

Biometrics market set to grow to “\$14.685 billion” by 2019



Frost & Sullivan has carried out a new assessment of the global biometrics market that predicts 2010 revenues of \$4.49 billion will increase to \$14.685 billion by 2019.

Universal adoption of biometric passports will be the driving force in this growth as so-called eGates are implemented at borders around the world. Portable devices used by the police and the military will also become increasingly common in the fight against crime and terrorism, according to the report.

Frost & Sullivan also suggests that biometrics will be almost universally adopted in the identification of citizens through IDs, driver’s licenses and healthcards complete with biometric capabilities. The European Union passed regulations to implement biometrics in EU passports in 2005, partly to better control immigration but also in response to security concerns following 9/11. Europe and North America have been leading the way on the use of biometric passports, with the rest of the world expected to follow suit.

However, slow return on investment, high initial costs and

the slow speed of Government procurement procedures have so far meant the adoption has not been particularly expedient. Concerns about privacy have also hindered take-up. As the majority of customers for eGates are Governments, Frost & Sullivan says that becoming a recognisable player in the biometric market will positively influence the speed of procurement.

MTA orders surveillance security systems for 1,150 buses



The Metropolitan Transportation Authority is increasing the number of surveillance cameras on city buses, as New York City Transit is looking to buy and install camera security systems for another 1,150 buses. The original contract awarded in 2010 equipped 426 buses with the technology and called for hardware and software to be installed at nine bus depots. An additional 12 depots will be outfitted. The Bus Camera Security Systems upload videos wirelessly to depot servers and can cover the entire interiors of the buses. MTA officials say the camera systems enhance both passenger and employee security.

Cisco to secure personal devices

Cisco Systems is expanding its services to enable companies to manage and secure private mobile devices used by employees at work, aiming to benefit from the trend widely known as BYOD or Bring Your Own Device. While corporate IT departments have systems in

place to ensure desktop security and to prevent data loss over the internet or through emails, they are now facing the challenge of dealing with devices such as smartphones, tablets, USB drives or laptops that can open the door to malware or data loss.

That’s where Cisco sees growth opportunities for its services, which it has expanded to enable businesses to provide control over individual access and security, beyond merely connecting outside devices to a company network, the company said. Allowing staff to use any device they choose is becoming a differentiator for companies seeking to hire young employees but it can become a nightmare for the IT department.



According to a study by the Ponemon Institute published in February, organizations often do not know if and what kind of data is leaving their networks through non-secure mobile devices. However, only 39 per cent have the necessary security controls to address the risk, and only 45 per cent have enforceable policies, the study also said. Cisco, which allows staff to use their own devices, said earlier this month that staff using personal devices at the company grew 52 per cent in the past year to 50,538 from 33,354 in 2010, with iPhones dominating with around 21,000 devices being used by employees.

Hitachi surveillance camera system scans 36 million faces per second

Hitachi’s latest surveillance camera system makes tracking millions of people all the more easy. It can compare a face it has just captured with 36 million on record in just one second. Such a rate of comparison means if you’ve been in



trouble with the authorities before, the security team monitoring the cameras will know everything about you just a few minutes after you step into the camera's view. But on the flip side, it means Hitachi can capture faces all day long and build up a healthy database of where you have been seen before.

The camera is capable of capturing any face that appears larger than 40 x 40 pixels within its view. After that it uses facial image recognition to match it to a database of existing faces. The time it takes to do the search is cut by taking into account similarities between faces, meaning a large section of the database doesn't need to be searched with just a few simple category checks. Hitachi is hoping the new system gets picked up for large-scale surveillance. So that means any location that sees a lot of regular traffic such as shopping malls, airports, or busy city streets.

