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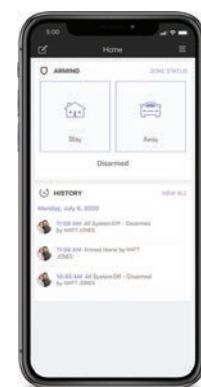
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2020, in New York City, has been canceled due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and continued restrictions on large events.

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seeking "reliable, easy-to-implement security solutions that eliminate touch points. While some companies are designing new solutions, others are choosing to retrofit solutions to support this touchless world that is unfolding before our very eyes. Aiphone has begun to look at how it can retrofit its solutions so that they support touchless measures by integrating a sensor as part of its video inter-



Paul Hefty

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chairman. "We're so pleased to deliver these award platforms and recognition to worthy technology providers that will help our members improve their businesses and better serve their customers."

On August 17-18, an esteemed judging panel of industry professionals collectively assessed the category winners during an interactive session. Judges grilled the presenters on value, ingenuity, purpose and business potential of the products and services they presented.

AWARDS *see page 4*



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Allied Universal builds up IT talent, capabilities

By Paul Ragusa

SANTA ANA, Calif.—Allied Universal's recent acquisition of New Jersey-based Service Works Inc. (SWI), a security and IT infrastructure integrator offering turnkey and custom solutions to clients nationwide, expands on its IT capabilities in the Tri-State area.

Allied Universal Chairman and CEO Steve Jones told Security Systems News that Allied Universal had been working with SWI for about a year on this deal as this type of acquisition “aligns perfectly with our strategy to target specific geographic territories in order to expand our technology services, especially within the Northeast.”

As an IT infrastructure integrator



offering turnkey and custom solutions to clients nationwide, SWI helps Allied Universal to build up this side of its offerings with more IT infrastructure solutions and inte-

gration, especially in the tri-state area, Jones noted.

“Safety and security have been among the leading drivers **IT** see page 14

ISC East decides to go virtual in 2020

By SSN Staff

NEW YORK—ISC East 2020, scheduled for Nov. 18-19, 2020, in New York City, has been canceled due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and continued restrictions on large events.

ISC see page 11

Touchless security

Post COVID, touchless security solutions look like they are here to stay

By Ginger Hill

YARMOUTH, Maine — “Touchless security.” This has become a major buzzword phrase — due to COVID, of course — as end user customers are seeking reliable, easy-to-implement security solutions that eliminate touch points. While some companies are designing new solutions, others are choosing to retrofit solutions to support this touchless world that is unfolding before our very eyes. Aiphone has begun to look at how it can retrofit its solutions so that they support touchless measures by integrating a sensor as part of its video inter-



Paul Hefty

com systems.

Paul Hefty, technical sales and support engineer II, has been a part of Aiphone Corporation for approximately 35 years, during that time, serving in various roles. “I started building products in the back, but I got tired of burning my hands with the soldering iron, so I picked up the phone [to request a different job],” he told Security Systems News. “At this stage of the game, I’m involved with our tech group, supporting the customers, specing out jobs, etc. as well as interfacing with our engineering staff and working with the marketing group and sales team. My team

TOUCHLESS see page 9

TechVision, People's Choice ESX winners

By Ginger Hill

YARMOUTH, Maine—As the exclusive media partner with Electronic Security Expo (ESX) in announcing the 2020 ESX TechVision Challenge and People's Choice Award winners, a “Shark Tank” style business pitch to identify the best product or service, the Security Systems News team is excited to share this year's recipients. Traditionally held in conjunction with the in-person ESX conference, this year's TechVision Challenge and People's Choice Award proceeded as a virtual contest.

“We're truly appreciative of the opportunity to present the 2020 TechVision Challenge program and introduce the People's Choice Award this year, despite the unprecedented circumstances that postponed the in-person ESX conference,” said George De Marco, ESX chairman. “We're so pleased to deliver these award platforms and recognition to worthy technology providers that will help our members improve their businesses and better serve their customers.”

On August 17-18, an esteemed judging panel of industry professionals collectively assessed the category winners during an interactive session. Judges grilled the presenters on value, ingenuity, purpose and business potential of the products and services they presented.

AWARDS see page 4



George De Marco



Video



Security



IOT



Fire

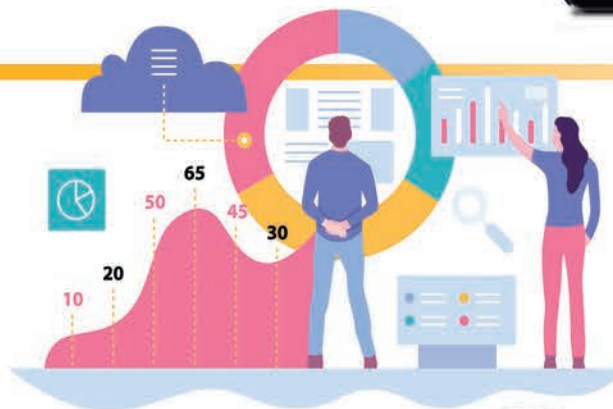


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NEWS

BRIEFS

SIA and ESA launch foundation for advancing security talent

SILVER SPRING, Md.—The Security Industry Association (SIA) and the Electronic Security Association (ESA) have partnered to launch the Foundation for Advancing Security Talent (FAST), a new 501(c)(3) non-profit organization designed to promote careers in the physical security technology and life safety industry.

The goal for FAST is to connect passionate, innovative professionals with new opportunities in electronic security and life safety.

"Whenever we talk to SIA members about their greatest challenges, they universally put recruiting talent into the security industry and workforce development at the top of the list," Pierre Trapanese, chairman of the SIA Board of Directors said in the announcement. "FAST will help our entire industry to be more competitive in what has become a 'war for talent' among all tech sectors. We are excited to partner with ESA to address an issue that we know is just as critical to the future of the industry as the continued development of technology."

The new FAST website offers job seekers information about the security industry's growth and unique position at the convergence of cutting-edge technology and a mission that matters, the types of roles available in the industry and what employers are looking for and a jobs board featuring immediate opportunities in security technology and life safety. SIA and ESA members will be able to list jobs for free for the next 12 months to help the industry recover from the COVID-19 pandemic's business impact.

PSA Technical Committee provides guide to machine learning and AI

WESTMINSTER, Colo.—Created on behalf of the PSA Technical Committee by Joshua Akre, Performance Engineering Manager at Northland Controls, The Basics of Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence and Physical Security provides some solid guidance and insight into key technologies that have often been confused, misunderstood and even overhyped.

Here is a sample: "Machine learning is a growing trend in the physical security industry due to its pattern recognition capabilities. Machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI) can automatically monitor social media feeds, advertisements, and recommended searches; identify spam emails; perform facial and image recognition, and has even given us self-driving cars. All of these examples are made possible through a trained model that recognizes patterns and makes accurate decisions based on those recognitions. This article is a basic introduction to what makes machine learning and artificial intelligence possible including data sets and neural networks, and how they benefit the physical security industry."

SIA questions Portland's facial recognition ban

SILVER SPRING, Md.—The Security Industry Association (SIA) said that the decision by the Portland, Ore. city council to ban facial recognition technology use by businesses in places of public accommodation starting January 2021 and to prohibit all city government use of facial recognition technologies are shortsighted decisions that do not consider effective and beneficial applications of facial recognition.

"Turning back the clock on technological advancement through a complete ban on private-sector use of technology that clearly keeps our fellow citizens safe is not a rational answer during this period of social unrest in Portland," SIA CEO Don Erickson said. "It is hardly a model approach to policymaking that any government should adopt. Let's act together now to thoughtfully educate the public about the legal and effective use of facial recognition technology while being

mindful of legitimate questions raised about the impact of this technology on all stakeholders, including communities of color. We continue to invite local leaders across the country to work with us to develop more sensible approaches to the use of facial recognition."

The Portland ordinance prohibiting private entities' use of facial recognition technologies affects any business providing goods, services or other accommodations to the public and will impact businesses' ability to protect workers, customers, facilities and property, since it effectively targets business use of security systems.

SIA's Senior Director of Government Relations, Jake Parker, provided testimony at the Portland city council hearing on Sept. 9 in opposition to these prohibitions.

As part of the council's discussion, Portland Councilwoman Jo



Ann Hardesty stated prior to the vote, the council would revisit the ban where there is technology that is not racially biased and is tested by independent third parties.

SIA noted that such technology is available today, and in July, SIA authored and submitted a letter to Portland's mayor and city council, noting the National Institute of Standards and Technology's research that documented high-performing algorithms perform equally well across different demographics. The letter stated: "The National

Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the world's leading authority on this technology, found last year that the highest performing technologies had 'undetectable' differences across demographic groups—accuracy rates well above 99% and undetectable false positive differences across demographics, even when tested against galleries of up to 12 million images."

SIA believes all technology products, including facial recognition, must only be used for purposes that are lawful, ethical and nondiscriminatory. **SSN**

SPECIFICALLY SPEAKING

John
Weston

Owner

Unified Network Consulting
LLC
Dallas, Texas



Please talk about your security consulting firm and your role as owner?

Unified Network Consulting, LLC is a technology consulting and project management firm that provides services for the planning, design, solution procurement and execution of any size project. We have more than 25 years of experience leveraging the complex aspects of the planning, designing, procurement and commissioning of technology projects. As new technologies are converging rapidly, most of our projects now involve multiple practice areas, especially where there are requirements for integrated systems.

I personally design/specify for access control (door hard-

ware coordination is included), intrusion, video surveillance and parking control, as well as complete a/v projects including control centers and the wired and wireless data networks to run all of it. I also do project management and construction administration.

What vertical markets do you specialize in? Any interesting projects you are working on?

Key vertical markets that we specialize in include government, healthcare and enterprise locations.

In terms of interesting new projects, I am wrapping up a new smart city project for one of my clients that includes a mmwave broadband network

SPEAKING see page 11

VPN usage soars, helps boost cybersecurity

By Ginger Hill

WITH MORE and more of us working from home — approximately 4.7 million in the U.S. — cybercriminals are cleaning up, wreaking havoc on individual's lives and businesses alike. In fact, IBM's "Cost of a Data Breach Report" pegs the average cost of a security breach at \$3.92 million.

However, people across the world are fighting back, using VPNs, Virtual Private Networks to hide their Internet Protocol (IP) address and their geographical locations from prying eyes. New research by Atlas VPN found H1 2020 filled with 134 million VPN applications downloaded from 85 countries.

Most downloads were from the U.S., reaching 19,935,032 downloads in the first half of 2020.

When companies offer VPN access to their employees, communications become harder to hack because VPNs automatically encrypt; thereby, offering secure remote access.

Remaining anonymous while online protects not only protects against identity theft and fraud, but allows sensitive transactions

to take place safely and securely.

Hackers track IP address activity and use their research to plan how to hack a system. VPNs designate new IP addresses each time it is launched, making users' activity untraceable.

VPNs also send data privately via a process called tunneling and use encapsulation that places data packets inside another data packet prior to traveling through the Internet, creating layers of protection around the data.

VPN can make a hacker's attempts to penetrate a system more difficult, which increases their time commitment of hacking the system, forcing them to move on to other unsuspecting systems that aren't as protected.

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M&A activity on the upswing after early slowdown

By Paul Ragusa

YARMOUTH, Maine—Results from Security Systems News' recent News Poll confirm what we here at SSN have been seeing over the last few months within security, which is a noticeable increase in M&A activity.

The arrival of COVID earlier this year may have put a temporary delay on some deals, but over the past few months the M&A landscape has certainly opened up, with deals both big and small making headlines recently.

Looking big picture, three quarters of respondents agree that there has been an uptick in mergers and acquisitions lately, with 50 percent saying, "yes," and 25 percent seeing "somewhat" of an increase. The remaining 25 percent did not see any change in M&A activity.

"Consolidation makes sense as income from RMR is a proven source of stability during the pandemic," noted one respondent. "RMR is the reason the traditional alarm industry has shown resiliency in past recessions as well as now during

these uncertain times."

Mark Buckley, technical sales trainer, DSC, noted that many of the recent acquisitions, such as the Johnson Controls-Qolsys deal, had been "years in the works."

Getting back to the value RMR brings, another reader pointed out, "Buyers want to protect their investment from attrition, and they want for sellers to share in the risk of a rapidly changing market. Both the Google investment in ADT and the Brinks/Protect America acquisition

point toward a lower multiple being paid for accounts. Companies that are not showing consistent and strong growth, ability to manage attrition and ability to drive positive cash flow after debt service will continue to be valued at reduced levels."

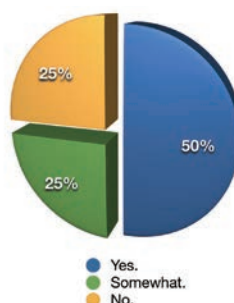
Interestingly, 62 percent of those polled said that it is a "buyer's" market, with just 25 percent saying it's a "seller's" market and the remaining 12 percent saying they were "not sure."

