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Safe equals smart

October 2016, **CCTV, Surveillance & Remote Monitoring**, Integrated Solutions, IT infrastructure

While exact definitions may differ, it is widely agreed that a smart city makes use of digital technologies to improve the quality of life of its people, reduce environmental impact and ensure the efficient operation of everyday services. However, Roy Alves, business development manager, MEA, Axis Communications, stresses the integral role of safety. "When people talk to me about smart cities, we need to talk about safe cities. A true smart city is one where people feel safe. Consequently, a city can't be smart if it isn't safe."

Axis Communications provides cities around the world with a 24-hour window into all activity and the ability to monitor everything from a central location, see in bright light as well as in the dark, while scanning large areas or zooming in on small details. It is enabling city officials to respond immediately to suspicious activity by dispatching personnel to the right place, at the right time.

"This not only helps people feel safer," says Alves, "but similarly protects a city's facilities and critical infrastructure from all kinds of threats."

Global examples cited include the Cincinnati and Los Angeles Police Departments in Ohio and California, USA; 18 municipalities across Lombardia, Italy together with various other locations throughout South America, Europe and China.
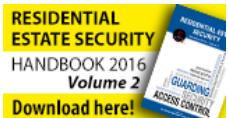
"Together with our partners, our solutions allow for everything from licence plate recognition to people counting and vehicle tracking," continues Alves. "In effect they operate as smart sensors, providing information that can be analysed for a host of reasons from security through to smoother traffic flow, optimised energy consumption and reduced pollution."

Local safety initiatives

Closer to home, Visec Surveillance Software, the first company worldwide to conduct licence plate recognition (LPR), works exclusively with Axis Communications as its preferred and only supplier of network video cameras.

"We refuse to allow our software to be deployed on any other make of network video camera," says Gary Scagell, CEO. "The quality of output, enhanced functionality and longevity of the Axis product range provide us with the ideal solution with which to conduct thorough surveillance."

As one of the companies to receive official endorsement from BACSA (Business Against Crime SA), Visec, together with Axis, is spearheading the move to safe cities. One such example that of the Constantia Valley Watches Association (CVWA) in the Western Cape, responsible for monitoring as many as 25 000 properties.

"We noticed a change in crime patterns from 'on foot' to more vehicle enabled, requiring us to monitor vehicle access," says Mike Voortman, founder and head, CVWA. "In addition, we realised that the benefit of LPR would not only enable us to proactively monitor known and suspected vehicles with criminal intent, but also provide us with the means to assist local police with 'after the event' footage of any incident in the monitored area(s)."

Having begun in 2011, the CVWA LPR project deployed centralised servers running Visec software on a wireless network linked to approximately 50 LPR points at main access roads into the valley. Most points have one LPR Axis camera, together with two related overview cameras. "We now monitor a total of 124 overview and LPR cameras, installed throughout the valley, connected via 146 separate wireless links."

"There have been too many successes to mention," enthuses Voortman. "Certain suburbs within the valley, where this technology is complemented by strong operational capabilities, have experienced as much as a 75% decrease in crime over the last three years."

Infrastructure lacking

But it has not been without its challenges. "The one stumbling block has been local network infrastructure," says Alves. However, he sees the current increase in fibre optic network installations as alleviating this pain moving forward. As more homes and communities gain access to fibre optics, the ability for network video surveillance around the country will increase.

Another key element is that of a non-proprietary security system, able to be utilised by multiple stakeholders. "This includes alarm companies, local and regional police, amongst other," says Alves. "It allows for the video management software to be integrated across multiple devices, including smartphones, key to effective on-the-ground security."

With the cost of these solutions directly linked to its uptake, Alves stresses that Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), just as with any B2B scenario, is key. "Currently, most municipalities in South Africa are either bankrupt or close to." Consequently, TCO is critical. "The real cost is often not the actual procurement, in this case the cost of the camera, but rather factors such as installation, compression of data, product longevity and long term maintenance."

However, notwithstanding, Alves emphasises the role that effective and efficient network video cameras and technology has to play, particularly in a local context. "As a country, we are very reliant on tourism," continues Alves. "We need to invest in both infrastructure and the resulting security of our cities, rendering them 'safe' and 'smart', while promoting that message internationally."