2,000 extra officers to police London post-2012 Games



London's communities are set to see an extra 2,000 officers in neighbourhood policing teams after the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games as part of the Met's 'total war' on crime. The new proposals are part of a major investment in neighbourhood policing scheduled

to commence this Autumn and which sees "a new set of promises" in terms of how the Metropolitan Police serves and protects the communities of London. Each ward will keep its dedicated officers and PCSOs in local policing teams. Under the new 'local policing model' they'll be part of integrated neighbourhood policing teams (INPTs) comprising of uniformed officers, detectives, forensic and other officers under the leadership of a police inspector.

These teams will investigate 'lower level' neighbourhood crimes, such as thefts, criminal damage and anti-social behaviour. They'll proactively target offenders, engage with the public and work with communities and partners to address problems. The teams will agree on a number of promises with local communities, such as patrolling certain areas at certain times, or visiting every secondary school and every place of worship in the area at least once a month.

More complex and serious investigations will remain with CID, who will prioritise on pursuing and disrupting harmful criminals and gang members. Their role will also be about supporting vulnerable people, such as the victims of hate crime or domestic violence. Changes to shift patterns will also see more officers on duty at key times, such as late at night and at weekends, while officers will be used in a more intelligence-led way in the areas where crime is taking or could take place.

Additionally, in a renewed focus on victim care, any person who suffers from a crime (whether that's a stolen bicycle or serious assault) will be offered a visit by police.

The extra 2,000 officers will result from transferring officers from backroom and non-operational roles and from merging existing squads. In tandem, senior management costs are being reduced to ensure that there are as many constables out in communities as possible.

Honeywell creates Pro-Watch program for integrators



Honeywell has announced a new training and certification program to help integrators become proficient with the company's Pro-Watch Integration Kit, a software development kit designed to create smarter buildings that fold security into building management functions.

The new Pro-Watch Integration Program is open to authorized Honeywell Integrated Security (HIS) integrators and combines professional training, certification and graphical toolsets into a single offering. This reduces development time to help certified integrators get solutions to market faster. The Pro-Watch Integration Kit, which is powered by the NiagaraAX Framework and compatible with Pro-Watch Corporate Edition version 3.81 and higher, drives integration to third-party systems to reduce costs and increase operational efficiencies in building management. This allows integrators to tie everything from access control to video surveillance with building controls such as temperature, lighting, energy management and fire systems. It also provides an easy way to build customized apps and modules that integrate physical security with building management systems.

For example, Mexico-based security integrator Tenco used the Pro-Watch Integration Kit to protect the Ciudad Judicial Federal de Zapopan Jalisco. The complex uses a MAXPRO VMS (Video Management System) head end to manage Honeywell's ACUIX IP video cameras, VISTA burglary panels, Notifier ONYXWorks fire alarm, Alerton building management system and Pro-Watch access control.

The solution integrates more than 360 HD cameras, 100 access control panels, 3,000 fire alarm points and 70 intrusion points, as well as the HVAC, electrical and mechanical system monitoring that results in a centralized security and control system that meets the highest level of security.

Planet Technology wins Excellent Corporate award



Planet Technology has won the “Excellent Corporate Award” under the “Social Responsibility” category as honoured by the New Taipei City Government, Taiwan. The company has demonstrated a continual commitment to corporate social responsibility. The “Excellent Corporate Award” was held for the first time by the New Taipei City Government. It aims to encourage corporates to promote social responsibility in areas of environmental protection, public safety as well as social welfare. It is to honour corporates which have been deeply involved in their communities and have contributed greatly to the economic and industrial development. Planet was recognised for its long-lasting effort in children’s education – its core CSR initiative.

Planet began with the children’s education initiative in the Xindian District of New Taipei City, where it is headquartered. It provides counseling and tutoring services to vulnerable children with an institutionalised approach in which Planet utilised its business know-how and integrated resource from the schools, education professionals along with corporate volunteers. By systematically duplicating

its management experience and execution model, it was successful in promoting these programmes which are deeply rooted in elementary schools in New Taipei City.

IMS Research acquired by IHS Inc



IHS Inc., an Englewood, Colo.-based provider of information and analysis for businesses, announced last week that it has acquired IMS Research for \$46 million.