"Consolidation makes sense as income from RMR is a proven source of stability during the pandemic."

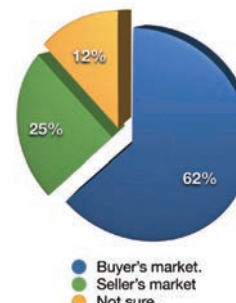
—News Poll respondent

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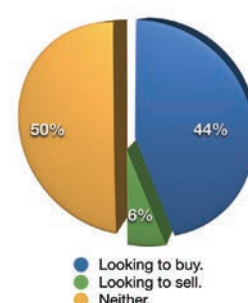
Has there been an uptick in M&A?



Is it a buyer's or seller's market?



Is your company looking to buy or sell?



Responses to that question were further validated when readers were asked, "Is your company looking to buy or sell in the near future?" with 44 percent saying they are looking to buy and only 6 percent saying they were looking to sell; the remaining 50 percent said, "neither."

"We, as buyers, are very concerned about attrition due to COVID-19 and the economy tanking with an anti-

ipated slow recovery in the commercial markets for retail, restaurants, day care, office buildings, and hospitality likely leading to business closures and long term unemployment," one respondent said. "What will attrition look like in late 2020 and all of 2021? Very uncertain and will require larger and longer holdback amounts leading to sellers sit on the sidelines." **SSN**

ESX AWARDS

Continued from page 1

"The finalists were extremely well-prepared," Steve Firestone, president of Select Security and veteran shark judge, said. "The technology presented was state-of-the-art, with tremendous upside from a business and market need perspective. These participants made our job as judges difficult, in the best way."

Chosen for their innovative design, utility and market potential from the top ten rated category winners of the ESX Innovation Awards program, the following took home the wins:

2020 TechVision Challenge Winner: Xandar Kardian, Inc.

Smart Home System Using Radar and 2020 Innovation Award Category Winner: Smart Home

"Fun fact," Sam Yang, managing director and co-founder of Xandar Kardian, Inc. told SSN. "One of the first locations we've commercially deployed our technology was at an international airport — one of the largest in the world — for security purposes! Being able to detect presence by detecting human vital signs makes it [Radar] the most powerful presence sensor in the world. This led us to start focusing on this market from 2017, and naturally, the ESX Innovation Award was always something we wanted to apply for as we gained more traction around the world."

When asked what being the 2020 TechVision winner means to him and his team, Yang compared it to the film industry's yearly televised award ceremony.

"It feels like winning the Oscars for the security industry," Yang exclaimed. "This is the first time we applied for the award, and having won two categories, we are extremely honored and excited at the same time. Winning the TechVision Challenge

was a complete surprise and we are ever more grateful for the award."

It took Xandar Kardian nine years of working hundreds of 16 plus hour days to get to where they are today, but they wouldn't have it any other way.

"For years, people were confused about who we are and what we were doing," Yang said. "But we had one goal: whether we are at work, traveling through an airport, sleeping in a hotel or living in our homes, people occupy space. A space is always static and

people are always creating dynamic vibration from motion and breathing."

Xandar Kardian's belief is that what is used to secure banks and airports, for example, should be used to secure people's most sacred place — their homes.

2020 TechVision Challenge Runner Up: Alula

Slimline TouchPad and 2020 Innovation Award Category Winner: Electronics/Control Systems/Networking

Alula is an all-in-one provider of security hardware and interactive services that offers Security Pro partners a cutting-edge platform to generate recurring revenue for security, video and automation services.

"We know the TechVision Challenge is where the security and IoT industry shows

off the most innovative new products," Dave Mayne, VP of product at Alula said. "The Slimline Touchpad is the hottest, most cutting-edge interface for the Professional Smart Security market in 2020."

Being the 2020 TechVision Challenge Runner up, Alula took the chance to highlight their partners' feedback.

"Our partners have told us the Slimline Touch is a system-seller that really 'wows' the end user, so we are honored that the Slimline Touchpad was voted in the Top 2

Most Innovative Security Products of 2020!"

2020 People's Choice Award Winner: Alarm.com

On-Site Wrap Up and 2020 Innovation Award Category Winner: Installation/Service Tools

Because ESX Award winners are viewed as outstanding solution for the security industry, Alarm.com saw this as the perfect chance to

demonstrate the extreme value the company brings to their partners, which positively affects technicians as well as end user customers.

"Working closely with our partners, we share a deep understanding of their day-to-day obstacles and what's required to tackle them," Adam Brandfass, Alarm.com product management director, explained. "Our team works tirelessly to develop and improve exclusive solutions, like our MobileTech application that addresses a variety of issues affecting both the technicians' job and the partners' business operations. This challenge presented a unique opportunity to demonstrate the value of one of MobileTech's key features, On-Site Wrap Up, which we felt aligned perfectly with the

objective of this challenge."

To work closely with partners, to really listen, understand and then create solutions that genuinely help, teamwork is essential.

"Our team is extremely determined and passionate about helping our partners solve problems and improve their business," Brandfass said. "Being voted the first-ever ESX People's Choice Award winner is a testament to [our] hard work and also underscores the positive impact people see On-Site Wrap Up having within the security industry."

Alarm.com's partners and their customers always come first.

"As is the case with so many other Alarm.com software and hardware solutions," said Brandfass. "Features like On-Site Wrap Up result from open lines of communication we've established with them [partners] over the years. The feedback, ideas and perspectives we collectively share help us constantly evolve our solutions to meet the growing needs of our diverse user base. Exceptional service and high customer satisfaction are critical to the success of us all."

ESX thanks all who contributed to the success of the 2020 Innovation Awards, 2020 TechVision Challenge and the new addition this year, the 2020 People's Choice Award.

As one of the companies who took home a 2020 Innovation Award in the category of Commercial Automation/Control Systems/Networking, DICE captures the heart of all the awards.

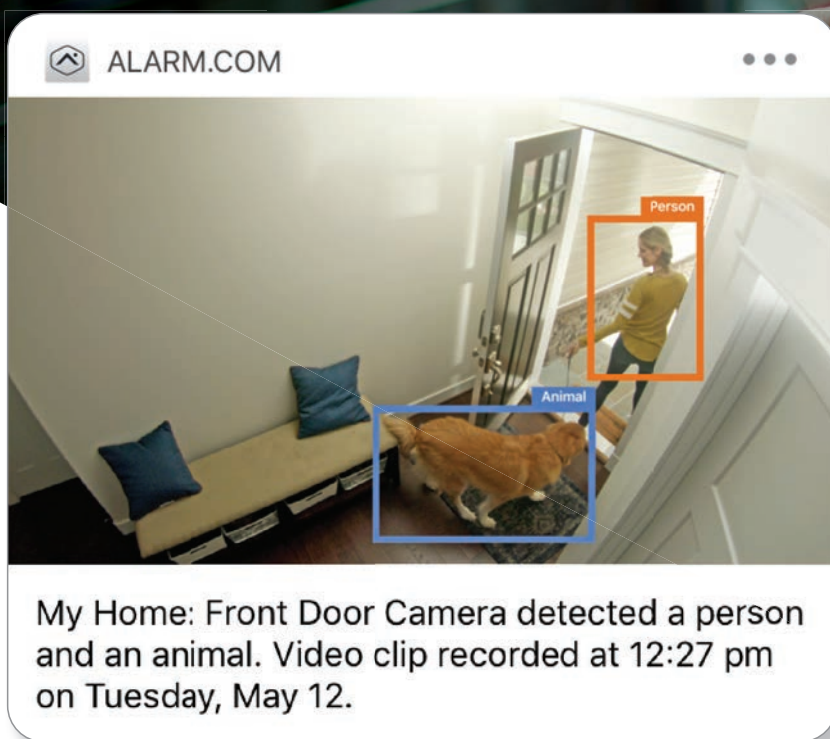
"Winning the award would be great," Avi Lupo, co-president, DICE, thought. "But, we also felt the Innovation Awards gave us a chance to share important information and this solution with the industry. Our team works hard on understanding the needs of security professionals and coming up with technology solutions to meet those needs." **SSN**





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SIA Women in Security Forum scholarship winners

Security Systems News gets to know a few of the inaugural winners in the WISF scholarship program

By Ginger Hill

YARMOUTH, Maine—Last month, the Security Industry Association (SIA) — with the help of the organization's Scholarship Selection Committee and Human Resources Committee — chose 12 recipients for the inaugural Women in Security Forum (WISF) Scholarship, a program developed by WISF to further educational opportunities and promote advancement for a diverse security workforce.

"The SIA Women in Security Forum continues to break new ground, inspire me and many others, and provide unique opportunities for the widest spectrum of people possible to thrive in this field through initiatives like this new scholarship offering," SIA CEO Don Erickson said in the announcement. "We congratulate this talented and historic first class of SIA Women in Security Forum Scholarship winners and look forward to celebrating their many accomplishments to come."

Each of the following awardees received \$6,650 from generous donors within the security industry to use toward continuing education and professional development courses, conferences or webinars; SIA program offerings; repayment of student loan debt and/or other academic or education programs:

- Ryane Burke, partner marketing and events manager, Identiv;
- Margurie Evans, SIA student member; event security lead, Phoenix Suns;
- Antoinette King, key account manager – end user, Axis Communications;
- Kavya Madhusudhan, senior project engineer, Allegion;
- Erin Mann, customer experience and strategy marketing manager, multifamily, Allegion Canada Inc.;
- Daphne Navarro, SIA student member;
- Sheethal Rao, mechanical engineer, Allegion;
- Jenna Rolfe, SIA student member; junior readiness and security policy officer, Global Affairs Canada;
- Joneka Russell, security officer, Allied Universal;
- Holly Sanson, marketing manager, ADT Commercial;
- Kerri Sutherland, human resources business partner, Axis Communications; and
- Rachel Wyatt-Swanson, director of business development, Cherokee Nation Security & Defense.

As a fellow member of WISF and a security industry journalist, I had the pleasure of speaking with a few of the scholarship winners. Listening to each heart-felt story allowed me to capture the essence of and put into perspective the core of our industry. I invite you to pause for a few minutes and really hear what these women had to say.

A fluke, but the best one ... ever

Erin Mann dedicated four years at DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana, and upon graduation, she didn't have a job.

"It was really tough for me because I was a really involved student," Mann told Security Systems News. "I had so many extracurriculars; I considered myself a high performer ... 'I'll have no problem getting a job,' she told herself."

She paused, smiled and giggled. "Didn't work out for me."

She ended up moving home with her parents, only to discover that was the best thing that could have happened for her because it gave her some time to sit back and really appreciate that she just went through four years of school.

"I made several meaningful connections; what I learned was incredible; and I needed a couple of weeks 'off,'" she said.

Afterwards she did what most college graduates do: sent out job applications and posted her resume at various places, but it was a call during a shopping trip that changed everything.

"It was a total fluke!" Mann laughed, when asked how she got into the security industry. "I was actually in Home Depot with my aunt looking at door knobs and I got an email from a recruiter from Allegion who found my resume online and said I was a great match for an entry-level marketing position. I had no idea what Allegion was because at the time, it had only spun off from Ingersoll Rand three years prior."

She did her research and called her dad asking, 'hey, do you know anything about Schlage?' He answered, 'oh yeah, they make great door locks.' So, she accepted the recruitment call, had a few follow up calls and was brought in for interviews.

"Within a two-week window, [I] was offered the position; packed my bags, moved from Cleveland [to Canada] and haven't looked back since," she said.

So, talk about a fluke ... it was approximately two and a half years before Mann decided to really get involved in the industry, seeking out opportunities. For her, it all started when she applied for (and received) the SIA RISE Scholarship at a time when she was starting her third role with the company.

"It was a really sexy position," she said, "working with 'MegaTechs' and the future of the industry and the way access control is changing. I was like, 'wow, this is the cool side of the business!'"

Mann credits SIA's RISE community for getting her involved within the industry as a whole, blooming out into other opportunities, such as the WISF.

When Mann found out about the first-ever WISF scholarship, she went back and forth internally just because she had recently won the RISE Scholarship back in 2019 and she used that to do take some online courses that helped her with the role that she was in.



Erin Mann



"I have been doing a lot for the industry from an inclusion and diversity standpoint ... female empowerment is a huge cause for me so I'm trying to ramp up my involvement within the industry," she explained. "This might be another good way to benefit from some of the groups that have the same interests that I do."

Finally arriving at a decision of 'why not?' with the allure that the scholarship funds could be used for loan repayment, Mann submitted her application.

"I actually sent in my application on the last day," she admitted. "I was absolutely shocked but totally honored to be chosen, and the fact that it was double what it was supposed to be was an extra surprise!"

(The original scholarship amount was around \$3,000; however, because of the generosity of donors, it jumped up by over half!)

