Trust as Temporal Relationship](#)[◦ Identity as Behavioral Continuity: Beyond Single-Point Capture](#)[◦ Biological-Device-Agent Identity Layering](#)[● Biological Signal Acquisition Tiers](#)[◦ Noise-Tolerant Feature Normalization for Biological Signals](#)[◦ Stable Sketching and Helper Data for Biological Features](#)[◦ Predictive Identity Trajectory: Forecasting Biological Identity Evolution](#)[◦ Population-Scale Collision Resistance for Biological Hashes](#)[◦ Adaptive Indexing of Biological Trust Slopes](#)[◦ Delayed and Sparse Validation for Disconnected Environments](#)[◦ Policy-Governed Capability Binding for Biological Identity](#)[◦ Multi-Identity Delegation Without Biological Data Disclosure](#)[◦ External Credential Integration With Trust-Slope Integrity](#)[◦ Anti-Spoofing Through Continuity Validation](#)[◦ Identity Lifecycle Management and Phase-Based Reseeding](#)[◦ Quorum-Based Biological Identity Recovery](#)[◦ Privacy Governance and Revocation for Biological Identity](#)[◦ Human-Agent Primitive Integration for Biological Identity](#)

Applications (General)

[◦ Airport Security Without Biometric Databases](#)[◦ Estate Verification Through Behavioral Continuity](#)[◦ Biological Identity for Elder Care Continuity](#)[◦ Biological Identity for Child Development Tracking](#)[◦ Biological Identity for Addiction Recovery Monitoring](#)[◦ Biological Identity for Workplace Safety Monitoring](#)[◦ Biological Identity for Athletic Performance](#)[◦ Biological Identity for Immigration Processing](#)

Applications (Specific)

[◦ TSA PreCheck Matches Templates, Not Continuity](#)[◦ Global Entry Verifies Documents, Not Biological Continuity](#)[◦ Face ID Matches a Stored Model, Not a Living Trajectory](#)[◦ Samsung Knox Guards the Container, Not the Identity](#)[◦ ID.me Verifies Documents, Not Biological Continuity](#)[◦ Secure Scores Risk at a Single Point in Time](#)[◦ Plaid Identity Verifies Financial Accounts, Not Biological Persons](#)[◦ Onfido Detects Document Fraud, Not Identity Drift](#)[◦ Veriff Captures Sessions, Not Trajectories](#)[◦ Trulioo Queries Databases, Not Biological Trajectories](#)

[Biological Identity overview →](#)

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