Founded in 1989 and headquartered in the UK, IMS Research provides in-depth market analysis for a variety of technology sectors within the security industry.

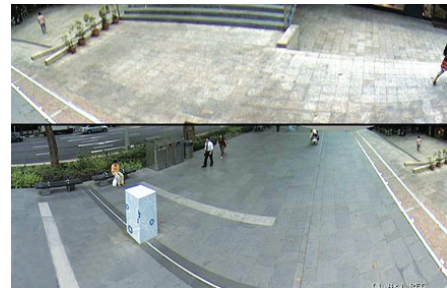
“We are very excited to be joining an organization that shares our passion for delivering an exceptional customer experience,” said IMS Research Founder and Chief Executive Officer Matthew Towers. “The IMS Research suite of products and services are an excellent fit with the existing IHS portfolio of technology information and analytics, and our research model provides a platform for IHS to extend into the consumer sentiment space for even greater breadth and depth of content.”



In a statement, HIS Chairman and CEO Jerre Stead said that the acquisition would help the company expand its offerings in several key areas. “The acquisition of IMS Research will help us expand our products and services in the technology, media and telecommunications (TMT) value chain, and better position IHS to deliver a more robust product offering to our customers in the global technology marketplace.”

Stead said. “The annual delivery nature of the IMS Research business is also an excellent fit for our subscription-based mode”.

Access real-time CCTV images of Singapore flash-flood prone areas



Singapore residents will now be able to view closed-circuit television (CCTV) images of 24 locations of flood prone areas and hotspots in Singapore. The CCTV images will be updated every five minutes, and include areas such as Orchard Road, Shenton Way, Bukit Timah Road, Upper Thomson, Veerasamy Road, Tampines St 81 and Ang Mo Kio Ave 3. Mr William Yeo, PUB’s Deputy Director of Catchment and Waterways said that these real time updates will help to improve public preparedness, and help members of the public check out road conditions during heavy storms or floods. There are currently a total of 65 CCTVs installed at areas which are flood-prone or have recently experienced flash floods. Images from 24 of these CCTVs will be posted online for public viewing. These are mostly CCTVs located at roads with higher traffic flow.

Cape Town to adopt London pattern of mobile cameras for city surveillance

Mobile cameras similar to the ones used by London police to combat crime could soon be added to the existing arsenal of CCTV cameras. If implemented, the cameras would be used to home in on areas with high crime rates or flashpoints of violence. Officers from the Metropolitan



Police in London, with members of the Westminster City Council, are in Cape Town assessing the city's CCTV network. London has been using camera surveillance since the 1970s and has about 25 000 cameras in its network. Smith said the city could now compare its operation with London's "best practice". He highlighted London's use of mobile cameras. This would be useful to target areas where violence suddenly flares up, he said. He also noted how London optimally operated resources by shutting down some cameras in the network.

This meant that if there was an area where there was traditionally no activity during a certain part of the day, the camera would then not be used, Smith said. Officers in London also travelled in brightly marked surveillance vans. The vans monitored the cameras, and this was also an option Cape Town would look into, said Smith. He said that while the city was constantly extending the roll-out of the network, it would not be ideal to increase the number of monitors. In Cape Town, 243 people monitor the 600-strong camera network.

Philippines plans to use biometrics to stop fraud

The social welfare department in Manila has proposed to use biometrics in areas where corruption has affected the beneficiaries of the government's poverty alleviation scheme that provides health and school allowances to poor school children, a senior official said. "We are studying the cost of biometrics in



Maguindanao where armed village leaders reportedly get a portion of the money being received by beneficiaries of the government's conditional cash transfer," said Social Worker Secretary Dinky Soliman, adding the proposal will help her department succeed in implementing the so-called Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Programme (Bridging Needs of Filipino Family Programme).

Maguindanao is one of the poorest municipalities from the 20 poorest provinces in the country where the programme is being implemented. In 2011, Soliman's department restored the government's poverty alleviation scheme in Maguindanao towns of Shariff Aguak, Rajah Buayan and Datu Saudi Ampatuan, following its suspension in 2010.