Mann lives by her mother's mantra in which she and her sister were raised with and she offers it to other women as advice: 'if you do something, do it to the best of your ability, do it so well that no one can take your achievements away from you.'

"That's been really central to how I approach anything," she explained. "If you don't give anyone a reason to try and take 'it' away from you, they can't."

In the same breath, Mann added that in addition to her mother's words the following must be added: "When you experience someone putting their hand out to pull you up, your responsibility is to extend your other hand and pull someone up with you. The best thing that women can do in the industry, especially one that is still slightly male dominated, is to use the trail that you blaze to make it easier for people coming after you."

It's all about embracing opportunities

Mechanical engineer, **Sheethal Rao**, views SIA's WISF as a valuable opportunity.

"SIA-WISF is a great connecting platform as well as an opportunity to budding engineers like me to get connected with security professionals and grow in this competitive industry," Rao explained to SSN.

Determined to set an example for other women within the security industry as it strives to keep the world safe and

security with necessary products and technologies, she encourages women that the security industry is no longer a male dominate industry.

"I see women working in high profile positions and leading the industry," Rao noted. "I strive to set an example for women and let them know that the security industry is no different from other verticals and it provides equal career opportunities to grow. There is constant need for technology and innovation in the security industry; hence, I would like to ask women to consider opportunities in the security industry."

Taking her own advice, she discovered the SIA WISF Scholarship in one of Allegion's internal articles and she was encouraged to apply. This was yet another opportunity to embrace.

"Being a woman, I want to stay competitive in the mechanical domain," said Rao. "This scholarship proved to be a good platform for me to learn and grow in my career."

Rao is planning on using her scholarship winnings to pursue and take courses that enhance her technical and managerial skills as she believes this will enable her to provide innovative solutions and products to the market and contribute to new business opportunities within the industry. But this scholarship also did something for her that, quite frankly, money can't buy.

"Winning the scholarship uplifted my confidence and self-belief," she said.

Within the course of our conversation, Rao mentioned that she sees it as an "honor" to be a part of SIA and WISF to encourage diversity within the safety and security industry. To help promote more of this, along with inclusivity, she believes the right place to initiate change is at the college campus level.

"Campus industry drives and initiatives for female graduates to help them understand the potential opportunities in the security industry [is necessary]," explained Rao. "Also, organizations can help maintain an appropriate gender ratio by providing

SCHOLARSHIP see page 8



Sheethal Rao



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Scholarship winners

Continued from page 6

equal opportunities to women. Making any organization a safe place to work; treating all employees equally; and not showing any discrimination based on race, gender and disability promotes inclusivity, diversity and women more within the security industry."

The opportunities are there; just take action.

For the love of security

Growing up as Chickasaw Native American, **Rachel Wyatt-Swanson** feels very lucky and was actively involved in the Chickasaw Nation.

"They provided me several scholarships in college so I could go to American university and intern for federal agencies in college," Wyatt-Swanson told SSN, adding that she always knew working in government was something she wanted to do.

She took action, transforming her 'want' into reality.

"I started working on Capitol Hill for Congressman Joel Hefley out of Colorado Springs, Colorado," she said. "He did some work on the Armed Services Committee and I got pretty involved with that, working as their legislative aid in the system for about a year."

Afterwards, Wyatt-Swanson went to

work for Northrup Grumman running their business development for their anti-terrorism force protection group. "We held the Navy anti-terrorism force protection contract and were very successful," she said. "It started me down the physical security path."

After of doing anti-terrorism force protection, Wyatt-Swanson discovered that security was her calling.

"The thing that I love about security is, you get to protect either your country's or your company's two most vital assets, which are first and foremost, its people and it's about safety and, then secondly, their facilities and all of their infrastructure," she explained. "I go to bed at night and sleep pretty well knowing that I help secure and make the world a safer place."

Wyatt-Swanson has always had a passion for promoting women, increasing her career objectives and looking for mentors and people that she can mentor. She found SIA really gives



Rachel Wyatt-Swanson

people the opportunities and ability to get involved and participate in whatever passion suits them within the industry.

"A friend of mine and I actually wrote a paper about the need and importance of more women managers in the security field," she noted. "At the same time, they [SIA] were putting together the Women in Security Forum. I attended their first meeting at ISC West and recently joined their membership committee and will be reaching out to potential new members and helping to really grow the security industry."

As a winner of WISF's scholarship, Wyatt-Swanson initially thought she would obtain her PMP or her certified capture manager credential, but after much consideration, she felt it would be better used paying off some of her student loans.

"I received my MBA in 2015 from the University of Maryland and I've been working very hard to try and pay those [student loans] down over the years," she said. "This scholarship will actually satisfy over 50 percent of that repayment. That will allow me to get more continuing education classes from SIA in the future."

Wyatt-Swanson definitely recommends the security industry as a viable, supportive industry for women to seek out and consider for a career.

"The security industry is a wonderful industry where you're able to

give back," she said. "More importantly, you're able to create a safe atmosphere and environment for those around you and in the world."

As a supporter of mentorship, she recommends that people joining the security industry reach out and find a mentor to gain guidance from.

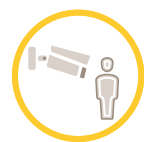
"The people that I've interacted with, met and worked with throughout the last 15 years in the security industry have really help shape me and guide me, and allowed me to grow in the right environments and the right opportunities as my career has flourished."

At the end of the day, when she turns her light out in her office to head home, a sense of pride washes over her.

"Cherokee Federal gives 100 percent of its profits back to the Cherokee Nation," said Wyatt-Swanson. "[These profits] then go on to support education programs, health programs, construction programs to make lives better for the Cherokee Nation throughout the United States and on its tribal land there in Eastern Oklahoma. It's something I'm really proud of, working for a company that literally dedicates a hundred percent of its resources to go back to the tribe or to strengthen one of the businesses. It's really incredible to see what the tribes overall, but especially the Cherokee Nation, can do." **SSN**

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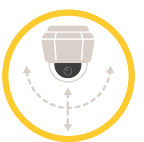
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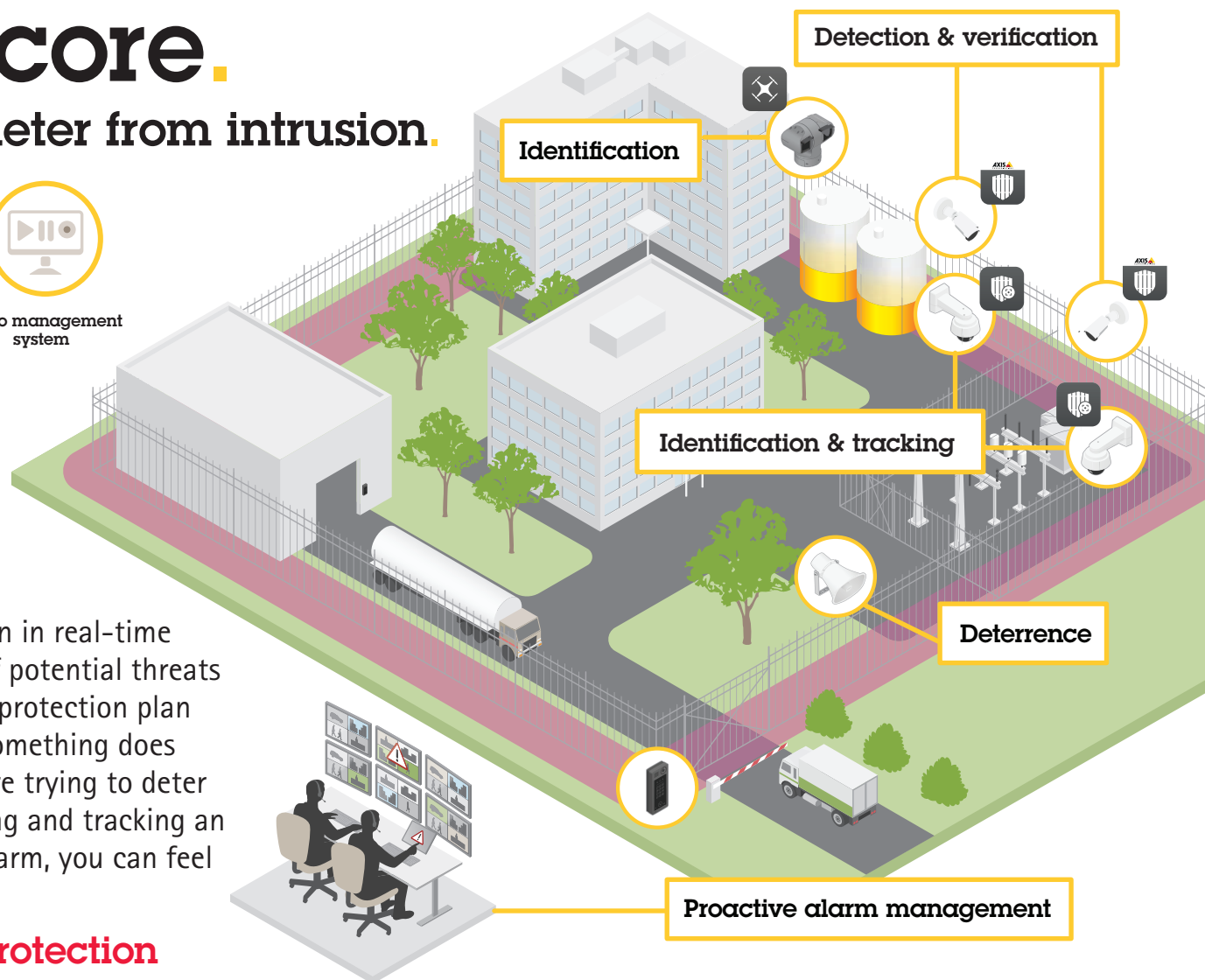
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All in the chip: shifting from 'sensors' to 'perceivers'

By Ginger Hill

YARMOUTH, Maine—Motivated to find a way to take cloud-level analytics, which are useful to do face recognition, object detection and voice understanding, and put that ability at the edge, Steve Teig, CEO of Perceive, and his team went to work using machine learning and neural networks to build and deploy software, tools and a tiny chip, ERGO, that makes it possible to keep digital analytics at the edge.

"The objective of my effort, Perceive, is trying to upgrade the whole idea of the sensor into something we call a 'perceiver,'" Teig explained to Security Systems News. "Instead of having a dumb sensor that hands you pixels or hands you audio, but has no idea what it's looking at or listening too, the idea of putting so much horsepower right at the sensor and the power constraints that you have with an edge device, we can provide data-center-class analytics."

Doing so reduces the cost of power consumption of sending data to the cloud, but more importantly to Teig, "we preserve the user's privacy and preserve security by never having the raw data leave the gadget at all."

Articles of hacking into people's homes and lives via their smart phones and other smart gadgets abound in today's media resulting in embarrassment all the way to criminal behavior.

"Amazon employees were sending clips to each other that were recorded from people's houses [via the Echo] because they thought there were funny," Teig pointed out. "I'm old enough that this kind of stuff really bugs me!"

Responsibilities of manufacturers

Quite frankly, incidents such as these should "bug" everyone. The majority of the world's inhabitants use technology in some form or fashion on a daily basis and they should feel safe doing so. Since technology is such a prominent part of modern existence, care should be taken at the manufacturing level to give users of said technology confidence in its security.

"First and foremost, [manufacturers should] be aware of it [security] as the first consideration that it actually is," Teig explained. "I think the cloud companies of the world think that, 'well, everything's available for everybody. Hooray!' [It's time to] acknowledge there is a concern ... that the privacy attribute does matter."

The second thing is somewhat technical in nature.

"It hasn't been technically possible — which is what motivated use to start Perceive — to do data center class analytics at the edge," said Teig. "What people who've tried to do stuff at the edge have been forced to do historically is to have pretty low-end computation happening, so the quality of the user's experience is poor. If it preserves privacy, that's awesome, but the quality of object recognition is poor because of all the compromises made at the edge."

After acknowledging privacy matters, manufacturers should invest in a strat-

egy for machine learning, both hardware and software, so as not to compromise the user's technical experience while still enabling edge capability.

"The possibility that there be recognition of objects, recognition of faces, recognition of voices, in some sense, that's got to be a good thing," Teig reflected. "I mean, we recognize each other's faces; we recognize each other's voices and part of what enables an intimacy of interaction is that very recognition."

In Teig's opinion, it would be great if technology could do all those things as well, with one important caveat: "not sending your data all over the web!" Because of this stipulation, he makes a distinction

between face recognition as a technical capability, which he views as a tremendous asset, versus the potential gross misuse of the technology. "Creating a police state ... nobody, well at least I don't want that!"

Perceive + ERGO = quality user experience with privacy

At about 7x7 millimeters, or a little over a quarter of an inch, ERGO is about the size of a button on a man's dress shirt, but it packs a punch at the edge. Because it doesn't need any external memory, it is ideal for really small, battery-operated gadgets all the way up to larger technologies. What's more, ERGO is not hackable because the imagery never leaves the chip.

