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Current Trends in Security Technology

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Security as an industry is impacted heavily by current societal trends. The COVID-19 pandemic seems to have strengthened some of the ongoing trends. Remote working is more acceptable. Spending working days in the office seems less obvious. Large political themes are addressed with more extremism. Technological advancements have manifested in all kinds of ways. But we're not here to talk about politics as an isolated theme. We wonder what current trends and developments are happening in the security industry of 2021. We would like to share some of our observations...



Focus on user experience

One clear trend that has emerged in the past years, is that there is more and more focus on the user experience in our industry. The growing role of software and the consequential introduction of new roles in our product development teams, like UX-designers and industrial designs engineers, have resulted in a more mature, user-centric, approach to product design and development.

Example: Our first class member Delightica has released an extension to intrusion detection systems that really are about better support of the user. With Domox they have introduced a solution to deliver an

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appealing and comprehensive visual user interface, as part of an app, to the alarm system. They even integrate KNX home automation systems and IP-camera footage in their app.

Awareness about employee value

Another development that, surprisingly, is not very technical in nature, is that there finally seems to be more awareness in corporate environments that it is actually the people working for them that is their most important and most valuable asset. Keeping those people, with their knowledge and skills, safe and available is actually more important to the business continuity than safeguarding buildings and material assets with access control and security management systems.

Example: Safeture has understood this paradigm and its implications very well. They have come up with a cloud-based solution for employee safety management, which contains modules like travel safety and that easily taps into physical security measures and incident response procedures.

Terror Protection

In many regions in our world, the threat of potential terrorist attacks, is very real. Proper physical security measures need to be in place to protect the public and safeguard the continuation of society and everyday life as much as possible. Unfortunately, current developments in international politics are not hinting towards a peaceful future. Many organisations, both public and private, will need to consider implementing additional physical security measures that offer increased security levels at a flexible, dynamic and user-friendly way.

Example: EL-GO Team is specialized in designing and manufacturing entrances for vehicles and people that offer certified protection against terrorist attacks, but that still offer smooth and flexible usage scenarios and that are easily integrated with third party systems for access control and security management.

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Robotization

The introduction and wide-spread use of robots has been predicted and anticipated a long time. Many believe that robotization will have a great impact on our labour force in any environment where physical tasks, repetitive tasks and tasks in harsh environments are carried out. Robots, fuelled by AI and machine learning, are getting more and more intelligent and more capable to perform tasks formerly executed by humans.

Example: SMP Robotics have dedicated their existence to the introduction of security robots that are, better than humans, capable of performing their guarding and monitoring tasks accurately, autonomously and enduring in challenging and harsh environments. Equipped with modern sensors and artificial intelligence engines, these robots are capable to expand the possibilities of traditional guarding services by human guards. In the near future, human and robotic guards may actually collaborate.

Contactless Access Control

Most people have always cared about their hygiene. But it is clear and obvious that the current pandemic has resulted in more awareness and acceptance towards contactless identification technologies. People should be able to access rooms and buildings without delay and hassle. Motorists should be able to access parking facilities or secured perimeters without having to slow down and roll down a window. Technologies to accomplish this have been around a long time, but in recent years these technologies have become more secure as well.

Example: French identification technology specialist STid and well-known security vendor HID Global have introduced a great platform for mobile access. Their platforms, including intuitive apps for users, enable remote identification of users by utilizing the BLE functionality of smartphones. Also, ANPR solution vendor Tattile is using ANPR to provide drivers of vehicles with similar benefits.

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Frictionless Access Control

Security should not be in the way of people. More and more security managers realize that when they obstruct people in performing their jobs, they will decrease the level of support from users in their organizations towards their security policies and security systems. Thankfully we live in a time where technology is actually helping us in finding the right balance.

Example: Geran Access Products has a great solution in their portfolio to illustrate the trend mentioned above. Their Digicon dFlow entrance lane allows everybody to move in freely, until an unauthorized person is detected. A smart combination of conventional access technology and modern sensor technology is used in this innovative solution.

Best-of-breed solutions (integration)

In the past many security vendors have used vendor-lock-in strategies to prevent customers from moving away from their brands easily. Access control vendors would sell the software, the controllers, the readers and the access cards and they would discourage clients to use anything else. Thankfully that is mostly a thing from the past. Security managers nowadays are encouraged and supported to build best-of-breed solutions where multiple vendors supply their best components.

Example: Cypress Integration Solutions has been a long-time advocate of the OSDP-standard and they even supply smart tools to easily connect readers, controllers and other devices from multiple security vendors. Access control vendors can now easily use readers or controllers from HID Global or STid and even ANPR Cameras from Tattile.

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Behavioral Analytics & AI

The role of software in security technology keeps growing. The potential power of artificial intelligence and machine learning seems unlimited and it seems to offer great opportunities to design and implement truly innovative security solutions. Behavioral and predictive analytics add another dimension to the effectiveness of security solutions.

Example: Tattile ANPR cameras are now also capable of identifying the vehicle class, brand, model and color, only through image analysis. The cameras can detect the speed and direction of vehicles. Future releases of their products are even expected to look inside the vehicle to improve road safety.

Introduction of new technologies in security

New technologies are introduced in the security industry to support new applications or better support existing applications. The security industry has long been regarded as a conservative industry. But the introduction of new technology, new applications and new paradigms has been significant in recent years. It is clear proof of the fact that new technologies and ideas can bring value when trying to safeguard business continuity and mitigate continuity risks.

Example: DFSL has introduced LIDAR scanners in our industry to enable accurate intruder detection alongside long-stretched fencing, on rooftops and building facades. The very low percentage of false alarm has made the laser sensing technology very popular in applications that aim to detect intruders approaching critical infrastructures.

The industry is buzzing with new ideas and new solutions to optimize the security of people, objects and buildings. These are interesting times!