

Security management: open systems enable change, advancement

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In the realm of security and security solutions, change is constant - systems continue to advance, threats evolve and business security priorities are continuously revised to defend and protect against new challenges. To maintain agility, maximise security system investments and ensure scalability and long-term affordability, open security management platforms are indispensable.

A core benefit of open security management platforms is their ability to integrate almost any component solution - e.g., Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), fire, intrusion, access control and Building Management Systems (BMS) - and provide an interface that allows these solutions to work together dynamically and seamlessly.



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For users, there are two key arguments for the adoption of open security management platforms: the fact that no two businesses have the exact same security needs, and the constantly evolving protocols, standards, features and technologies of security systems.

Business security needs

Businesses security needs will differ depending on the type of business and the threats it faces based on location and other external factors. A corporation may prioritise access control and protection of data; a manufacturing operation may focus on safety in the workplace and warehousing operations; while a mine may prioritise protection of high-value assets, perimeter security and workplace safety. Location also influences security

requirements - businesses in the crowded inner city may have very different needs to those situated in business parks or industrial areas. This boils down to one sure fact: no two businesses will use the same systems - there is no "one size fits all".

One measure of the value of open security management platforms is their ability to hook into any system via Application Program Interfaces (APIs) that are either released by system vendors, developed by the platform vendor or by the community of users that has grown around the platform. It's a critical consideration.

Evolving protocols

While the basic security systems (CCTV, fire, intrusion, access control, etc.) remain the same, they all make use of different protocols. In addition, most have advanced significantly in just a few short years, albeit at different rates. While keeping current with new releases is a priority for some businesses, others find particular systems remain useful for many years. This makes backward compatibility and the ability to integrate security systems of different vintage and type an important feature when selecting a security management platform.

Developments in the CCTV arena are a good example of how fast systems change. The shift from analogue to digital and the sharp ramp up in software capabilities to incorporate video analytics resulted in a step change in infrastructure as well as surveillance approaches. It has also had an impact on other related security systems, such as access control. In addition, the components of the CCTV system - the camera, servers and PCs have different life cycles and may have to be upgraded or refreshed at different rates. An open security management platform is flexible enough to facilitate all this change.

The integration capabilities of the security management platform enable the user to manage a number of individual security

solution from a single interface. This provides significant benefits - the user gains an overview of security system performance and can manage incidents through the many layers of security. There are additional benefits such as standardisation of security processes.

Which solution should you select?

The best ones have been around for some time and have a large user base. They keep pace with the global technology roadmaps of major system developers, constantly add new features to meet users' needs and keep users current, and have a solid community adding APIs to an API stack they actively refresh. This will enable the organisation to ride the wave of technology change, maintain connectivity and integrate solutions seamlessly.

Open security management platforms are the smart choice when it comes to enabling greater control, flexibility and adaptability. Point to point integration has forever given way to open systems and integration platforms with intelligent user interfaces. If you are in the process of selecting a platform, consider the following: the ability to adapt and keep pace with change is what differentiates a winning solution. Furthermore, there is great change on the horizon: even as we continue to battle physical intrusion and data theft, the world considers the next evolution in integration and human-computer interface - a future in which ZeroUI, gesture and biomarkers are role players.

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