Some three million families are enrolled in the government's conditional cash transfer programme. The government's aim is to increase beneficiaries to five million in 2014, Soliman said. Although the government has already included the cost of the conditional cash transfer in the amount of 34.4 billion pesos in the 2012 national budget, the World Bank will still continue extending loans for the programme, sources say.

Check your smoke alarms

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, has launched its Fire Kills campaign to coincide with when the clocks went forward for British Summer Time on March 25. And at the heart of the hard-hitting public message is the slogan "We all lose an hour's sleep this weekend – make sure you don't lose a lot more."



According to fire experts a working smoke alarm can buy you valuable time to get out, stay out and call the fire service. However, it is estimated that just half of all householders who own a smoke alarm test whether or not it is working on a regular basis.

Statistics show that people are more likely to die in a fire if their smoke alarm is not working, so the importance of regular checking could not be more obvious. Last year alone there were 491 accidental fires in homes within the area covered by ESFRS, leaving 48 victims included eight who died.


David Kemp, head of community safety for ESFRS, said, "Everyone soon notices when a clock stops ticking, but it's not so easy to be sure that your smoke alarm is still in working order. Whether the battery is flat, has been removed for a kid's toy or the connection is loose, everyone should take the time to test their smoke alarm."

"We're all losing sleep at the start of British Summer Time, but testing your smoke alarm could save you from losing a lot more. As you put your clocks forward please take the time to test your smoke alarm."

CDVI partners with ievo™ to enhance its biometric applications

Worldwide supplier of class leading Access Control solutions CDVI has joined forces with ievo™ to enhance its biometric portfolio and provide more secure, efficient use of fingerprint technology with its applications. Both multi-spectral fingerprint readers from

ievo™; Ultimate™ and Micro™ will seamlessly integrate into CDVP's leading Centaur access control module, renowned for its flexibility and performance.

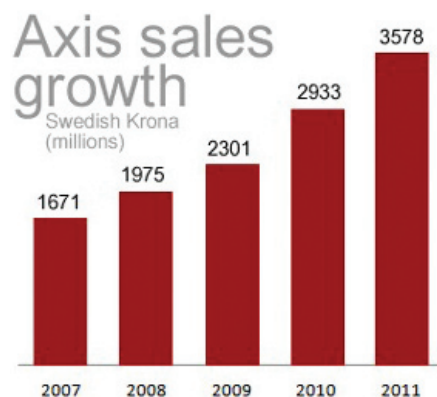
 CDVI has chosen to partner with ievo™ due to the indisputable capabilities of their product range. Unlike standard fingerprint readers, ievo™'s multi-spectral sensors are unaffected by variations in fingerprint quality including levels of dirt, oil, grease, powders and moisture as well as in even the harshest weather conditions, for example freezing temperatures, rain and sunlight.

Daniel Phillips, CDVP's Operations Manager for UK division comments on the integration saying, "With database level integration between CDVP's Centaur access control platform and the ievo™ software, we have increased the feasibility of large scale sites using biometric credentials, whilst reducing installation time and human error in duplicating access rights. Providing powerful integrated access control with Centaur and excellent reading capability with ievo™, this integration is sure to make installation faster and more secure and will benefit both CDVP's and ievo™ customer base. We look forward to working with ievo™ and further strengthening the integration between our product ranges.

Commenting on the partnership, Shaun Oakes, Managing Director of ievo™ says, "The ievo™ fingerprint reader has been designed from the outset to easily integrate into established and market leading systems such as CDVP's Centaur module. Our innovative products provide customers with a reliable and simplistic biometrics that are fully functional in certain adverse environments. Providing a superior quality access control solution is imperative to our business ethos and something we clearly share with

CDVI, and through this we eagerly anticipate generating new prospects for both companies"

Axis annual profits rise to £43m



Axis Communication delivered impressive growth figures in 2011 with sales rising 22 per cent to £338m (SEK 3,578 M) in a tricky global economy. In a year that saw the company pass 1,000 employees for the first time, the Swedish camera and IP solutions manufacturer saw overall profits after tax rise from just over £28m (SEK 300 M) to £43m (SEK 456 M).