"We're trying to make this sort of tech-

nology ubiquitous, so where ever you have a sensor, you might as well have a perceiver," said Teig, thinking practically. "What's the point of having the sensor have to send the data upstream for raw processing?"

As a company, Perceive is selling their ERGO as well as their machine learning applications to end customers.

"Our initial way into the market is security cameras ... home security cameras, IoT devices, doorbell cameras and more, with the intention of broadening into appliances and perhaps mobile ... drones, robots, toys," he said.

Teig sees sensors as a historical accident simply based on what technology existed and the timing of that technology's existence.

"There are 25 billion sensors right now, estimated to be a trillion by 2025," he educated. "My claim is that it's not the right thing, technically or societally, that those sensors are all aggregated in the cloud. So, my objective is to build something that's lean enough, powerful enough and, quite frankly, inexpensive enough that where ever you would have put a sensor — be that in a camera, appliance, toy, doorbell, whatever — you might as well have something like us right next door and have the whole concept of sensor become something instead."

Teig and his team at Perceive that putting intelligence at the edge is life-changing for the better.

"People should set the bar and we should do as good a job with these edge gadgets as people have come to expect from the data centers of the world," he said. "There's no reason to compromise the quality of your experience in order to maintain your privacy." **SSN**



Steve Teig, CEO of Perceive

Touchless security solutions are here to stay

Continued from page 1

and I are kind of the technical guys in between; we basically explain what tech is trying to tell sales and what sales is trying to tell the engineers. We're the translators."

The main thing about Aiphone is the company's reputation for reliability.

In one of Hefty's roles, he remembered receiving calls about Aiphone products that had been discontinued for 20 or 30 years. The caller would say, 'hey, we've got this old system, can we add onto it because it still works?!' "I was like, 'you're kidding me; it's time to try something new,'" Hefty jokingly said, adding that reliability has always been a part of Aiphone's DNA.

COVID interferes prompting touchless solutions

Aiphone North America celebrated its 50th anniversary this year, honoring its Japanese roots by featuring the origami paper crane, symbolizing its commitment to longevity and success to their customers, in their celebration artwork. When COVID hit, Aiphone summoned their historical success to create a solution that was suddenly in demand.

"It was important to find a retro-fit piece and fortunately, our equipment is very

forgiving in that manner," Hefty explained. "Once the decision was made to address this [COVID and touchless solutions] quickly, a first-look method for making it work was developed."

The day before Hefty spoke with SSN, he was thumbing through some new images of devices that are in the plans to come out from Aiphone, and he realized that six months ago, those images didn't even have a touchless sensor on them.

"Engineering adapted as they were going, so the next generation of product that will come out will have this built into it, rather than having it be a patch or a retrofit type of module."

While waiting for these next generation products, Aiphone enables end user customers to retrofit their IX Series door stations with a touchless sensor, which eliminates ripping out and replacing equipment.

"The sensors are pretty straight forward," he said. "The cool thing is, there's a variety of them [sensors] out there, so you can get them in different shapes and sizes. While our intercoms are setup for outdoors, with touchless sensors, some of them are rated for outdoor use and some of them not so much. So, it's making sure there's no false triggers."

Power must be supplied to the sensor to provide a contact closure, but it's no more complicated than a normal switch. To activate the sensor, people must be within inches, but it's not like the days of motion detectors where a person would simply walk by and trip it.

"Depending on the unit, people must be within an inch or two; then depending on what it's mounted to — if it's in a stainless-steel enclosure, that will knock the read range down a little bit."

Post-COVID momentum of touchless security

There will come a time when COVID is no longer such an intense threat and life will become whatever "normal" means to each individual person; however, due to the havoc it has caused, it will leave certain things seen as necessities in its wake, one of which is the concept of not touching anything.

"I think you're just now seeing first generation [solutions] coming through," said Hefty. "For the most part, it's a 'band-aid' approach where it's, 'hey, let's slap this on here' type of mentality."

He predicted, however, that at the next trade show, most companies will be showcasing a new product with touchless sensors

built into it. "Instead of the normal call buttons to [physically] press," he said, "there will be a touchless sensor there that can be used as a call button, [for example]."

No matter what the future holds, Aiphone equates to reliability.

"We're been doing this for a long time; we'll continue to do it for a long time," Hefty said. "Our goal has always been to give people [end user customers] the right solutions."

Reminiscing to when he worked Aiphone's tech desk, the mantra was, "we want everybody to call us." If we have an Aiphone solution, great; if there's not an Aiphone solution, we also want to be able to say, 'this other brand over here does it really well, go use those guys.'" However, this is where Hefty's current role really comes into play.

"Where there's anything that's a little bit different that a tech may not have a solution for, the sales team will reach out to me and my team, and we will find a solution," he said. "Let's make sure we get the customer the correct answer and make sure we find the best solution for them. It's all about relationships; it's what's best for people." **SSN**

Cyberattacks continue to affect U.S. companies

Over the past 12 months, cyberattacks on U.S. companies shot up by 93 percent, according to Atlas VPN

By Ginger Hill

YARMOUTH, Maine—Over the past 12 months, cyberattacks on U.S. companies shot up by 93 percent, according to an Atlas VPN investigation. VMware Carbon Black canvassed 250 North American company representatives operating across different verticals.

Data from March 2019 to March 2020 was taken into account and produced the following results:

- 23 percent of respondents saw an uptick in attack volumes between 1 to 25 percent;
- 42 reported a more significant increase between 26 to 50 percent;
- Nearly a quarter of the surveyed companies saw more than 50 percent growth in attack volume;
- 4 percent reported attack volume surged by more than 2 to 4 times;
- Financial services saw the highest average rise in cyberattacks at 56 percent, which is 11 percent above the norm;
- 43 percent of financial service companies reported an over 50 percent increase in the volume of attacks; and
- Healthcare saw an average increase of 49 percent in cyberattacks.

Attacks come in a variety of types, kind of like Skittles, where victims can literally “taste the rainbow” (to quote Skittles’ commercials) of the types of tactics and techniques cybercriminals are using. However, most favored by cybercriminals in this survey was custom malware that leverages existing, legitimate, already-installed software on a victim’s computer. From this survey, 29 percent of the companies identified custom malware as the most frequent type of attack.

Other types of attacks included:

- Commodity malware reported by 1 in 10 of the surveyed companies;
- Supply chain attacks reported by 9 percent;
- Ransomware at 7 percent;
- Hollowing reported by 5 percent of the surveyed companies; and
- Island hopping reported by 2 percent.

Part 2: Six Most Popular Attacks

Jumping into the nitty-gritty of the six most popular cyberattacks used against U.S. companies, in which cyberattacks shot up 93 percent over the past 12 months, I engaged the help of cybersecurity expert, Rodney Thayer, convergence engineer at Smithee Solutions LLC. Let’s explore what each of the six attacks are and what you can do to help prevent them.

But, first, a little about Thayer ... “I was a software developer building communications protocols; therefore, I was doing things with networking and people started asking about systems getting defended,” he said. “I realized that because I used to build software, I actually could recognize failures of some sorts. I ended up being one of those people who could figure out how to build exploits to break certain kinds of networks, so I used my superpowers for good!”

This is great news for us because Thay-

er offers some great insight and advice on the following six types of attacks:

What is custom malware? Most frequently seen is “noise-generating” or “noisy” custom malware that makes a lot of noise to cover up some other event and is most commonly used in a botnet format where multiple machines are infected and configured to execute the malware at the same time.

What is commodity malware? This just means malware that is widely available to buy or even offered as a free download.

What is a supply chain attack? Also known as a “value chain,” a bad actor infiltrates a system via an outside partner, for example, a vendor partner with an infrastructure or network that is not secure, but connected to the intended victim’s network.

What is ransomware? A form of malicious software that locks and encrypts a

software inside the victim’s computer,” explained Thayer.

What is island hopping? “If it still means what it used to, it is when a bad actor jumps from one part of infrastructure or network to something else,” he said. “The famous example is the Tar-



“Attacks come in a variety of types, kind of like Skittles, where victims can literally “taste the rainbow” (to quote Skittles’ commercials) of the types of tactics and techniques cybercriminals are using. However, most favored by cybercriminals in this survey was custom malware that leverages existing, legitimate, already-installed software on a victim’s computer. From this survey, 29 percent of the companies identified custom malware as the most frequent type of attack.”

computer or connected device, and the bad actor’s connected to that piece of software, contact the victim directly, usually demanding money to restore access to the victim’s data.

“Ransomware is just another version of a natural disaster,” Thayer explained. “I’m in California; I’m standing 100 feet away from an earthquake fault, so I better be able to handle things like ‘what if my entire building, computers, disks, etc. went away?’”

In other words, businesses should have a disaster recovery plan. According to Thayer, “you should have really good backups and you should know that they work by checking them periodically along the way,” Thayer advised.

What is hollowing? “You have some sort of software running inside your organization and then some bad guy sends some malicious email to somebody within your organization, and they click on the link, it is then able to execute

get hack, where the hacker got into the internet-connected meat scale and from there, they managed to get into the cash registers which were connected to the meat scale.”

Now that you know what each of these attacks are, here is some advice from Thayer on how to protect yourself and your company from such attacks.

“Most of the stuff is the same as before March [pre-COVID] ... don’t click on weird emails; be security vigilant; make sure your equipment is well-maintained and up-to-date,” he said. “BUT, what I think I would add now is, even though you have to move faster and be more forgiving [in daily life with COVID] with the types of communications you do with computers and networks, you still have to be careful. Use credit card monitoring. Make sure you run antivirus software on your desktop computers. Don’t let your kids load random games onto your work iPhone.”

Perhaps the best piece of advice from Thayer: “Anyone who’s living a digital life should be worrying about it, a little at least. There’s no such thing as somebody who doesn’t have cybersecurity as a part of their world these days.”

Zoom “zooms” up lax security

The platform of choice has quickly become Zoom, offering free and cost-effective paid options, positioning Zoom to not only become more of a household and corporate name, but as a huge target for cybercriminals looking to gather information and data to use in phishing, vishing and mishing attempts, ransomware attacks and other virtual crimes. And, at first, due to Zoom’s lax security, intrusive videobombers were successful and a barrage of privacy breach lawsuits followed to which the CEO vowed to fix security issues in 90 days, starting April 1st.

1. Enactment of a 90-day freeze on all features not related to privacy, safety or security and released over 100 features, such as meeting defaults including passwords, waiting room and limited screen sharing.

2. Worked with a group of third-party experts to review and enhance the company’s products, practices and policies.

3. Prepared a transparency report detailing information related to requests for data, records or content.

4. Developed a Central Bug Repository and related workflow processes.

5. Launched a CISO council to facilitate ongoing dialogue about security and privacy best practices.

6. Engaged in a series of simultaneous white box penetration test to identify and address issues.

7. Hosted 13 webinars every Wednesday since April 1st featuring company executives and consultants who took live attendee questions. **SSN**

SPECIFICALLY SPEAKING

Continued from page 3

design as a fully redundant loop supporting all outdoor cameras that will be actively monitored, using onboard analytics. The entire project was designed to scale as far as the City wants to grow it and has the capacity to support other IoT devices in the future.

How did you get started in security and designing/specifying?

I come from a background of designing and selling voice and data networks including all the hardware systems. About 14 years ago I left the sales world and started consulting, primarily voice and data projects. Back then architects and clients were

asking for help on security and A/V elements in our projects so I jumped in there. I had the luxury of starting on new projects that were all IP based and that fit easily with my network background.

Can you talk about what new or emerging technologies you are seeing or specifying today?

I am designing 100 percent with OSDP in mind for access control. I am closely following who is doing what with camera analytics, both onboard and server based. There are interesting new IP solutions that can fit into the new "touchless" wave this year. Longer range, I am looking at the capability of access control system to integrate with other client databases.

What is your view on the industry moving forward?

I am spending time talking with security hardware and software manufacturers, large and small, who are devoting energy to enhanced engineering and software design.

I am also spending time smoking out the spin from some opportunistic companies who clearly want to sell fast and hard to get to do an IPO and

cash out. Not a good fit for my clients!! **SSN**

—Paul Ragusa

Specifically Speaking, a Security Systems News monthly column, features Q-and-A with a security consultant provided to SSN by SecuritySpecifiers.



ISC EAST

Continued from page 1

While ISC East cannot convene in person for 2020, Reed Exhibitions, along with Premier Sponsor SIA (Security Industry Association), announced that ISC East, in partnership with ASIS NYC Chapter, will collaborate to host a virtual event on Nov. 18. The ISC East 2021 event will take place at the Javits Center on Nov. 17-18.

ISC Event Director Mary Beth Shaughnessy pointed out that ISC East has seen "tremendous growth" over the past few years, and she is looking forward to the in-person event in 2021.

