

Technology-enabled protection

Digital integration has revolutionised the security industry with benefits for both industry and home owners

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Increasing threat to global security, constant need for personal protection, and acceptance of new technologies has given the security surveillance equipment market limitless opportunities for the future.

According to the market research report, CCTV Market Update (2006-2007) by RNCOS, the advent of new technologies such as IP video and video analytics, RFID, biometrics and the synergy between IT and security have led to the growth of global security market.

With the shifting of global CCTV market from analogue to digital, new avenues for growth have opened in the form of upgradation of existing systems, and emergence of countries seeking sophisticated technologies.

RNCOS's analysts predict that the convergence of access control technologies with other security systems like biometric and video surveillance equipment are likely to witness a colossal demand with an approximate annual growth rate of around 37 per cent across the world by 2009.

Integrating CCTVs into smart home systems is an integral part of any home automation solution. "With technology evolving on a daily basis and the real estate sector going through a renaissance in the UAE and the region, we are extremely optimistic that the security systems industry is going to show tremendous growth for years to come," says Fayssal Daoud, COO, Eon Circuit. With advances in technology the options for an end user are limitless.

For example, instead of watching security cameras only from dedicated monitors one can now exercise the same function from a regular TV set. "Additionally the picture in picture (PIP) TV function can be activated to watch a favourite show while keeping an eye on the children.

A more sophisticated solution will involve smart controllers and intrusion detection enhanced cams that can trigger a set of pre-defined actions once a motion is detected.

The emergency drill can involve playing a pre-recorded message to alert the dwellers, turning all TV screens on with a feed from the cams monitoring the trespassed sections of the facility, and notifying third parties through short text messages, emails, or phone calls.

The initial investment in such solutions is scalable, and upgradeable, rendering the technology affordable to all," says Daoud.

Continuous recording

Seven Seas in the UAE is a partner with Asis Technologies - and the company's Asis Home Gateway provides a complete video CCTV surveillance and DVR solution; support for 4-16 analogue cameras with PTZ functions, fully embedded Linux based operating system, digital video recording with date and time stamp, simultaneous and multi-user GUI (graphic user interface) to manage up to 64 DVR's over the LAN (local area network); high quality MPEG4 compression; pre-event recordings; PTZ capability; digital zooming and motion detection; recording on time schedule, on user request, on continuous recording, or on the event of an alarm sounding; integrated access control for doors, window, and outdoor perimeter security; secure live video feed via Internet browser; viewing stored and archived files, password protections and self diagnosis.

Software platform

"When using the DVR solutions with access control as well, the system software platform allows integration to CCTV, intrusion detection, lift access control, car park management, guard tours, with unlimited floor plan support that clearly define floor locations and real time icons to manage alerts and alarms.

So in a given scenario, the security personnel in the control rooms have complete control at their fingertips. They can set up the system to remotely monitor and control sensitive areas of their building, and refuse or allow access to staff and tenants based on a plethora of information fed into the system parameters.

If required a service staff who has not been cleared for access in a particular part of the building, will not be allowed beyond certain pre-determined points.

Access in these locations is verified by biometrics, image recognition or access cards," says Mario Bentley, business development manager, infrastructure, Seven Seas Computers.

Zio Technologies prefers not be involved in home projects ("dealing with a family is more difficult than handling a large corporation," says the company's CEO Parag Vadodaria), but is currently working on CCTV and security systems projects in malls and offices in Kuwait and Bahrain.

"We are installing a sophisticated security system for an upmarket showroom in the Avenues mall in Kuwait and an entire systems solution for the Bahrain City Centre, with complete audio-visual and broadcasting solutions, state of the art background music system and digital signage solutions, plus we are putting in portable stage and portable light system which will be useful for arranging events," says Vadodaria.

Dubai Police has made it mandatory for all technicians and engineers who install CCTV and security systems in the emirate to be certified by the police.

"After the installation of a system, the police verifies the system before issuing a trade licence to the company.

Being in this business is one of enormous responsibility, even after we install a security system, we have to make sure there are no gaps in the systems and everything works smoothly 24x7," says Vadodaria.

According to Firas Mazloun of Smart Homes, CCTV and security cameras are becoming essential in today's high profile homes.

"We can offer high levels of security in a home - from cameras at the front gate, back yard to the swimming pool - every inch of a home can be monitored remotely or from anywhere within the house.

We are now using cameras from Digitcom of Canada that are weatherproof, rustproof, unbreakable and come with in-built infrared illuminators which are ideal for low light or night conditions. These cameras are priced at \$220 (around Dh807) per piece," says Mazloun.

On guard... every inch of a home or workplace can be monitored - from the front gate and back yard to the swimming pool. Some security cameras are weatherproof, rustproof, unbreakable and come with in-built infrared illuminators that are ideal for low light or night conditions as well.