At the start of 2011 the firm received an award for "listed company of the year" from an influential Swedish business magazine, Veckans Affärer, and they also acquired 20 new patents from Hoya/Pentax, strengthening their patent portfolio.

Product innovations in the year included their 'Lightfinder' technology, which gives their cameras high image quality in poor and demanding lighting conditions. Axis' president Ray Mauritsson cited the long-term nature of their work in research and development as a key driver in continuing to expand their competitive product portfolio, and in Q3 IMS Research ranked Axis as the 'clear market leader in the network cameras category'.

Mauritsson also spoke about a 'dramatic year' including the Arab Spring, terrorist attacks in Norway, several natural disasters and the European debt crisis.

He said, "Of course, some of the events have a direct connection to developments in the security market where our products are sold. We see that the need for products and solutions that contribute to a safer and more secure everyday life is increasing throughout the world, and that our customers require smart solutions that make their everyday lives easier.

Siemens announces significant enhancements to intruder detection systems



IP-based video and audio verification, which has the potential for greatly reducing the disruption caused by false alarms, is just one of the many important enhancements offered by the new version of the popular SPC intruder detection system, which has just been released by Security Products from Siemens. Other new features include advanced security functions for banking applications, multilingual support, and an extensive portfolio of wireless options. In addition, options are now available for monitoring the status of and viewing images from Siemens SPC systems via portable internet-enabled devices, including the iPhones and iPads.

The new IP-based fully digital video and audio verification feature significantly increases efficiency in the CMS (Central Monitoring Station) by reducing false alarms caused by incorrect user activations to virtually zero. By using the confirmation feature, operators in the CMS can avoid needless call-out

operations, which are wasteful of money and resources, by basing their decisions on live audio and video as well as on pre- and post-event audio and video.

For banking applications, the new version of Siemens SPC offers easy configuration for procedures that are commonly used to address the complex security requirements of ATM and vault areas, including dual-PIN access and automatic testing of seismic detectors. In addition, support is provided for wireless personal security devices to protect banking employees. As supplied, the new SPC panels are capable of operating in eight languages, and additional language packs can be easily downloaded to extend this range. For installers, this makes the systems easy to set up and easy to match to the requirements of the user, and for end-users it makes the systems easy and intuitive to operate. It is even possible for the individual users of an installation to choose the language that best suits them, with this language being selected automatically when they enter their PIN.

Messoa Technologies President resigns

Messoa Technologies Inc. has officially announced that Steve Yang has resigned as President after he led the Company for 5 years. Allan Lee, Chairman of Messoa, will succeed Yang and serve as the Company's new President concurrently.

Allan Lee has an extensive experience and leadership in the video surveillance industry at the top senior position. As the Company's Chairman, Lee has been dedicated in building the Messoa brand by persistently focusing on product and service innovation to offer the topmost product performance and reliability to customers worldwide. To date, Messoa has been on a solid growth track and been successfully marketed to more than 65 nations around the world.

Going forward, Lee reaffirms his full commitment to reinforcing Messoa's brand, while strengthening the company's position through a strategic expansion of product portfolio and service base. He will continue to lead the Company to grow and progress towards the ultimate goals of becoming a global leader in the field of video surveillance.

IndigoVision appoints new Senior Vice President EMEA



IndigoVision has appointed Jurgen Klijn to its executive team, as Senior Vice President, EMEA. Klijn has been with IndigoVision since 2006, as a sales account manager based in Amsterdam. Over that time, he has built a strong business in the Benelux region. Klijn came to IndigoVision with an established record in security system business development, having worked with international operating companies Optelecom-NKE, Getronics and previously in a variety of roles with local system integrators.