"With the strong support from premier sponsor SIA, plus the collaboration and partnering with the ASIS NYC Chapter and other regional tri-state associations, we are confident that we will continue on a positive growth path," she said. "We all have a mutual commitment to excellence in security and public safety for the tri-state area and Northeast region, and are excited to roll out a bigger and better than ever ISC East in 2021."

SIA CEO Don Erickson added, "ISC East is widely recognized as a major platform for industry networking in the tri-state area each fall anchored by innovative exhibitors and compelling education sessions delivered through SIA Education@ISC. SIA is excited to continue our work with ISC Events and the ASIS NYC Chapter to support the Person of the Year award program as part of the ISC East virtual event on November 18th 2020, and to produce an impactful ISC East next year."

ASIS NYC Chapter – Annual Conference Chairman Ray Dean is confident a virtual event will be a success. "We are grateful for the partnership the ASIS NYC Chapter has established with ISC East," he said. **SSN**

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EDITORIAL

What end users want ... and need

SYSTEMS INTEGRATORS, security consultants, manufacturers all want the same thing — to truly understand not only what their customers “want,” but also what solutions, technology and services they truly “need” to help solve their specific problems, and meet their specific requirements.

Now more than ever that need to be what many in the industry are calling a “trusted partner” is more critically important than ever, which is why new research on end user expectations provides valuable insight — especially for systems integrators — into what their customers are really looking for from them, and in some cases, not getting.

System integrators seem to be “behind the technology curve,” according to a recent Physical Security Industry Benchmark study based on a survey of more than 340 corporate and campus security managers, system integrators, dealers and manufacturers conducted by H2 Strategic Communications and commissioned by System Surveyor.

The survey focused on physical security system design, procurement and client-vendor relationships, asking respondents about their current challenges, priorities and plans for technology investments into 2021.

Enterprise security professionals, the study found, want “more knowledgeable, transparent and digitally advanced

security vendors,” noting that enterprise professionals want their system integrators to be “more up to date on the latest products and technologies and better understand their needs.”

The following is a breakdown of some of the findings:

- Enterprise professionals want their system integrators to be more up to date on the latest products and technologies (49 percent).

- Enterprise professionals want their system integrators to better understand their needs (44 percent).

- Enterprise security leaders are fast tracking security projects (44 percent) but 71 percent said their budgets are not increasing.

- System integrators are bullish on business (76 percent) with a top priority to maintain or increase sales (58 percent).

The study also looked at the top three system integrator challenges, which are:

- Gathering accurate site details (48 percent).

- Inability to visit customer sites (39 percent).

- Customers requesting multiple proposal revisions (35 percent).

Interestingly, the study found that 82 percent of systems integrators continue to use paper and pen to gather requirements at customer sites, “contributing to these obstacles and creating negative impacts to business,” researchers noted.

“Driven by the pandemic and other factors, in-house security professionals are striving to remedy any vulnerabilities and add new safety measures,” said Chandra Hosek, co-founder and principal

at H2 Strategic Communications. “These leaders have raised their expectations of system integrators and other security vendors to provide expert guidance, a higher level of service, and seamless digital interactions.”

All agree that remote collaboration technologies will be a big focus moving forward, with opportunities for systems integrators to increase business if they are prepared.

For example, the study found that system integrators can enhance customer service by providing a portal with access to the latest service and system records (35 percent) and being more transparent with project and proposal information (35 percent).

“The survey results show that system integrators and other physical security firms have an excellent opportunity to engage and improve collaboration with customers to build better long-term relationships,” said Chris Hugman, CEO of System Surveyor. “Digital transformation is a key enabler to improve both in-house business operations and the customer experience. Digital will enable remote selling and consultations in the short term. In the long run, digital will determine the market leaders.”

System integrators cited the need for customer-facing software/tools for visualizing and co-designing systems (a top response to which technologies would most improve business). One-third of the enterprise security leaders said a top priority this year is to implement technology to virtually collaborate with their team, partners and vendors. **SSN**

Paul Ragusa



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Welcome to the new age of safety and security

By Mimi Lanfranchi and Charles Bohnenberger

WITH THE advent of the pandemic and societal unrest, today's government agencies are faced with evolving threats like never before. The pandemic, which has created higher unemployment rates and civil unrest across the nation, has created the 'perfect storm' for increased crime. Furthermore, in a recent article, the Wall Street Journal reported that in a survey of municipal budget officers, the average municipality tax revenue has declined 11% year over year, and most expect 2021 revenues will come in 13% below 2020 levels. How can today's agencies ensure the protection of their employees and their property in times of heightened security needs in a financially feasible way?

Compounding the problem, over the past decade, our country's police departments have been under immense pressure to keep crime rates low despite whittled-down budgets and a reduction in staffing. Today, in 2020, with the mass protests and civil unrest that followed George Floyd's death and a national movement to "defund the police," the struggle to recruit police is harder than ever. The Police Executive Research Forum reports that 63% of police departments nationwide have seen a decrease in applications. This year alone, the NYPD reported a dramatic increase in retirements. From March 1 through July 22, 813 NYPD officers retired, and another 1,172 cops filed paperwork to follow them. These numbers such as these cannot easily be replaced.

Public/Private Partnership

Now more than ever, government policy makers need to focus resources; allowing law enforcement to focus on the core duties and responsibilities of law enforcement officers. And industries like ours, need to be creative in developing solutions to support them in this effort.

The physical security industry supports law enforcement and when private security works in partnership with law enforcement, police officers have more time to focus on preventing and solving crimes. To ensure that the physical security sector supports our nation's police departments, public-private partnerships are essential. There are many respected organizations dedicated to fostering dialogue between public and private entities. In the forefront are ASIS International's Law Enforcement Liaison Council and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Private Sector Liaison Committee. These groups work

to facilitate a collaborative environment for members to engage in the development, research, and implementation of programs and activities which foster cooperation and partnership between public law enforcement and private security professionals.

In a recent National League of Cities survey of 485 cities, 90% said they expected a harder time meeting the needs of their communities. Christiana McFarland, Director of Research of the National League of Cities said in an interview with the Wall Street Journal, "Many cities skimmed from the top through moves such as hiring freezes and furloughs" since personnel costs account for the largest share of municipal budgets. Private security can supplement and support state, county and municipal police agencies by relieving them of some of their service calls.

The private security industry must increase its capacity and capabilities through targeted recruitment and screening, enhanced training and skills development, and building career paths. As public budget reductions lead to reduced police forces, more private and public enterprises are turning to contracted private security officers to supplement state, county and municipal police agencies.

Supporting Communities

Private industry and governmental organizations all support peaceful protesting. However, if protesting is usurped by acts of lawlessness including rioting, looting and violence, what can businesses and government agencies do to ensure the safety of their employees, visitors and property? The best way for organizations to manage risks is to identify and evaluate all possible scenarios and create a contingency plan detailing how to deal with the emergency if it occurs. This plan should detail strategies for dealing with emergencies specific to its location and type of business as well as general risks that apply across all industries.

Before developing the plan, it's important to decide who is responsible for the maintenance and practice of the emergency plan. Additionally, larger organizations may consider creating plans for individual departments or locations overseen by a team of personnel, while smaller or more streamlined organizations may only require one plan. Either way, collaboration and communication are essential to ensuring a coordinated response to an emergency.

During these times of uncertainty, it is important to have a security program that meets an organization's needs. It can be challenging to continuously control and manage the right configuration of security personnel, technology, systems and deployment to maintain robust protection, quality service and cost effectiveness. Choosing the best approach boils down to the ability of the security program to meet the specific objectives of the business and trust that the methods of meeting these objectives will fol-

low through on deliverables and ROI.

Big, Government Buildings Attract Trouble

City, county and federal governmental buildings are lightning rods for trouble. Government buildings can be faced with threats of unlawful entry, terrorism, and acts of workplace violence. Whether it's a high-profile trial or full-scale protests, those big, federal/state buildings that house governmental agencies require special security attention. Building security affects daily operations and the health and safety of employees and the public. There is a wide-range of security measures employed at public buildings including exterior barriers, x-ray and metal detectors, closed-circuit television, and security personnel.

A comprehensive crime prevention assessment of the governmental building is the first step toward an effective security program. Often these assessments are performed by the local or state law enforcement

agency. However, rarely are local law enforcement agencies up to speed on the most current capabilities of the private sector, nor are they familiar with the manner in which to procure those services. Also, local agencies are often unaware of best practices or lessons learned from other jurisdictions since there are few forums where local agencies can participate or share this type of information. These issues are always addressed in government facilities – just not always with the most up-to-date approach.

Training Reinvented

In light of these challenging times, physical security companies are reviewing and updating their training protocol with the goal of keeping people safe while doing everything the right way. For example, remedial training on the proper role and authority of the security officer, modules on civil rights, peaceful assembly, and de-escalation techniques. Also, in conjunction with the clients, they are updating post orders to reflect the new realities that police response times are increasing and large gatherings organized through social media can present at any time. Physical security companies are tasked with keeping client facilities and their occupants safe and secure; they are not monitoring or overseeing protests. By deploying situational awareness tools, security companies help clients keep a pulse on civil unrest and protests in proximity to their facilities along with hazards such as fires, traffic closures and the like. Depending on circumstances, the appropriate mitigation tactic is used whether it is locking down a building, boosting exterior or interior patrol, or redirecting egress from a building in order to avoid hazards.

By way of example, in 2017 and 2018, Philadelphia endured an outbreak of flash mobs which vandalized store fronts, harassed pedestrians and in some instances, individuals committed robberies and assaults. In one such instance, just at the beginning of the evening rush hour as thousands of workers were leaving their buildings, the mob began to break windows at client's facility, and the physical security team immediately locked down the building elevators and front doors, advised the clients to shelter in place and ensured that the mob didn't move into the building. By using situational awareness tools and company communication channels, these well trained security teams were able to coordinate with security teams at other loca-

tions, thereby mitigating the threat this mob presented. Buildings were locked down, employees were redirected to alternative egress routes away from the moving flash mob, and they were able to

communicate accurate information to local law enforcement and emergency responders. These well trained security professionals were able to use all the tools at their disposal to fulfill their mission to protect the employees and property of their clients.

Off-Duty Police

In order to assist in addressing the issues of societal unrest, in addition to traditional security personnel, some companies are enlisting the services of security companies that can provide off-duty police officers (ODOs) to safeguard their businesses, employees and visitors. In fact, today security companies are receiving unprecedented requests for off-duty police officers (ODOs).

Whether a police officer is on or off duty, they have the authority of their position and can make an arrest if necessary. They can also call in crimes to get support from other officers. ODOs detect crimes in real-world situations, interact with the public, and know how to handle themselves in a high-pressure environment. We are seeing this trend across all industries.

The keys to success are the hiring of high-quality security professionals and the development of solid relationships between all public and private groups—whether or not formal agreements exist. Private contracted security officers dedicated to specific posts or areas make a significant impact on safety, security and caring for the people and businesses of our communities. **SSN**

Mimi Lanfranchi is President, National Accounts & Government Services at Allied Universal, and Charles Bohnenberger is Vice President, Government Services at Allied Universal.



Mimi Lanfranchi



C. Bohnenberger

"As public budget reductions lead to reduced police forces, more private and public enterprises are turning to contracted private security officers to supplement state, county and municipal police agencies."

—M. Lanfranchi and C. Bohnenberger

COMMERCIAL & SYSTEMS INTEGRATORS

Sage Integration teams with Alcatraz

By Paul Ragusa

REDWOOD CITY, Calif.—Alcatraz, developer of secure autonomous access control products, and SAGE Integration, a national security integration provider, have partnered to deliver facial authentication solutions to enterprise businesses to help modernize access control.

Headquartered in Kent, Ohio, with a regional office in Atlanta, SAGE Integration will develop and expand Alcatraz's presence along the East Coast and in Mid-Western states.

"We're excited to partner with SAGE Integration to work together on modernizing access control solutions," Alcatraz Chief Revenue Officer Tina D'Agostin said in the announcement. "SAGE is a powerhouse

that brings a client-centric approach to the services they offer and therefore understands and appreciates the Alcatraz

people, facilities and reputation. "Touchless, biometric-based access control solutions are in high demand," Sage Integration

Alcatraz to offer the solution."

Alcatraz offers a touchless and secure physical access control platform that works with any access control system. It replaces or augments badging as a credential with facial recognition, 3D sensing, and artificial intelligence to enable highly secure and frictionless entry into physical locations.

The company's Rock technology uses passive 3D sensing, machine learning for increased security, and accurate tailgating detection while intelligently enrolling employees as they are badging in, eliminating the headaches associated with traditional enrollment. A newly added mask enforcer feature offers businesses the ability to comply with increasing state-mandated mask orders.. **SSN**



Rock platform and its ability to deliver autonomous access control."

