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Connecting people and information with IP access control

mt Michael Troiani



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As technology constantly evolves, IP access control is quickly moving forward with both new installations and retrofitting existing legacy access control systems. The control panel concept is quickly being replaced for access control just as the DVR is being replaced with IP video. As a result, both video and access control can finally be truly scalable in small or large increments

with a better understanding or predictability of cost. This also results in a significant reduction in infrastructure cost as well. In traditional access control systems, the first door is normally more expensive than the second if you consider the cost of the panel, software, server etc. With IP based access control, there are no dedicated servers, the software systems are embedded on a Linux or Unix chip, individual panels can be placed at the door with a simple cat 5 run back to any IT room/closet with a POE switch.

IP access control is no different than any other device on the network. As with any Ethernet connection, care must be taken not to expose the connection in unprotected environments (like on the outside of a perim-

eter door). This is just good common sense. With IP access control, you have the option of separating the reader from the controller without losing any functionality, and most importantly gaining the ability to keep the network connection within the protected space. Currently the IT security market is a \$5-10 billion a year market that is not available to traditional access control systems.

In today's challenging corporate and financial environment, the network gets more attention and care simply because the network is carrying the day to day information that keeps the company in business. With IP access control, the only impact of network communications failure is that the events will not be transmitted to the host application

when the event occurs. The door still works and employees can still enter, with all the events, transactions and alarms being buffered. Once network communication is re-established, all events that took place during failure will be transmitted back to the host. Communications loss is a universal problem that affects Ethernet and serially connected devices in the same way, so please don't be swayed by the misconception that IP access control is unproven or untested. Keep in mind that the network in your office rarely goes down, it is the backbone of the entire business. One of the beauties of networked-based information is the fact that information can be re-routed in less than 100 milliseconds by finding an alternative path. No legacy access control solution has

this level of reliability.

So when you are ready to discuss IP access control and why it might be a good solution for your organization with your security vendor... don't forget to invite your IT manager. As an "IT guy" now on the security side, it is extremely important to have your IT manager/network administrator present at the security meetings when you are deciding to implement, or upgrade your existing legacy security system. While the IT department may not handle the day to day activity of entering new card holders into the system, reviewing video or running reports, they will monitor all devices on their LAN and be proactive with keeping software support and other service and warranty items up to date, and if you are lucky and have a good relationship with your IT staff, they may even handle support costs under their budget.

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By Nadine Cino

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Telephony as "Game Changer"

Telephony is another area where technology is changing the way we communicate producing tremendous efficiencies in communications and significant reductions in operating costs and energy requirements. VoIP, an emerging technology not so many years ago, has improved its reliability to the extent that, coupled with cell phone and WiFi technology...it is a "game changer." This topic is so broad...it's a platform for another article. As a quick simplistic way of looking at it through the lens of "Triple Net Bottom Line Wins," the technology affords us the following: (i) economically – reduced cost of communication over the Internet, reducing the number of lines needed to support an organization's communications needs, (ii) socially – "anywhere, anytime" communications features such as VM conversion to TM or email and (iii) environmentally – reduced energy demand by eliminating the hard infrastructure to support land lines, servers and related equipment.

"Triple Net Bottom Line Win" new opportunities/technologies increase daily and move managers and consultants are in a pivotal position to pull these new opportunities/technologies into the conversation so that their clients can better manage change and optimize the outcomes of their expenditures and strategies.

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