

Security on the Rebound

A Look at 2009 and 2010

2009 has born witness to countless struggles in a subdued global economy. Collateral damages can be seen in every industry, with some governments forced to put projects on hold while others pressed on with stimulus packages. *A&S* reviews the year's happenings and presents how industry players have prepared for 2010.

BY ROSA CHEN

Lowered forecasts from Frost & Sullivan and IMS Research indicated that earlier optimism for the industry was premature, and the industry has indeed suffered. However, increased fear of crime and terrorism has prompted countries, both emerging and mature, to take proactive measures. According to the "Global Homeland Security 2009-2019" report, worldwide government spending on products and services for homeland security reached US\$141.6 billion in 2009, with continuous growth going forward, said Roni Klein, VP of Sales for Verint Video Solutions APAC, Verint Systems. "Prevention of terrorist attacks and detection of perpetrators are vital."

To this end, security activity has been booming in infrastructure-related projects, including all modes of transportation, city surveillance, and health care and educational institutions. Funding, however, has been difficult and postponed by some government bodies.

"For the global video surveillance market, Western Europe, the Middle East and Africa have been the most severely affected, followed by North America," said Alastair Hayfield, Research Manager, Video Surveillance and VCA Group, IMS Research. "Asia is still performing strongly, thanks to China, India and other growth regions."

Partnerships, such as Pelco-Cisco, Dell-HID and UTC Fire and Security's recent acquisition of GE Security, have turned heads in this industry, and companies continue to fill gaps in their portfolios with strategic acquisitions. "We're going to see new players from telecommunications,

looking at leveraging their network capabilities in the fast-growing security market," said Matia Grossi, Industry Analyst for the EMEA Physical Security Group, Frost & Sullivan, in a prepared statement.

To varying degrees, certain countries and regions abide by standards and regulations, and efforts have been made to consolidate video standards. "Both PSIA and ONVIF have made progress over the last year. With numerous large manufacturers committing to implementing these specifications, we should start seeing them make a real-world impact in 2011," said John Honovich, founder of IPVideoMarket.info.

In biometrics, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) launched its professional certification program for biometric practitioners. The Certified Biometric Professional (CBP) program includes study material and course work. "The CBP will spur more interest in biometrics as a professional field of endeavor, and, as a result, help encourage industry growth," said Walter Hamilton, Chairman of the International Biometric Industry Association and Senior Consultant with Identification Technology Partners.

More companies are also investing more in certification and training for partners and users. "Meeting user needs requires a level of commitment from dealers and integrators," said Gadi Piran, President of OnSSI. "Our certification program strengthens our channel partners' capabilities to design, configure and install our solutions in a complex, networked environment."

Scott Schafer, Executive VP of Sales and Marketing at Arecont Vision, added, "We hold classes around the globe focusing on megapixel technology, to help better design and deploy systems."

Additionally, manufacturers such as Honeywell stress the importance of going beyond the product. "Everything from lead generation programs and custom literature, to specification tools and sales and product training are areas

in which we make a difference and help our customers grow," said Frank Roth, VP of Global Marketing for Honeywell Security.

The security industry has been tried and tested by the financial crisis, leaving only the fittest to survive. Those who pulled through 2009's tribulations do not expect 2010 to be easy, but most remain cautiously and reasonably optimistic.