SAGE Integration is a national security integration provider serving enterprise clients with the mission to protect their

Chief Operating Officer John Nemerofsky said. "The Alcatraz platform, which accurately authenticates identities using facial recognition, is ideal for our enterprise customers. We look forward to partnering with

BRIEFS

ProdataKey, System Surveyor partner

DRAPER, Utah — Manufacturer of a cloud access control platform built for mobile, ProdataKey (PDK), partnered with System Surveyor, a mobile and graphical design and management tool. A complete catalog of PDK's mobile-first access control system components are now available for import into the System Surveyor platform.

Importing the PDK catalog into the System Surveyor platform is a simple, one-time process. Using an iPad or Android-based tablet or browser-based device, users upload a floor plan or Google Earth snapshot, and then drag-and-drop PDK components into place to create a system design. As elements are added, a bill of materials is automatically generated, specific to PDK's parts.

Using System Surveyor as a centralized platform, communication is enhanced; accuracy is ensured; and countless hours are shaved from generating system design documentation.

A free 21-day trial of the full-featured System Surveyor software is available here: <https://systemsurveyor.com/prodata-key/>.

Minuteman Security Technologies acquired Skynet

ANDOVER, Mass.—With the acquisition of systems integrator, Skynet Integrations, LLC of Tampa Florida, Minuteman becomes Central Florida's largest, independent, full-service provider of integrated security, communication and life safety systems.

"Josh Williams [Skynet general manager] and Mike Andrews [Skynet operations manager] have built a terrific team and our organizations share a customer-focused approach that will allow us to continue our strong growth throughout Florida," Peter Green, SVP of Southeast U.S. operations for Minuteman, said in the announcement.

Like Minuteman, Skynet serves enterprise clients nationwide across diverse end markets including business enterprise, education, government, healthcare, energy and public safety.

"I am thrilled about this next chapter for Skynet," Williams said. "Mike and I are incredibly proud of how we have grown Skynet with a focus on building a great culture for our employees and providing best-in-class solutions for our loyal customers. We are pleased to have found a partner in Minuteman, which shares these values and our collective commitment to quality and innovation."

Andrews echoed Williams' excitement. "We are very excited to continue to drive the combined companies' growth."

Andrews and Williams will run Minuteman's combined Florida operations.

Allied Universal buys

Continued from page 1

pushing advancements forward and adopting better solutions, especially in the technology space," he explained. "The security industry is at a convergence point where manned-guarding, robots, drones and AI technology are now working together to create cohesive solutions for businesses. Due to the advances in IT security, our security professionals are better equipped to help reduce incidents, respond faster to emergencies and provide unmatched operational performance accountability."

All SWI employees will be joining Allied Universal, which is also keeping all SWI offices in New Jersey, Manhattan and Long Island.

SWI provides end-to-end service, from design to maintenance, to clients in the commercial, education, industrial, healthcare, pharmaceutical, government and financial industries across the United States. With revenues exceeding \$14.8 million and

35 employees, SWI specializes in video surveillance, access control, intercom and gate systems, turnstiles, intrusion alarm systems, IT infrastructure and audio-visual.

"Allied Universal's vast resources will help to fuel continued growth in the security technology solutions market," SWI Founder and President Stephen Govel said in the announcement. "We could never have been successful without all our talented employees at SWI and I thank each one of them for their constant dedication to offering our clients top-notch service."

SWI's tech experts have experience in design, engineering, project management, installation and service. The company takes pride in its unique ability to design and fabricate integrated systems and devices to accommodate any specific need or situation.

SWI was represented by financial advisor Sandra Jones and Company in the transaction. Terms of the deal were not disclosed. **SSN**



Steve Jones

Defendify offers free cybersecurity package

By Paul Ragusa

PORTLAND, Maine—All-in-one cybersecurity platform, Defendify, attribute a surge in new Cybersecurity Essentials package sign-ups to the increase in cybercriminal activity targeting small and mid-sized businesses. The package, released in late March, offers three award-winning cybersecurity tools that help businesses understand what data security vulnerabilities and threats might impact their organization, and next steps for remediation.

"As we look at the changes impacting businesses during the past months, simplifying cybersecurity and protecting businesses needs to be top of mind," Rob Simopoulos, co-founder of Defendify said in the announcement. "Cybersecurity can no longer be an afterthought and there are ways to improve cybersecurity posture today to help protect and grow your business. Essentials does just that, and we're happy to be able to provide it to businesses at no cost."

According to a recent survey by the U.S. Small Business Administration, 88 percent of

small business owners claimed they would be vulnerable to a cyberattack due to lack of budget, time or knowledge of where to begin.

Additionally, Defendify found in a random sample of Essentials users who completed the Quick Cybersecurity Health Checkup during onboarding, 70 percent had a failing grade prior to fully implementing Essentials, with 68 percent of these at-risk companies in manufacturing or providing some form of business, professional or technical service.

The Defendify Cybersecurity Essentials package is completely free. Defendify is built securely in the cloud so users can deploy in minutes with no additional hardware or software to install. Businesses across manufacturing, professional services and other sectors have already leveraged the package to evaluate their current cybersecurity strength, identify key gaps to fix and know what cyber threats might impact their business.

The Essentials Package includes a Cybersecurity Assessment Tool, Network Vulnerability Scanner and Threat Alerts System. **SSN**

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MONITORING

Value of monitoring still strong

TMA Executive Director Celia Besore and TMA President Don Young give state of the industry

By Paul Ragusa

YARMOUTH, Maine—To help get the pulse of the monitoring industry, Security Systems News sat down with The Monitoring Association (TMA) leadership to talk about the current state of the industry, how members are dealing with and overcoming challenges related to COVID-19, and what the future may look like post-coronavirus.

GETTING BACK TO WORK

As both TMA Executive Director Celia Besore and TMA President Don Young point out, there were two key moments early on that changed the course of the pandemic for the monitoring industry and for security dealers and integrators.

One was the fight by TMA, along with Security Industry Association (SIA) and the Electronic Security Industry (ESI), to get the “essential” designation added to the language of government legislation that previously did not specify security as such.

“We worked hard at TMA, and with our members, to get that essential label attached to all of us so we could go about and operate as normally as possible, which worked out really well,” noted Young. “Once we were able to get that essential label early on, everyone was able to focus on the parts of their business that was most at risk due to the impact of COVID, including challenges to enter the home or business.”

As Besore pointed out, “It really was important to work with the AICC and actually go through the White House to have security mentioned explicitly in the language of the legislation, which allowed people to go out and work when they had to. At TMA, we also provided resources, including templates for letters that employees could carry with them about being

an essential worker and business and what that means.”

The second big moment for the monitoring industry was the creation of work-from-home guidelines by UL for monitoring companies.

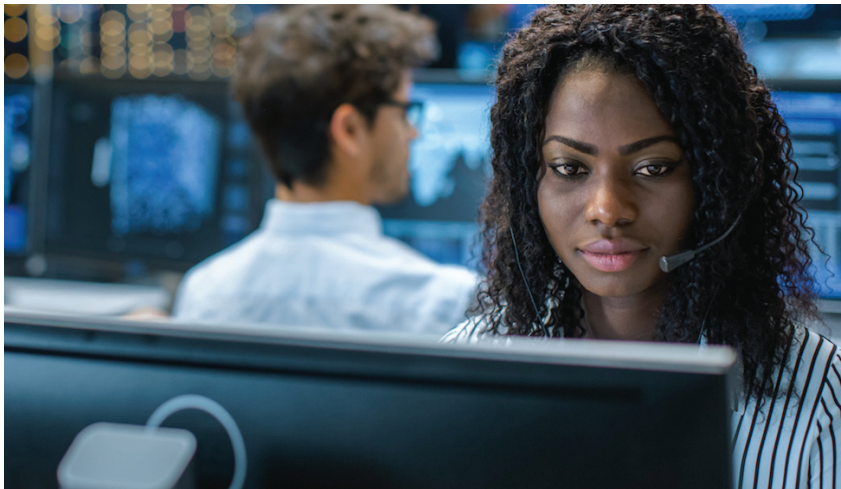
“Early on in March, one of our members, Washington Alarm, contacted us because they were concerned as they saw COVID happening on their side before the rest of the country and they wondered how they were going to serve their customers if they could not be in the monitoring

center because they had to stay at home,” explained Besore. “So we spoke with UL and they understood very quickly the need and within a few days they were working on some guidelines that have been very well received, and a lifesaver for many members and people.”

Young added, “UL was really helpful in giving us guidelines for allowing our members to work remotely from home, which solved a big problem when it comes to employee safety.”

What could be considered a third key factor that bolstered the industry was the fact that many within monitoring, including dealers who have a strong residential side of their business, focus on recurring revenue as a core business model.

“Because of who we are at TMA, most of our customers have a recurring revenue stream,” said Young. “And because monitoring is the nature of the business for most of our members, that recurring revenue stream



obviously has helped our members not necessarily sail through the crisis, but at least survive the crisis, at a minimum.”

MONITORING STILL HAS VALUE

While the monitoring industry has seen its share of struggles in the past few years, professional monitoring — including the recurring revenue that dealers can build by offering monitoring services — still has great value within security today.

“According to our members, monitoring seems to be a valuable and important service that our member’s customers still want,” said Young. “We are not hearing of any challenges or push back from our members’ customers about that valued service. I have heard from some of our members that there is a bit of a push back on the maintenance that people charge monthly for, but with most of the country starting to open up, that is not a factor.”

He continued, “We are seeing many company’s backlogs come back to normal. I am hearing from members that they are really not having trouble getting on premises at all these days. So members do feel that we are in a far better place than we were a couple of months ago.”

Young added that he sees a lot more optimism on the residential sales side than on the commercial side, for example, because of the financial impact of the crisis, not so much the health safety impact of the crisis.

While those with the highest

recurring monthly revenue (RMR) on the monitoring side fared the best, those who depend on new sales and installation revenue every month are struggling more, Young opined. “Being agile is important,” he said, noting that it is tougher for some of the high-end, big-project systems integrators to be as agile as a dealer whose RMR accounts for a good portion of the company’s overall revenue.

WORKING FROM HOME A GAME CHANGER

Young noted that there has been a lot of discussion among members about the possibility of a work-from-home standard, or a work-from-home alternative.

“A work-from-home solution is a game changer for our members and a game-changer for our industry,” said Young. “Does that live up to the definition of professional monitoring, allowing a work-from-home solution to exist and what is the definition of a work-from-home environment? And what does that have to look like or be to live up to a professional monitoring offering?”

As Young pointed out, it will be interesting to see in the near future what that work-from-home piece of the monitoring business looks like going forward.

“And our customers are saying the same thing about their businesses,” he said. “How much of that work-from-home solution can be part of their future road map?”

If customers are looking at

TMA see next page

BRIEFS

COPS Monitoring and Mission 500 team up for families in need

BOYNTON BEACH, Fla.—In what has become an annual event spearheaded by Mission 500, students at Crosspointe Elementary School in Boynton Beach, Fla., will once again have essential school supplies, provided by COPS Monitoring, thanks to the generous efforts of the “Back to School Backpack Event.”

Different from the past six years, the COVID-19 pandemic dictated a format change from the norm. Rather than meeting in-person to assemble the backpacks and distributing them directly to the students at Crosspointe Elementary School, the school supplies, bags and positive mental health items were shipped to the school so that teachers can sort the items and distribute them safely.

Select team members from COPS Monitoring, the primary sponsor of the annual event, donned their masks and visited the school to join the staff to distribute handwritten Notes of Hope and information on employment opportunities for parents and guardians of students seeking stable employment.

“It has been our honor to continue our efforts with Mission 500 in this extremely worthwhile event,” COPS Monitoring’s President Jim McMullen said in the announcement. “This year has even more meaning and a greater sense of urgency due to the increased economic hardships inflicted on many members of our community as the result of the pandemic. While our business of safeguarding millions of homes and businesses nationwide is built on a foundation that places an extraordinary emphasis on the importance of ‘people helping people’, in addition to providing children necessary school supplies and the essential tools to begin the school year; we continue to make it a priority to also help parents with the goal of improving the well-being of each family.”

The Axis Southeast team also participated by purchasing supplies on Crosspointe’s Amazon Wishlist using Amazon Smile (Mission 500 also benefitted from this initiative). “We are so glad we were still able to participate this year and help the children overcome the obstacles of virtual learning,” added Tina Sprigg, the local Regional sales manager at Axis Communications.

Ken Gould, chairman of Mission 500 expressed his team’s appreciation for being able to support once again the annual “Back to School Backpack Event” even in its new format. “The security industry is a dedicated and generous group of individuals, and we thank them for their time and financial donations that make this annual event a success,” said Gould. “While circumstances may have made this a bit more challenging for 2020, the spirit of our partners and sponsors helped make this an extra special project.”

Contact Tom Nolan at tnolan@mission500.org, or call 516-903-7291..