IndigoVision has a well-established network of partners and industry-leading reference sites. The sustained strong investment in product development is now producing a flow of new products that makes this an exciting time for the business. IndigoVision recently reported operating profits up by 14% to a record £1.59m (\$2.5m) for the six-

month period ending 31 January 2012. Continued strong investment in research and development increased spending by 9%.



Warning of a potential national threat posed by excessive reliance on foreign surveillance equipment, standards and software, officials in China want the country to reduce such dependence. According to government officials, China's reliance on foreign surveillance equipment, standards and software may threaten the country's security. And that, in turn, may lead to a greater use of a Chinese-developed standard for compressing video surveillance footage.

"In some important areas and industries, we should avoid the risks to national security that might come from using overseas standards and products." China has no official standard governing the compression of video surveillance. Even so, Surveillance Video and Audio Coding (SVAC), a standard that it took developers about two years to devise, has been in use by the government since May.

Video surveillance in China is still dominated by foreign companies, Chen said. According to the market research company Frost & Sullivan, multinational corporations such as the US-based Cisco Systems Inc, the South Korea-based Samsung Group and the Japan-based Sony Corp, Canon Inc and Panasonic Corp command 80 percent of the Chinese market for such equipment.

Brakes put on Oxford taxi CCTV scheme



Controversial scheme to put CCTV in all of Oxford's taxis has been put on hold over privacy fears in Oxford. April 1 was the start date for a programme of putting CCTV to record images and audio in the city's taxis by 2015. But Oxford City Council has put it on hold while the Information Commissioner's Office investigates if recording people's conversations is a breach of privacy. Oxford West and Abingdon MP Nicola Blackwood has also told the council she is unhappy with the scheme. Ms Blackwood, Conservative MP for Oxford West and Abingdon, has also written to the Information Commissioner's Office seeking an update on that investigation.

Executive member for city development Colin Cook said: "I'm in favour of this scheme but we are waiting for a response from the Information Commissioner's Office. "We think the scheme complies with the ICO's code of practice."

Council spokesman Louisa Dean added: "We have had an inquiry from the Information Commissioner who wishes to better understand the scheme. We are happy to assist in those enquiries."

Ms Blackwood said: "It does seem the city council has crossed the line. "It is an invasion of privacy and undermining of civil liberties that neither passengers nor taxi drivers themselves have welcomed. "The ICO stated to me that recording conversations between passengers is highly intrusive and unlikely to be justified.

"CCTV plays an important role in

combating crime but that has to be balanced with privacy concerns and used within common sense limits.

Fraudsters costing UK £73 billion every year



The latest Annual Fraud Indicator published by the National Fraud Authority shows the true extent to which fraud is impacting on all sectors of our society. According to the National Fraud Authority (NFA), fraudsters are now costing the UK a massive £73 billion per annum due to their illegal activities. This latest estimate brings together new and existing estimates of fraud, in turn allowing the NFA to reveal losses which would otherwise remain hidden.

In particular, during the last year the NFA sought to fill gaps in its knowledge by conducting primary research into the scale and nature of fraud against the private and not-for-profit sectors, procurement and payroll fraud, identity and mass marketing fraud against individuals and the organised crime threat.

Due to this improved research, for the first time the Annual Fraud Indicator shows that fraud against the private sector represents the highest proportion of loss - with almost £19 billion worth of losses suffered by SMEs alone.

On a positive note, the latest overall estimate figure realised by the Annual Fraud Indicator does ably demonstrate the success of the NFA and its partners in uncovering losses which were previously hidden,

in turn helping organisations to actively prevent this type of crime in the future.

CCTV can't replace traditional security measures: Experts



According to studies conducted by various research groups, Britain has far more watchful eyes trained on its population than other countries. And surveys carried out following the riots which hit the UK last summer suggest that public support for CCTV surveillance has grown. But Abbey Petkar, managing director of Magenta Security - one of the country's largest private security firms - says that while footage from CCTV can certainly help in the fight against crime, it is a tool to aid enquiries rather than a preventative measure.

