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Prioritising client and staff safety in shopping malls

By Roy Alves, country manager, Axis Communications

Whether you run an SMB or a whole chain of stores, it is essential that safety remain a key priority. With the recent spate of mall robberies around South Africa, retail staff and the general public have become increasingly apprehensive about going to work or to their favourite shop or mall. Implementing security measures to ensure staff and patron safety, as well as the preservation of your brand, is one of the most important solutions that are essential in the retail sector across the country.

Retailers over the years have traditionally implemented analogue-based systems to deter shoplifters. Today however, network video (IP) surveillance systems have far superior intelligence 'on board', offering clients much more than what was previously available on the market. Some of the newer applications include fire and motion detection, number plate recognition and more. With reference to number plate recognition, this has been linked to the e-Natis system in some instances and has proved to be very fruitful in assisting police and recovery companies in the retrieval of stolen vehicles and apprehending those responsible.

These types of benefits, along with the clarity of high definition imaging, enable proactive security measures which allow for the tracking and identification of criminals and suspected individuals alike before the next premeditated strike. The surveillance cameras, apart from the monitoring functions, have proven to give a preventive effect – the knowledge that one is being watched and recorded is often a deterrent. The net effect is a reduction in crime and offence rates. When incidents do happen, high-quality recording is used as evidence in court.

A solution that many shopping malls have started implementing is that they operate quite closely with various anti-crime initiatives such as Business Against Crime as well as directly with the local South African Police Service. Through these interactions malls receive relevant crime reports, tips and warnings pertinent to their areas. Using this intelligence, coupled with effective surveillance and pro active monitoring, they can drastically reduce their risk factor and in many cases have thwarted attempted robberies and assaults to patrons.

Many malls however still employ archaic surveillance equipment which give little or no assistance pre- or post incident due to the aged state of equipment. While Axis has upgraded many of the busiest and most prestigious malls in the country we would suggest that all security systems are checked and updated ahead of the prestigious event taking place in July.

Notes to editors

1 Axis Communications is the global market leader in the network video market with a market share of network cameras of 31.2%. The world market for network cameras alone is forecast to be worth more than \$2.5 Billion by 2013. The network camera market is set to have a CAGR of more than 28 per cent per year over the next five years,

according to industry analyst house IMS Research (www.imsresearch.com) in its latest market report entitled 'The World Market for CCTV and Video Surveillance Equipment 2009 Edition' published in August 2009.

About Axis Communications

Axis is an IT company offering network video solutions for professional installations. The company is the global market leader in network video, driving the ongoing shift from analogue to digital video surveillance. Axis products and solutions focus on security surveillance and remote monitoring, and are based on innovative, open technology platforms. Axis is a Sweden-based company, operating worldwide with offices in more than 20 countries and cooperating with partners in more than 70 countries. Founded in 1984, Axis is listed on the NASDAQ OMX Nordic, under the ticker AXIS. For more information about Axis, please visit our website at www.axis.com

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