TMA says monitoring more essential than ever

Continued from previous page

working from home, Young said there is a role that monitoring can play in that. "For example, do we begin to offer monitoring of people's work areas of people who are working from home, to ensure that they are at their desks at all times, or their area isn't being invaded by family members all day?" he surmised. "Those kinds of things are being talked about as it relates to this new norm of working from home."

As much as privacy plays a role, Young noted that a video monitored solution is a real outcome of this new work-from-home normal. "No one does video monitoring better than our TMA members so we see that as a huge opportunity for us in the future as the whole country leans more deeply into a work-from-home strategy."

While more employees will undoubtedly be working from home, there are also opportunities helping companies going back to work, such as with health screening in coordination with access control and video surveillance.

"Thermal cameras seem to be all the rage, because everyone understands that they are going to want to detect fevers but also understand who the fever belongs to so you are looking at technology that incorporates facial recognition with temperature sensing, all in one," Young noted. "There is a lot of noise out there as to what is a real trusted solution, so people are spending more time searching for what is a viable solution, and there are opportunities there for the right companies."

He continued, "When it comes to tracing and some unknowns, such as evolving CDC guidelines for going back to work, we will also see how that can be handled through technology and solutions that can be delivered by security and monitoring professionals."

TMA TOWN HALLS

As Besore points out, one of the key functions of TMA is providing a forum for members to come together and learn from each other, share their knowledge and expertise.

"A lot of this education and these resources have been made available through our weekly TMA Town Halls, which we have been doing every Monday at 11ET since March," noted Besore.

Town Halls are really about being there for members, said Besore, with topics focusing on helping companies deal with and

get through the current crisis in the best shape possible. Recent town halls have looked to the future and how members can strengthen and rebuild, if needed. TMA members from all areas, including financial and legal, have appeared on Town Halls to offer up advice and help other

"According to our members, monitoring seems to be a valuable and important service that our member's customers still want."

—Don Young,
TMA President

members.

"We are responding to our member's needs," she said. "We created a page for, and are archiving the town halls and turning them into minutes so members can get the summary of what was discussed if they miss any portion of it." **SSN**

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RESIDENTIAL SYSTEMS

Zigbee Alliance's Project CHIP becoming a reality

By SSN Staff

DAVIS, Calif.—When Zigbee Alliance's Project Connected Home over IP Working Group set out to create a unifying standard for the smart home industry, there was excitement, but of course, questions:

- Would this global consortium truly be able to bring this new standard to market?
- How long would it take?
- What products would actually emerge?
- Would we be able to pull off our promise to unify a fragmented industry under a single connectivity standard that would help companies focus on creating experiences over "plumbing"?

The working group recently updated the industry on its progress, outlining the Project's growth and introducing the newly detailed architectural stack

diagram for the open standard. Here's a summary of the details:

- December 2019 – the date the group set out to create a unifying standard for the smart home industry.
- September 2020 – as of now, the working group is on track to deliver a draft specification by late 2020 and continue toward their goal of releasing the standard in 2021.
- There are now more than 145 active member companies participating in developing the standard.
- ASSA ABLOY, Resideo, STMicroelectronics and Tuya have joined Zigbee Alliance's Board of Directors and actively contributing to and promoting the Project. Joining these leaders are hundreds of project, engineering and marketing

experts, working across 30 cross-functional teams.

- Architectural Overview has been refined with a defined understanding of the Project's protocol and structure.
- An open-source repository has been launched on GitHub. This repository is an implementation-first approach to the technical specification, vetting integrations in practice. By sharing the repository, the group hopes to bring the benefits of this project to consumers and manufacturers quickly.
- Smart home devices the Project is initially targeting includes: lighting and electrical (light bulbs, luminaries, controls, plugs, outlets); HVAC controls (thermostats, AC units); access control (door locks, garage doors); safety and security (sensors, detec-

tors, security systems); window coverings/shades; TVs; access points; bridges; and others.

- Scoping exercising are underway for additional consumer electronics products and the commercial industry.

The currently global crisis has brought togetherness in unexpected ways, but with no less enthusiasm or momentum towards the working group's common goal. Zigbee members from across the globe and the industry have come together virtually and tirelessly to work towards the collected vision of a unified solution for the smart home industry.

Device manufacturers, silicon providers and other developers across the smart home industry are invited to contribute to this new standard. More info: <https://connectedhomeip.com>. **SSN**

Safe Home Security closes on \$195m credit facility

By SSN Staff

MIDDLETOWN, Conn.—Safe Home Security, a nationwide provider of electronic security services and PERS, announced recently that it has entered into a \$195 million senior secured credit facility with a group of institutional investors.

Safe Home will use proceeds from the financing, the company said, to repay the amounts outstanding under the its existing credit facilities, fund growth through acquisitions in the electronic security and personal emergency response services (PERS) industries, as well as for general corporate purposes.

"This transaction allows us, together with our extensive network of partners and dealers, to

execute on our growth plan in the security and PERS industries," said Safe Home Owner and CEO David Roman, an industry veteran with more than 32 years of experience.

Safe Home VP of Sales,

Brad Leeftang, added: "Safe Home is now well positioned for continued long-term growth and success with this new financing. After months of diligent work to finalize this transaction, Safe Home is in position to pursue additional dealers, partners, and acquisitions."

SPP Advisors, LLC, an M&A advisory firm founded by Mark Sandler and Peter Flynn, represented Safe Home Security in connection with the credit facility. **SSN**

"This transaction allows us, together with our extensive network of partners and dealers, to execute on our growth plan in the security and PERS industries."

—David Roman, Safe Home Security

Challenges ahead for smart home players?

By SSN Staff

DALLAS—Parks Associates' "Smart Home Tracker" noted 44 percent of U.S. broadband households who do not own or intend to purchase a smart home perceive the devices as too expensive.

"The perception of high prices continues to be the leading inhibitor for smart home device purchases," Brad Russell, research director, connected home, Parks Associates said in the blog. "Previously, companies would introduce an advanced model of their product to innovators and early adopters, and then maybe come down-market with a simpler, low-priced model, but as more product manufacturers enter the space, increased competition is driving industry players to integrate high-end features into their most affordable models. Consumers will start to see more value per dollar spent."

The Smart Home Tracker reveals privacy concerns are increasing among consumers—35 percent of U.S. broadband households who do not own or intend to purchase a smart home device report security and privacy concerns

as a reason not to purchase these devices, up from 25 percent in 2018.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting social-distancing guidelines are forcing companies to find new and creative ways to promote these privacy features and deliver support to consumers.

"Google has updated its Nest Wi-Fi router in order to help slow home networks support multiple video calls and games simultaneously," Patrice Samuels, senior analyst, Parks Associates said. "This move by Google will drive better user experiences. It is also very timely as 40 percent of U.S. broadband households now report using virtual meetings or video conferencing services, while only 26 percent reported using these services prior to the COVID-19 crisis."

Additionally, the Smart Home Tracker tracks several major market moves from solution providers in the multifamily space, with Allegion and SmartRent both launching smart access solutions aimed to help property managers improve security and operating efficacies at MDU properties. **SSN**

BRIEFS

The smart toilet adds health screening and privacy concerns into the mix

YARMOUTH, Maine—Scientists at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Joshua Coon and Ian Miller, recently analyzed 110 of their own urine samples directly from a toilet bowl over a 10-day period.

The smart toilet actually went into the molecular makeup of these men's urine, giving information about what was in their blood. From that, Coon and Miller were about to see how much sleep and exercise they got; alcohol or coffee they drank and when; and over-the-counter medications they had taken.

The two reasoned that a toilet of this caliber could be used not only to detect certain illnesses before systems presented, but could automatically send information to users' doctors.

So they are on a five-year journey to complete a smart toilet with a briefcase-size screen above the tank; a phone app; a specific bowl for collecting and separating urine samples; and the ability to differentiate between six and 12 users.

This would help propel medicine into being more preventative, yet this would be yet another way to allow cybercriminals access into lives of unsuspecting individuals.

SimpliSafe Business Security offers customizable protection plans to corporations

BOSTON—SimpliSafe recently launched SimpliSafe Business Security, a suite of products and services curated to meet the unique needs of both single and multi-unit business owners.

"We're building on our proven ability to support business owners and making protection even more accessible," Don LeBlanc, chief commercial officer at SimpliSafe, said in the announcement.

With DIY installation and no long-term contracts, SimpliSafe Business Security offers businesses a wireless solution with comprehensive monitoring at an affordable price.

Like SimpliSafe's home security offerings, the company's new business solution is fully scalable and customizable, so that customers can easily adapt to the ever-evolving business climate.

For over a decade, SimpliSafe has secured more than 100,000 businesses of varying sizes and industries, including healthcare, restaurant and retail.

The system arrives to the end-user customer ready to work and comes with a 60-day return/refund promise.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Video Analytics



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- Recognizes suspicious activity and also handles people counting in real time and recorded footage
- IDIS Deep Learning Engine: high accuracy, live event monitoring & recording, simple & cost effective

www.idisglobal.com



Alarm.com

ALARM.COM VIDEO ANALYTICS

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www.Alarm.com



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www.lenels2.com



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- Algorithms self adjust, so users concentrate on all-important detection rules

www.3xlogic.com



Johnson Controls

EXACQVISION 20.09

- Introduces face mask detection that integrates directly into the exacqVision VMS, enabled by Tyco AI
- exacqVision mask detection leverages (AI) analytics vs. pixel-based analytics - for improved accuracy and a scalable solution
- This solution's automated notifications make it easy to monitor, link and search No Mask events - providing situational awareness

www.exacq.com



viisights

WISE

- Provides advanced behavioral recognition for security and safety
- Recognizes video surveillance events, actions, scenes and more in real time and in a cost effective way
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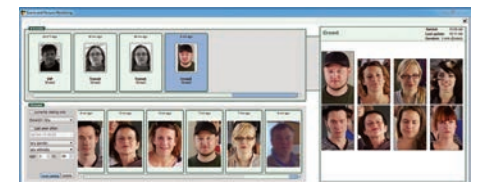


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- Finds frequent visitors and detects crowds

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Videotec

EVO

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- GeoMove&Track connects two cameras and tracks based on the geo-coordinates of the target
- Every time there is an alarm, the auto-tracking automatically activates and event metadata is sent to the VMS

www.videotec.com



Editor's note: The companies listed in this special section submitted product information in response to a call for products for this month's feature. *Security Systems News* is not responsible for the accuracy of the content in the product descriptions.

Coming Up:
November: VMS / December: Intrusion

SUPPLIERS

Kastle expands remote video program

By SSN Staff

FALLS CHURCH, Va.—As office locations and business districts nationwide remain at low occupancy and multifamily properties operate at near record levels 24x7, Kastle Systems has introduced KastleSafeVideo, a remote video platform to help these facilities maintain security while also reducing operating costs.

“With a longer timeframe for a full return to normal office activity and a growing concern about crime and security during this delay, we reshaped our existing video services to meet an immediate need for innovative, modern security coverage at lower cost for commercial office buildings and multifamily properties,” Kastle CEO Haniel Lynn said in the announcement. “We see KastleSafeVideo as a safe and secure bridge to a

broadier return to the office that the KastleSafeSpaces platform can help facilitate.”

Kastle’s technology, supported by multiple patents in AI-based video surveillance, has been harnessed in KastleSafeVideo, which provides clients with robust video analytics and remote guarding services to bolster security without increasing staff.

KastleSafeVideo provides video surveillance technology options to help secure properties and offices remotely.

This set of cloud-based services enables customers managing commercial or apartment buildings, as well as those tenants monitoring an office space, to access their video surveillance footage from anywhere on any device. Clients can either self-monitor their spaces with live viewing through 24x7 record-

“We see KastleSafeVideo as a safe and secure bridge to a broader return to the office that the KastleSafeSpaces platform can help facilitate.”

—Haniel Lynn, Kastle Systems

ing and push notifications, or employ Kastle’s monitoring expertise using smart cameras with artificial intelligence to provide real-time incident response from a new U.S.-based Video Security Operations Center (VSOC) located in Falls Church, VA.

The tailored service offering includes live VSOC-supported options that can help augment or replace guard staff to oversee empty commercial spaces or overcrowded multifamily amenity areas. These include dispensing live remote audio

talk-down, which Kastle has used for more than a decade to actively dissuade on-premise intruders, as well as remote video patrols to make regular video sweeps across a property.

Kastle Systems remains committed to providing smarter security for a safer world during the pandemic and as Americans return to the workplace over time, continuing to invest in video services and expanding their VSOC to handle the increased demand with 100% U.S.-based remote video guarding. **SSN**

BRIEFS

ASSA ABLOY launches interactive egress calculator

NEW HAVEN, Conn.—ASSA ABLOY Opening Solutions introduced the ASSA ABLOY Egress Calculator, an interactive tool that helps select the proper code-compliant doors and hardware for various openings based on individual states’ adopted version of the International Building Codes.

