

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

# SECURING THE FUTURE

SecuTronic has emerged in recent years as the market leader in the region, providing systems integration services to key government, commercial, petrochemical and banking sectors. CEO *Jawad Ali* discusses the dynamics of the security industry as well as the gaps that need to be identified and filled

## Why are you in this business?

I believe there is a gap in the market between the supply of superior quality systems integrators and the requirements of clients today.

## What are your views on the current state of the security industry?

The security industry today is extremely scattered, with hundreds of manufacturers and providers present but with no clear market leader. The industry is experiencing a shift as it goes through a phase of aggressive acquisitions and mergers in an attempt to try and consolidate itself. Whether this consolidation is beneficial will reveal itself in the coming years.

## What is the SecuTronic philosophy?

SecuTronic's focus has always been on building an enterprise that centers on the client. The process of fulfilling security management needs begins from the client's needs, the employee, the manufacturers. We identify client's needs and build our business priorities around that.

## What are the strengths of SecuTronic?

We have the most technically qualified people on the ground as well as the most know-how in terms of technology. Our strong project management team is motivated and equipped to deliver projects on time and according to the client needs. Finally, our vendor-neutral policies ensure that we match the best possible product to our client's specifications.

## Has SecuTronic been approached as a target of acquisition and merger and what are your feelings about a possible merge with another company?

Yes, SecuTronic's growth and potential has not gone unnoticed within the region, and we have received, but not entertained, several offers for mergers or acquisitions. However, at this point in time, we are confident that the enterprise that would take over would not be able to meet the vision that is in place or understand the values and standards that we have set for stakeholders, especially our clients.

## What is your opinion of potential entrants coming into the market and attempting to duplicate the success of SecuTronic?

At this stage in the game, any potential entrants are too late if they are planning to penetrate today's market. First of all, this region and its market is not an easily accessible one. There are a lot of barriers to entry including the difficulty of deploying trained human resource on the ground. Do I consider that a threat? Realistically speaking, SecuTronic is way ahead of the game because we took stock of the situation and demand at the proper time.

## What vertical market segment will SecuTronic focus on in the future?

Speaking in terms of the Gulf, I feel that the petrochemical sector will experience exponential growth, for obvious reasons. In the next few years, we plan to position SecuTronic to take full advantage of the security demands that will undoubtedly come hand-in-hand with such an expansion.

## SecuTronic has made great progress in recent years, can this pace be sustained? How do you categorise SecuTronic's presence in the different sectors of the industry?

Yes, I feel that SecuTronic can continue at the pace that we have set in recent years. We have a strong infrastructure in place, our strong financial backing and our diversely rich culture based on making human resource a priority and not an after-thought, all contribute to our ability to evolve and grow with market.

Currently, we have a diversified segment base with a strong presence in each of the four sectors (petrochemical, financial, government, and commercial). To categorize our presence, I'd say that the unique qualities and resources of SecuTronic have allocated us a reliable and flourishing presence in each of our target sectors. In the future, I'd like to see us become the company of choice particularly in the petrochemical market, as that is the sector which has the greatest impact on the region, fiscally speaking and otherwise.

## What is the one thing you would like to see most changing in the field of security? What has SecuTronic done to accommodate this change?

We need to move away from devices and move into software – what I like to call the transition from hard to soft. I feel that the security industry needs to move away from what we do well and focus on what we can do better and at this point, that means evolving from a hardware based industry to one which primarily focuses on software development and implementation. Planning and forecasting at SecuTronic accommodates this change through prioritizing the development of our R&D Department, which builds open-architecture softwares and tool-kits designed at meeting and surpassing our clients' system integration needs.

## Who are your typical clients and what are they looking for in an integrated system?

We provide services for financial, commercial, petrochemical and some government institutions. Their basic interest is loss prevention. Our customers are interested in security – what is happening in their facility – protecting their assets and people management. They want to know who's in their facility, where they are and where they've been.

## What type of integrated system do your clients typically buy?

Many of our clients (especially financial sector) have multiple locations across the country. They prefer to have their security in a central location using IP infrastructure. The next issue would be to retrieve and analyze data as quickly as possible for either evidentiary purposes or for assessing an incident in progress. They want to be able to pick out an intruder without having to have a person do it all the time.

## How can central station software help video, intrusion detection and access control function as a single seamless system?

When you look at a traditional security panel today, the installation company has a central station database and a variety of competitive panel platforms, and each of those has upload/download software to communicate to multiple panels at a time. We believe that is pretty antiquated and there's an opportunity for the central station software to communicate directly with the panel, so any time you touch any platform, they automatically communicate with each other, and you're really integrating hardware and software at the central station level.

## Some of the challenges involved with integrating different types of security systems stem from incompatibilities among different manufacturers. Is there a way to avoid or simplify some of those challenges through the central station software?

There's a difference between interfacing and integration. We can interface with virtually anyone's product. We get a lot of requests from our clients to bring a certain DVR into our central station software. The way we do it, we have to write custom middleman software to allow the API [applications programming interface] that we're given by the manufacturers to communicate with our CMS.

The value of central station software is that it has to be able to communicate with a wide variety of platforms. If a DVR is integrated with central station software, then a central station operator can pull up the DVR software through the central station software, rather than a separate system sitting on a computer.

More and more we see video and access control coming together. But where it becomes challenging for the access control manufacturers is that they have to constantly keep their software up to the latest API and that can be pretty daunting. If they could move to a central station platform, that's a real win/win. Then they only have to keep one software platform updated.

For more information visit the website: [www.secutronic.com.sa](http://www.secutronic.com.sa)