He comments: "CCTV cameras don't prevent crime, they only aid an investigation. They can help security staff on the ground, and its use can deter troublemakers if they know they will be caught. In my opinion, to make sure members of the public are protected it is better to have well trained staff on the ground. Our staff are highly trained and have a strong commitment to protecting people and we work with a variety of local agencies and other organisations to make environments safe and secure. However, as a leading security company we use a variety of methods to assist us in carrying out our security operations efficiently, and CCTV is just one of the tools

we use. And of course, in order for CCTV to provide the best results it has to be monitored by trained staff that can identify suspicious activity.”

New thermal imaging cameras on the way

A teaming by surveillance and control companies in Israel and Spain will result in enhanced thermal imaging cameras for security. The strategic partnership between Opgal Optronics Industries and Ngaro Intelligent Solutions will also advance Opgal's expansion in the European market, it said. “We are excited about our partnership with such a well-respected technology provider in Spain,” said Yair M. Sakov, vice president of the Security Business Unit at Opgal.

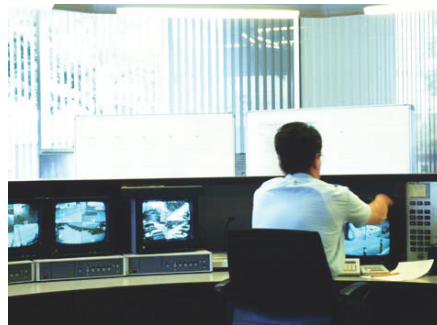


“Ngaro's product architecture and independently operating modules enable the design of a variety of solutions to protect infrastructures, facilities, processes and people against terrorism, theft, sabotage, fire, intrusion or any other type of threat which is identifiable by its thermal signature.” Opgal's strength is using state-of-the-art thermal and active-imaging technologies, which will be integrated with Ngaro's analytics algorithms for detection, surveillance and control functionality superior to those based on infrared imaging.

Also, Ngaro's intelligent surveillance and control systems complement Opgal's thermal cameras to deliver intelligent solutions to Spanish and global system integrators. One immediate benefit is that customers are able to secure a variety of sites at a substantially lower cost, the companies said. “Opgal's image quality enables us to

offer a high-quality, high-accuracy, comprehensive product portfolio addressing key requirements of the security market,” said Alvaro Mocholi, International Sales manager of Ngaro. “Our customers are seeking innovation-led smart cameras that can be tailored for cost and performance requirements. We look forward to a successful partnership.”

Business is booming in the Private Security Industry



Private security spending tends to take a hit during tough economic times. But according to IBISWorld research, private security is expected to grow more than 6 percent in 2012, which represents the largest gain the industry has seen in the past nine years. IBIS research indicates that increasing optimism is causing many businesses to re-evaluate their business security investments. With the economy of the upswing, many companies are once again budgeting more dollars for contracted security and other line items, driving industry revenue to increase by 4.9 percent to \$32.85 billion by 2015.

“We're excited about the projected growth in the private security industry,” said Reed Nyffeler, CEO of Signal 88 Security, Inc. “Making businesses and communities feel more at ease through our presence and patrols is at the core of what we do every day.” At the same time, nagging concerns about unemployment and the fragile state of the economy are creating perceptions that benefit private security firms, causing individuals and organizations to take

added precautions against crimes of opportunity.

“When our economic outlook is bleak, individuals tend to think that their personal safety is in jeopardy,” adds Nyffeler. “We often see individuals taking extra security precautions for themselves, their families and their personal property during a bleak economic cycle. As unemployment rates remain high and homes continue to go into foreclosure, concerns for public safety heighten -- and so does the need for private security.”

The private security industry may also be poised to reap gains from public sector downsizing. The February 2012 jobs report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed that 20% of the industries with the highest employment declines are government agencies and municipalities. As public safety positions are eliminated (including law enforcement jobs), it's expected that the public sector's demand for contracted security will increase.