“ASSA ABLOY has always been committed to not only providing customers with the best possible solutions, but also with tools and training that educate them on how to make strategic decisions about their facilities’ openings and access control,” Katie Flower, AOC, CSI, CDT, training specialist at ASSA ABLOY Academy, said in the announcement. “We’re excited to offer customers with ASSA ABLOY Egress Calculator as another resource in our suite of digital tools and trainings, which are available for free.”

The calculator determines occupant load of a space; minimum opening clearance needed for exit and exit access doorways; and required swing direction of doors. It can also provide references to minimum hardware requirements for side-hinged and pivoted swinging doors, and fire and/or smoke-related doors, based on the exceptions for each occupancy type.

Alula launched wireless, outdoor siren

ST. PAUL, Minn.—Alula announced the RE636 Wireless Outdoor Siren, a perimeter warning device that produces high volume alert sounds and visual strobing.

“In an emergency, there’s no time to waste, and we’ve seen tragic instances where first responders weren’t able to find the right house,” Dave Mayne, VP of Products for Alula, said in the announcement. “With the outdoor siren, there’s a flashing light that tells police and firefighters exactly where help is needed. Eliminating confusion in those critical moments can save lives.”

The RE636 provides an early warning to summon help in the event of a burglary, smoke or carbon monoxide alarm conditions. The siren’s volume and strobe lights are adjustable through Alula Connect to accommodate any installation scenario, and the siren can be incorporated into home automation routines through Alula’s Scenes engine.

“There has been a dynamic shift with people spending more time at home this year,” Brian McLaughlin, Alula CEO, said. “It’s more important than ever to feel secure at home, and the outdoor siren offers an early warning that can save lives and provide peace of mind.”

The RE636 includes a multi-cadence siren; two- to five-year battery life (batteries included); Connect+ panel supporting up to eight sirens at one time; and installation with AC power or wall mounting.

Johnson Controls unveils the iSTAR Edge G2

By SSN Staff

CORK, Ireland—Johnson Controls introduced Tyco Software House’s iSTAR Edge G2 that provides a powerful, flexible and secure access control operation at the network edge, enabling cyber-hardened, standalone physical access control.

iSTAR Edge G2 provides an optional PoE module that provides ample power for two doors; local alarm and event buffering; an advanced access control feature set including OSDP, peer-to-peer clustering and allowing a local database of up to one million cardholders; localized decision-making at each door, increasing overall system reliability; advanced hardware-based cybersecurity protection; and a secure web interface for remote diagnostics, management and the ability to fix performance issues from any location, increasing user-friendly servicing options.

Using Trusted Execution Environment (TEE), a secure, isolated environment within the CPU that runs in parallel to the main Linux OS

guarantees confidentiality and integrity of code and data loaded within the device. TEE provides reliable storage of keys and other cryptographic materials, and manages a secure booth process to guarantee authenticated sources for hardware and software.

Designed to drastically reduce installation and startup costs, controlling and powering all access control devices at the door minimizes installation costs. A rechargeable coin cell battery for the real-time-clock (RTC) and the use of supercaps to provide power for graceful shutdowns when power is lost helps minimize service needs, which further reduces costs.

iSTAR Edge G2 can also replace its predecessor, iSTAR Edge, as hardware configurations and connection points remain the same. Coupled with a build-in database conversion tool within C•CURE 9000, existing iSTAR Edge users benefit from a seamless transition to the latest technology. **SSN**

Pro-Vigil announces social distancing AI suite

By SSN Staff

SAN ANTONIO—Pro-Vigil, provider of remote video monitoring, management and crime deterrence solutions, announced its Social Distancing AI Suite that is focused on helping retailers, manufacturers, schools and other organizations restore stakeholder trust in the safety of their work environments.

The company accomplishes this by using AI-driven video monitoring technology to measure compliance with the Center for Disease Control COVID-19 prevention guidelines around social distancing, occupancy limits and face-mask usage. When the system detects unsafe conditions in a workplace, managers can use this information to remediate the problem by redirecting traffic flows, expanding the use of safety signage, altering schedules, etc.

“Organizations across industries are struggling to restore trust with stakeholders in a post-lockdown world,” Pro-Vigil’s Founder Jeremy White said in the announcement. “The Pro-Vigil Social Distancing AI Suite is a powerful tool for accomplishing this by automating CDC guideline monitoring and analysis, so our customers can minimize health and safety risks without

the need to hire more people or divert staff from their core duties.”

Pro-Vigil’s remote video surveillance system can analyze digital video data to identify areas where CDC guidelines are not being effectively implemented. This gives users the intelligence to adapt processes and policies to reduce opportunities for virus spread in three specific areas: social distance monitoring, occupancy management and face mask detection.

Pro-Vigil’s Social Distancing AI Suite delivers information via a daily scorecard, showing exactly how an organization is doing. If a problem area is detected, users can drill down to learn more about the issue — where it’s happening, at what time of day and who’s involved, for example.

“Social Distancing AI Suite users can publish their daily scorecard results to further build trust with stakeholders,” White said. “The daily scorecard provides an easy and efficient way for organizations to let stakeholders know that they are committed to safety and CDC guidelines are being taken seriously.”

(Pro-Vigil is backed by The Riverside Company, a global private equity firm.) **SSN**

Brivo unveils all-in-one reader and controller

By SSN Staff

BETHESDA, Md.—Brivo, a global leader in cloud-based access control and smart apartment automation, announced the launch of the ACS100 all-in-one reader and controller.

Designed to lower hardware costs and make installation easier and faster, the ACS100 is used with Brivo Onair, Brivo Mobile Pass and secure physical credentials to deliver better affordability and broaden the application for access control at more doors.



Steve Van Till

A key feature of the ACS100 is Fluid Access, which allows users to unlock doors without removing their mobile credential from their pocket. In a time when reduced physical contact can halt the spread of germs, the ACS100 delivers a hands-free access solution to unlock doors.

“The trend with landlords and property managers is to look for more architecturally pleasing products throughout their buildings. A plain old industrial looking reader just doesn’t cut it any more,” Brivo President and CEO Steve Van Till said in the announcement. “Between the evolution of great looking IoT products in the smart home environment, plus the PropTech focus on occupant amenities, today’s products have to deliver both good experiences and good aesthetics.”

Key benefits of the ACS100 combination reader and controller include:

- Multi-technology reader and controller all in one convenient device
- Scales from single door to the largest multi-site, global deployments
- Architectural finishes, form factors and colors to match property aesthetics
- Designed for hands-free user experience with Fluid Access
- Multiple credential technology supports both mobile and smart cards
- Supports a second external reader for in/out and antipassback applications
- Encrypted data storage and communications to meet the highest security standards
- Indoor and outdoor rating for broader use cases
- Lower hardware costs and faster installation

“We’ve seen a steady trend

over the last 10 years toward IoT devices on the edge of the network, and away from traditional centralized control panels,” explained Van Till, who pointed out the interoperability factor is important differentiator. “We’ve supported this migration with

“The trend with landlords and property managers is to look for more architecturally pleasing products throughout their buildings. A plain old industrial looking reader just doesn’t cut it any more”

—Steve Van Till, Brivo

several different flavors of PoE controllers over earlier product cycles, so the ACS100 represents the logical next step in this shift of customer preferences to a single product that takes the place of two pieces of hardware and all the wiring between them,” said Van Till. **SSN**

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SSN SNAPSHOT

PEOPLE NEWS



Dan Cosgrove was appointed as Midwest U.S. regional sales manager for Feenics, Ottawa, Canada, bringing 20+ years of end user and channel management experience. He will implement effective strategies to support and expand upon Feenics' Keep Access Control as a Service (ACaaS) installed base within his territory. For Cosgrove, it's the chance to get back into the cloud/ACaaS space and promote Keeps' advantages.



Dan Cosgrove

"I'm totally stoked to be joining Feenics and can't wait to start promoting the value of

cloud-based physical access control systems," Cosgrove said in the announcement. "We are going to see much greater demand for cloud-based solutions in our post-COVID world and I'm excited to be on that leading edge!"

Cosgrove is also eager to help system integrators better understand how to leverage the recurring revenue model offered by the Keep platform.

"Dan's passion for Access Control as a Service and his intimate knowledge of the Midwest made him a perfect fit for Feenics," Paul DiPeso, executive vice president, Feenics said. "His philosophies for how to best service end users as well as help provide a better financial model for system integrators will deliver a win-win scenario for all parts of our

go-to-market model."

Blaine Frederick has joined Alcatraz as vice president of product to lead the technology startup in product development. He serves a liaison between business, technology and user experience, managing all components of the Alcatraz Rock product and connecting internal resources with the needs of the addressable market while guiding the development of product requirements. He also works closely with engineering to maintain alignment with product requirements.

"As we pioneer a new sector of the security industry, autonomous access control, Blaine will play a critical role to bring the Alcatraz Rock platform to market," Alcatraz Chief

Revenue Officer, Tina D'Agostin, said in the announcement. "Blaine's impressive experience as a security consultant, and in product management and engineering roles with some leading names in biometrics and physical security is a great asset to Alcatraz."

Frederick joined Alcatraz because he believes in the team and technology.

"Alcatraz looks at the problem of access control differently. Instead of thinking about biometrics as solely a means to replace a traditional credential, we are looking at how we can improve the experience of not only the user, but also the business manager, the system administrator and the installer," Frederick said. "By creating a device that can autonomously make complex, real-time decisions — including verifying identities and detecting tailgating — we change the entire access control paradigm."



Blaine Frederick

FIVE QUESTIONS



Presenting, **Richard Hahn**, president, Richard Hahn & Associates ...

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THE INDUSTRY?

In 1989, I was hired as editor of a new publication called "Security News," similar to Security Systems News as it was a newspaper rather than a magazine. I left the publication in 1994 to start my own company that includes business and marketing strategies, and planning, public relations and marketing.

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO RELOCATE TO COLOMBIA?

A friend from Colombia invited me to accompany her to see her country and meet her friends. I loved it there! Since then, I was elected to the board of directors of ASIS Colombia and have given many seminars here in Colombia and in several other Latin American countries. It was also in my heart to help in the poor areas. I have given motivational chats to children, families and senior citizens!

HOW DOES THE COLOMBIAN SECURITY INDUSTRY COMPARE TO THE U.S.?

As far as technology, I would say we are similar. Where I think there are differences is in guard services. Most apartment buildings have a several guards, not just a doorman. For this reason, most apartments do not have home alarm systems. For commercial buildings, it is not easy to just walk in for a meeting with a company as it is in the U.S. In addition to security guards who request identification, there is also access control systems and video.

WHAT'S SOMETHING INTERESTING ABOUT YOU THAT YOUR COLLEAGUES MIGHT NOT KNOW?

I used to collect comic book and attended a lot of the comic book conventions. I had a huge collection including first issues of Spiderman, Fantastic Four and Avengers. Comic books helped me develop a love for writing, art and design.

WHAT BOOK WOULD YOU RECOMMEND TO OTHERS? "E-Myth." It deals with the entrepreneurial myth that most people who start small businesses are entrepreneurs.



Richard Hahn

CALENDAR



Oct. 5-8 ISC West 2020. Held at the Sands Convention Center in Las Vegas, ISC West will feature a variety of exhibitors and host many security professionals. The conference features SIA educational sessions and the exhibition hall, which will be open from Oct. 6-8. For more information on the ISC West 2020 conference, visit www.iscwest.com.

Oct. 27-28: Securing New Ground (SNG), founded in 1996, is the executive conference of the Security Industry Association (SIA), including two days of intelligence sharing, education, analysis and networking. Held at the Grand Hyatt New York, the conference is attended by 250+ senior-level industry leaders and financial partners. Visit <https://sng.securityindustry.org>.

Nov. 18-19: ISC East 2020, held at the Javits Center in New York, will feature approximately 7,000 security and public safety professionals and representatives from more than 300 security brands. The event will also highlight new products, including video surveillance, access control, smart home technologies, IoT and unmanned security, and offer special events and education. For additional information about the show, visit www.isceast.com.

Dec. 9-11: 2020 Security Investor Conference, usually held at the Inter-Continental Brackley in New York, Imperial Capital's Annual Investor Conference is now virtual. The show connects the leading security focused companies with an audience of key investors and business leaders. Features 65 public and private companies to an audience of over 400 attendees. SIC provides investors access to senior management teams while they present their positioning and strategic growth plans to deliver the latest compelling security solutions across the Global Consumer, Enterprise and Government Markets. Surveillance, access control, smart home technologies, IoT and unmanned security, and offer special events and education. For additional information, visit www.imperialcapital-sic.com.

Jan. 6-9, 2021: The Consumer Electronic Show (CES), CES is the most influential tech event in the world — the proving ground for breakthrough technologies and global innovators. This is where the world's biggest brands do business and meet new partners, and the sharpest innovators hit the stage. Owned and produced by the Consumer Technology Association (CTA), CES features every aspect of the tech sector. Visit www.ces.tech

— Ginger Hill

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