



Harnessing the Internet

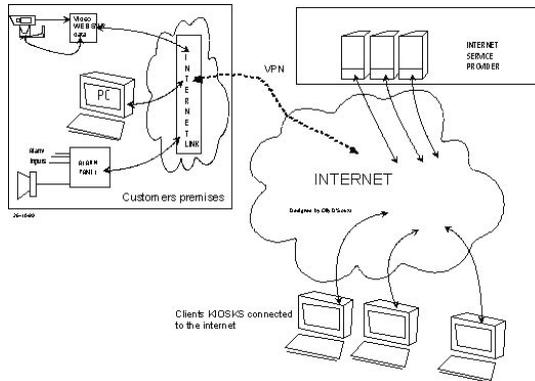
By Olly D'Souza

The security industry should not ignore the potential of the "Internet" (NET), particularly the graphical World Wide Web (WWW) to reach into millions of homes and businesses across the world whilst providing a very versatile technology rich environment to deliver services ranging from information to mission critical security monitoring. Although e-mail is currently used widely, enabling global connectivity, it is probably the only function provided by the NET that has been embraced by the security industry.

This article focuses on and identifies functionality, hardware and software solutions to harness the capability of the NET available to the security, safety and facilities management industry.

CUSTOMER PREMISES EQUIPMENT

The most important "functional" capability of the NET is its REACH using a simple and easily accessible network interface and protocol which is now an accepted world wide standard. The security industry will find that connectivity to the end user will be ever present and customers will now be able to use security services easily, if delivered on the NET, and PAY-AS-THEY-



USE. By using Network Address Translation it is possible to use a single IP address per location and expand it to a number of devices across the premises that manage the required services.

GRAPHICAL PORTAL

To add to the NET's ubiquitous presence we must add the versatility of the WORLD WIDE WEB (WWW) graphical user "WINDOW" or PORTAL into the Internet using widely accepted MARK-UP languages such as HTML, DHTML & XML. The security industry can "present" and "package" their product so demand, supply and delivery of services would only be a click away.

Today even children are being brought into this bright new connected world. Soon they will be grown-ups who will not be able to live without the NET, like people did with the telephone in the 20th century. Whilst the telephone allowed instant communication - it is not seen to be "intrusive" with telemarketers turning the telephone into a nuisance. Most people prefer to add an answering machine

to ensure that calls are filtered off and do not deplete the precious little time that is available to them.

REAL WORLD INTERFACES - DURESS, ACCESS CONTROL, CCTV, VIDEO, AUDIO AND CONTROL

REAL WORLD interfaces using TCP/IP WEB interfaces are now possible. Java, JavaScript and other flexible WEB friendly languages are now able to deliver LIVE status DATA to the user directly. With the advent of XML a powerful new opportunity emerges to actually place live and interactive services, including status reports on the NET.

VIDEO related services such as ALARM VERIFICATION could be implemented very easily using off the shelf, low cost, USB type camera system options.

Bi-Directional Video, Voice and Control implementations to customers can also be implemented using current technology. As VPN technology develops these services will be more robust and delivery of video streams could be guaranteed.

INFORMATION TO CUSTOMERS

All too often the industry is



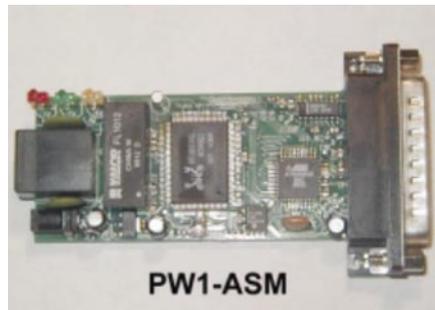
confronted by problems that developed into serious issues because information did not flow to the relevant people, customers, response teams reliably and securely. If the Security, Safety and Facilities Management Company was able to provide a customer instant access to the status of their assets, safety via a simple WWW Web Page log on then many issues can be resolved leaving the onus of collecting this information to the customer. The customer can quite easily stay logged onto the NET using a WWW "Browser" to enable instant access to the status of all their services in one well-laid out GRAPHICAL page. NETWORKS, LINKS AND QUALITY OF SERVICE

The "NETWORK" has always been a big "capital" intensive exercise for the industry where monitoring centres had to setup point to point LINKS from customer premises to their own monitoring centres via a Telecommunications carrier. Today a simple connection to the Internet would be adequate to establish a "permanent link" to every customer connected to the NET.

Security of the link, currently implemented via "tokenised" ASCII protocol can now be upgraded to "Virtual Private Network" (VPN) technology where software and hardware can be used to establish very secure encrypted links with prioritised and guaranteed data delivery using "Quality of Service" (QOS) levels that can be "purchased".

UBIQUITOUS PRESENCE OF SERVICES

A convergence of SERVICES delivered to the home by a host of other "CONTENT DELIVERY" providers could put SECURITY, SAFETY and FACILITIES MANAGEMENT services in front of the customer all the time. INTERACTIVE LINK TO THE CUSTOMER AND ALL STAKEHOLDERS USING INSTANT MESSAGING, WAP, MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS



The NET's "Chat" feature is growing into a "private" telephone-like means to communicate. The phenomenon of instant messaging is making most youngsters and senior citizens stay on line. With the introduction of WAP we shall see mobile connectivity. For example in Japan young people carry their mobile phones around their neck or in their top pocket - which is as near to them as possible using the DoCoMo developed WWW web access technology.

The fact that cannot be ignored by the security, safety and facilities management industries is the INTERACTIVE LINK to the customer.

MANAGEMENT OF SERVICES

Customers can now get connectivity to a RESPONSE crew quickly, easily and direct-

ly. In fact the customer can SIMULTANEOUSLY be informed via his EMAIL, WAP Phone or SMS PAGER probably saving more than 50% of the time used up in dialling, calling and speaking to customers who may be difficult to contact.

The other benefit that is likely to gain acceptance is the ability of the customer to log on to the Internet and view the status of the services that were requested, at any convenient time.

For the business it would be possible to have the ease of electronically transferring the information to the customer's preferred means of communication immediately thus giving the customer the option to choose the available or remaining service options.

Most often than not the customer will use connectivity tools to avail of the benefits of the service options that are offered at that time. For the service delivery company the onus of actually delivering the service becomes one of interactively receiving instructions directly from the customer and acting on them with the resources on hand. •

Olly D'Souza is a
National Manager CCTV
Sontec Incorp. Chubb VISION
Tel: 61 (0) 2 95816603
Mobile: 61 (0) 401778359
Email:
odsouza@ozemail.com.au
Web:
www.ozemail.com.au/~odsouza