China's bullet trains to get cameras with facial recognition



Chinese police will soon be able to use face recognition technology to catch crimes, with cameras to be installed at several stations on the Beijing to Shanghai high speed railway. The technology, which was used widely at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, will be installed at Shanghai Hongqiao station, Tianjin West and Jinan West, according to reports. According to the reports, the fixed cameras can spot the faces of evil-doers even when they are on the move and can also see through

cosmetic surgery procedures which some criminals use to avoid detection.

China's high speed rail network also compels travellers to show ID when buying tickets, in a system kick-started last year to clamp down on train ticket touts but which also reportedly helped cops catch over 300 fugitives in the Chinese New Year period alone. Facial recognition has become popular in the People's Republic, being used not only to identify visitors to stadiums during the Beijing Olympics but also in cases as diverse as college entrance exams, airports and hospitals.

Companies will be invited to bid for the project, but any western firms hoping to profit from China's this may be disappointed. Reports last month quoted government officials as arguing that the country's reliance on foreign firms for surveillance technology could threaten China's national security.

UK gets ready to snoop on online activities



The UK government is preparing proposals for a nationwide electronic surveillance network that could potentially keep track of every message sent by any Briton to anyone at any time, an industry official briefed on the government's moves said. Plans for a massive government database of the country's phone and email traffic were abandoned in 2008 following a public outcry. But James Blessing of the Internet Service Providers' Association said the government appears to be "reintroducing it on a different format".

Blessing said the move was disclosed to his association by

Britain's Home Office during a meeting in recent weeks. Britain's Home Office declined comment, saying an announcement would have to be made to parliament first - possibly as soon as next month. There was no indication of exactly how such a system would work or what degree of judicial oversight would be involved, if any.

A Home Office spokesman insisted that any new surveillance program would not involve prying into the content of emails or voice conversations. "It's not about the content," the official said, "It's about the who, what, where and when." In a statement, the Home Office said it's vital that police and intelligence services "are able to obtain communications data in certain circumstances to investigate serious crime and terrorism and to protect the public".

Authorities already have access to a huge wealth of communications data. Generally, authorities request such information during an investigation. A standardized mass-monitoring program capturing of every email, every post and every tweet would spell the creation of a formidable new surveillance regime.

UK vulnerable to cyber attack, says former CIO of GCHQ



The UK lags behind the US, France and Germany in its ability to respond to cyber attack, according to a former head of the government's spy agency, GCHQ. Nick Hopkinson, now head of cyber security EMEA for US-based IT services firm CSC, spent five years as head of GCHQ, and then a further period heading up

Communications Electronic Security Group (CESG). He says there is a lack of cohesion between the various UK organisations set up to work towards its cyber security – a national strategy that was heavily criticised last year for being fragmented and inefficient.

In 2010, the UK government announced a £650m boost to cyber security. Despite that, some believe it is a fraction of the sums that are really needed. Indeed, David Cameron said last year that cyber crime costs the UK economy £27bn each year.

Ross Anderson, professor of security engineering at the University of Cambridge, points to a lack of significant spending on security as part of the UK's problem. "[The UK's cyber security strategy is] fragmented, messy, inefficient and hopelessly under-resourced," he said.

The superior budget available to the US has enabled it to develop a better strategic defence capability than the UK. That in itself is not surprising, but it is also the country's superior co-ordination that has led to its position ahead of the UK. "The US sorted out its accountability and priorities earlier than the UK, and so they have greater clarity of responsibility between agencies," said Hopkinson. The US has also been faster to implement a system of collaboration between its public and private sectors, something which is happening in the UK only now.

"The US put into place active mechanisms in 2008 to enable near real-time data-sharing on threats and mitigation techniques between industry and government," said Hopkinson. "CSC is part of that framework, in that we advise the government as soon as we see new threats, and about how best to defend against them."

The UK's version of this – the cyber security hub – is currently in a trial phase, and again suffers from under-funding.