IP Video: It's Not Just About The Camera

For the IT reseller, video surveillance is an untapped market and the opportunity to build market share in the IP security market is now.

BY YOAV STERN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, DVTEL

What is the most significant trend in video recording and storage that integrators should be aware of?

Improvements in compression technologies and H.264 are significantly reducing the total cost of ownership of one system over another. Because not all H.264 cameras are the same, integrators need to evaluate the cost savings derived from the storage and compression options delivered by different cameras as opposed to simply comparing camera prices. Integrators that recognize the significant differences in storage requirements between various H.264 cameras are making smarter choices in their camera selections. These integrators also consider pixel per bit as an important factor in selecting the right camera for an installation.

As compression technologies make significant improvements, such as H.264 with motion processing, and the cost of hardware storage continues to rapidly decline, the old adage that motion is an effective recording trigger becomes a less viable argument. Motion detection has been used to assure customers that their video will be stored for the desired retention period at half the cost, while ensuring all video is retained. This is untrue and unnecessary. When you factor labor costs for configuring motion detection for various conditions, there is little economic benefit.

Lastly, storage on the edge is a significant trend in the surveillance market. Edge-based storage is useful when a user doesn't require long-term video storage, or they do not have the correct network infrastructure or bandwidth to support constant video streaming. Improvements in compression technology and the lower cost of SD cards allow users to save video directly to the camera while being able to review it on demand. The system architecture also allows integrators to be more competitive in certain situations where an on-site archiver is not necessary. Integrators will work with customers on their specific storage requirements for any given facility and together, determine if the site will need on-board camera recording, on-site archiver recording, or remote cloud-based recording.

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What challenges will integrators new to video surveillance face when implementing video recording and storage solutions? How can they overcome these challenges?

Often, the challenges faced during video surveillance deployments stem from a lack of understanding of cameras and networks. A common challenge, especially for those integrators new to the security market, is that they treat a camera as just another network device, such as a printer or a PC. A camera is not just another network node — it consumes more network resources then a typical node and has to do it all in real time. Therefore, it is important to understand the network and its topology upfront to have a stress-free deployment. Overall, new integrators need to not only be IT savvy but also understand the many different storage architectures, project requirements, and solutions. When selecting a camera for a specific project, it is also important to understand the optics side of the equation.

Network savvy integrators will be reading this article. How difficult will it be for them to become technically capable to sell video recording solutions? Where can they go for help?

Network savvy integrators do very well on the IP side of the video surveillance business as the systems and devices are very similar to many of the IP solutions they offer. My recommendation to IT VARs is to partner with a good security integrator that can help evaluate requirements such as fields of views, camera and lens selection, and risk mitigation. Another successful approach includes hiring security and surveillance specialists to complement the IT reseller's existing IT expertise. This allows the company to open doors to new business opportunities. For the IT reseller, video surveillance is an untapped market and the opportunity to build market share in the IP security market is now. ●