



Security's evolving role and what's in store for the coming 20 years

May 10, 2010 - Owners Developers & Managers

Technology's rapid advancement has changed the nature of society over the last twenty years. Computers, cell phones, the internet, information networks and fiber optics have all contributed to incredible changes in our daily lives. The security field is no stranger to these changes and advancement. Closed circuit television, video, analytics, ID card readers, and biometric readers have all been enhanced thanks to technology and are now part of the day to day operations of security companies. Metal, biological, chemical and nuclear detectors are widely used in this industry. Body scanners and heat and motion sensors are crucial in many security areas including airports, schools, and public attractions. Technology is here to stay and will help us improve how we deliver service.

However, no matter where technology takes our industry, it is important to always remember that security will always need the human element - the face, the person, the voice. While security officers are now using more technology to assist in how a job is done, recruitment, training and retention of quality personnel, while always important, will become even more important. Security officers will always have to service and respond to our clients needs in person. The presence of a person in uniform could never be deemed unnecessary or unimportant.

One challenge our industry faces is staying ahead of the curve. As our protection security becomes more sophisticated, so will the attempts at security penetration. Greater technical skill sets are required to combat this challenge. Fortunately, one benefit from the explosion of technology in society is that there is a larger pool of security officers with technological proficiency developed from early childhood. Young adults today live in and have grown up with technology and those skills can be transferred into their professional lives.

Terrorism has changed the way people live and the way we provide security. We find that we must be alert and proactive in dealing with incidents that in the past would not have raised an eyebrow. People, not technology, are key to providing a safe, secure environment in today's world. However, we must work in partnership with local, state and federal agencies to enhance safety and security for our clients with the help of technology at our fingertips.

Robert Tracy is vice president of security services at Summit Security Services, Inc., Uniondale, N.Y.