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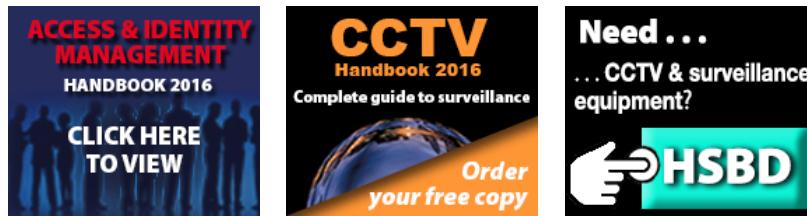
Further reading:

- **Fibre-to-the-home: The impact on your security**
  October 2016, This Week's Editor's Pick, IT infrastructure, Residential Estate (Industry)
  Fibre-optics networks offer significant benefits to estates, both in the security field and further, as the growth in fibre-to-the-home installations proves.

- **Security by SLA**
  October 2016, Residential Estate (Industry), CCTV, Surveillance & Remote Monitoring, Access Control & Identity Management, Perimeter Security, Alarms & Intruder Detection, Integrated Solutions
  Based on a service-level agreement, AMAX offers security and communications installation and maintenance services to estates in Gauteng.

- **Security lighting in residential estates**
  October 2016, BFR Digital, This Week's Editor's Pick, CCTV, Surveillance & Remote Monitoring, Residential Estate (Industry)
  Lighting has become a large portion of the security budget for new lifestyle estates, with the expense mainly being the electrical infrastructure required to power these lights.

- **Successful security is planned**
  October 2016, Technews Publishing, This Week's Editor's Pick, CCTV, Surveillance & Remote Monitoring, Access Control & Identity Management, Perimeter Security, Alarms & Intruder Detection, Integrated Solutions, Residential Estate (Industry), Training, Conferences & Events
  The second Residential Estate Security Conference, hosted by Hi-Tech Security Solutions in association with Rob Anderson was held recently in Durban, and saw delegates attending from all across South Africa.

- **Better decisions through training**
  October 2016, Elvey Security Technologies, This Week's Editor's Pick, CCTV, Surveillance & Remote Monitoring, Access Control & Identity Management, Residential Estate (Industry), Training, Conferences & Events
  Elvey Security Technologies offers the globally accredited Tavcom training courses on security technology and processes.

- **Outdoor loudspeaker**
  October 2016, Axis Communications SA, Residential Estate (Industry), Products
  AXIS C3003-E Network Horn Speaker is a simple-to-install outdoor loudspeaker that provides clear, long-range speech for remote speaking in video surveillance applications. In live video monitoring situations, ...

- **Thermal network cameras**
  October 2016, Axis Communications SA, Residential Estate (Industry), Products
  AXIS Q19 thermal network cameras are a perfect tool for perimeter protection, offering high-performing video analytics.

- **A finger on the estate's pulse**
  October 2016, Solution House, This Week's Editor's Pick, CCTV, Surveillance & Remote Monitoring, Security Services & Risk Management, Residential Estate (Industry)
  Criminals feed off our blind spots and any weak links, so it's up to us to make sure we have the systems, processes and technologies in place to deliver proactive protection.

- **SmartProtect extends visitor management for estates**
  October 2016, This Week's Editor's Pick, Access Control & Identity Management, Integrated Solutions, Residential Estate (Industry)
  SmartProtect's latest innovation is designed to make estate access control and visitor management simpler, faster, and also more secure.

- **What's hot on the perimeter?**
  October 2016, Bosch Security Systems, Sunell Security, TeleEye (South Africa), Axis Communications SA, Hikvision South Africa, This Week's Editor's Pick, CCTV, Surveillance & Remote Monitoring, Perimeter Security, Alarms & Intruder Detection, Residential Estate (Industry)
  Thermal cameras have become hot topics in the residential estate market over the past few years as the prices have dropped and they have proven their worth time and again.

- **Drawing the line**
  October 2016, Axis Communications SA, This Week's Editor's Pick, CCTV, Surveillance & Remote Monitoring, Perimeter Security, Alarms & Intruder Detection, Residential Estate (Industry)
  The versatility of network cameras, in combination with many available applications and video analytics software, makes the system flexible, scalable and cost efficient.

- **Perimeter security options**
  October 2016, Technews Publishing, Perimeter Security, Alarms & Intruder Detection, Integrated Solutions, Residential Estate (Industry)

Making the right decisions as to your perimeter security sets the tone for the estate's security. We ask for the best advice and practices to secure the perimeter.

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