

Choosing Integrated Security Management for Growing Enterprises

The modern enterprise regards security as an integral part of their business and modern security concepts are about protecting business assets, managing risks and creating value to the business.

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Businesses need to recognize the risks they may face. In an ideal situation, a reputable international security consultant should be approached to complete an assessment from a third-party perspective. However, if upper management and staff openly discuss the possible risks internally, they may be surprised at how much they can discover with little professional help.

This requires a top-down approach with open support by management. Employees will disregard the need for security if management does not place an emphasis on it. This can erode the organization's competitiveness, margins and accountability over time. Also, organizations need to realize that educating employees and raising security awareness is a long-term effort. Results are not visible overnight like they are when investing in systems.

Investment in a proper security system that drives business processes is very much like investing in financial or human resources software. It is a process that does not drive visible profit, but instead improves operational efficiencies which subsequently help lower the total cost of operating the business.



▲ Management should provide direct guidance when making purchases.

Selecting an enterprise security solution is not an easy task for growing enterprises. There are many factors to consider — from protecting business assets, managing risks and creating value for the business, to the finer, more complex technological aspects in relation to business needs.

PROTECTION OF FACILITIES AND ASSETS

Controlling access to facilities and company assets is an important issue to consider, since theft and damage can hinder daily business operation. Some SMEs do not believe that they are a target because there are no assets of significant value on their premises. However, they could not be further away from the truth.

Burglars do not have criteria when selecting their target — they will jump at the opportunity to rob any establishment with a weak security system. A burglar could enter into an office hoping to steal some laptops. During the process, a lit cigarette could be dropped, causing a fire that destroys the whole office. Even if the office were insured, the organization would have lost all their documents and server data. Such data is sometimes irretrievable, and many SMBs would not survive such an incident; business operations and cash flow would be severely impacted. A more important factor to consider is the disruption of services to the client base. Clients may likely move to other service providers and this will inevitably affect the long term viability of the business.

Outsourcing has become a growing trend, and this is prompting many industries to regulate their security and safety standards. Compliance to security standards will determine the ability to grow for these enterprises.

STAFF SAFETY

No employee will be able to work efficiently when they feel insecure or unsafe. As businesses venture into more

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remote locations, security should become a top priority. Issues such as riots and protests, workplace violence and crime are significant concerns. While it is not realistic to control the dangers that happen outside the facility, it is possible to keep these dangers from entering the facility or office if a good security system is utilized.

DRIVING COSTS DOWN

Operational costs can be lowered if business systems are integrated into a good security solution. Many SMBs are unaware that a good security system can be programmed to perform management and administrative functions such as managing attendance, updating payroll and controlling the internal usage of copiers. Retailers use video analytics software to count customers and detect overcrowding. These are just a few examples of security systems being used for business objectives and taking over functions that are tedious and prone to human error.

TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP

Junior executives often do not have a very good

grasp of the overview of the business; thus, decisions concerning the selection of a security system are often based on the upfront cost of the system. Upper management should take this into consideration and provide direct guidance over all security purchases to prevent wasting time and resources on an inappropriate system. The wrong system can result in frequent downtime, repairs and replacements, while failing to meet the security objectives.

GREATER BELIEF

There is a common misconception that security can be a source of inconvenience, but we have seen renewed confidence by customers and employees when better security is in place. SMBs who have implemented a well-integrated security management process see a large improvement in staff morale, which results in better productivity, punctuality, sense of ownership and reduces chances of disruptive behavior.

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