

Challenges Facing the Electronic Security Industry

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Electronic Security has become a hot topic during the past 12 months whilst we all adjusted to life during the pandemic. Lockdown has forced a period of cultural change, where technology has been at the forefront of everyone's day-to-day lives. Programmes or applications such as Zoom have seen some of history's greatest stock increases and many have had to learn to use new technologies to keep connected with the workplace, family and friends. We all know that technology is the key, enabling us to...

'Work smarter, not harder'.

How do we continue to maintain this mindset of adaptability in terms of technology and how do we ensure that we utilise what technology has to offer within our industry?

There are a number of challenges we, as Electronic Security Specialists, and our clients across all sectors, face today:



The challenges to meet customer expectations and service delivery times

Advances in technology mean that there are numerous choices to make when choosing a security solution. From **remote access** (which requires a certain degree of physical intervention), **software-driven engineering** (which could provide automated systems) to **cloud-based solutions** (which can offer reduced hardware costs).

We have seen clients requesting engineers to be on site in as little as 30 minutes following the trigger of an alarm. Is this even achievable using standard methodology?

Will technology ever replace a physical visit? I hope not. But can it support an enhanced service delivery? I think so.

Data overload?

We are extremely data-hungry these days, but how much of this data is *value adding*? When was the last time the data was reviewed ensuring it is value adding? What does the customer expect or require, and are we all guilty of supplying excess data in order to meet client expectations?



Should new technology be valued using traditional paradigms?

Is new technology as expensive as one may think? When was the last time new technology and its cost was reviewed, and has cost become the main driver for change?

What if we thought of new technology differently? The initial cost implication offset against the typical annual spend, could show significant benefits in a short period of time.

Can new technology complement an aging infrastructure/hardware?

Can software or technology be utilised alongside existing hardware and can this be cost effective? With so much growth in the software market today, would this reduce the cost of technology? It is an interesting thought and almost a cultural change in the way in which one approaches electronic security.

Conclusion

There is a technological solution for almost every task. We all know that new technology is fast evolving and is the key to working smarter, not harder.

At ICTS we work with a wide array of technology, software, and cloud-based industry leaders. In order to design bespoke electronic security solutions that meet our clients' needs, our teams listen to the industry leaders, allowing them the time to showcase their offerings, but most importantly, our team considers how we can work with them in true partnership.

When reviewing the electronic security market, it is important to consider the following technology/aspects:

- **Software platforms.**
These platforms, such as BMS (Building Management Systems) or VMS (Visitor Management Systems) provide one with the ability to centralise and easily control a wide range of products or suppliers and can reduce the need for security personnel.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI).**
AI will continue to be the technological innovator for the foreseeable future. What current AI technology can complement an Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) and the installation business? AI can monitor a range of security aspects e.g. are face masks being worn, and are the numbers for gatherings being exceeded?
- **Cloud-based solutions.**
Cloud storage for CCTV is becoming more common practice, thus the need for onsite recorders will start to dwindle. Customers who have experienced theft of CCTV equipment know how important it is to back up their footage offsite. Also, temporary CCTV is becoming standard on remote sites, and this area is perfect for cloud storage, as well as the subscription-based SaaS (software as a service), meaning the customer only pays for the equipment for the duration of a project. This in turn means the same hardware installed on mobile towers can be utilised on multiple sites before needing to be replaced. The bonus of all of this is that this can be achieved over a 4G network and it does not require the bandwidth most people would expect.

- **Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC).**

A traditional ARC can be set up to offer additional services such as:

- Remote Concierge Services - The control of access via intercoms or physical entry 24/7, reducing the heavy costs of personnel).
- Operator tours of premises - For additional perimeter protection and pre-penetrated entry).
- Monitoring of lone workers - This service is in demand, due to reduced office working and site capacity.
- Disaster recovery solutions - These include comprehensive options for server and alarm handling equipment to connect with BS5979 disaster recovery desk locations.

Those organisations which embrace the increasing use of technology, will reap its myriad of rewards.

