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BY BOB DOLPH, SCOTT GOLDFINE AND STEVE PAYNE



SSI's technology treasure map leads to innovative riches as our authorities dig deep to unearth 2008's Top 30 selections. This year's game-changing, moneymaking and timesaving product picks will no doubt have installing security contractors shouting, "Shiver me timbers!"

We've made our list, we've checked it twice, and we've decided what qualifies as a lofty device. You'd be hard-pressed to find an installing security contractor who wouldn't be thrilled to receive most any of the cool products featured in SSI's 2008 Top 30 Technology Innovations listings — or the profitability and efficiency they represent — this holiday season.

Amid the housing market catastrophe, financial institutions fiasco, stock market binge and purge, runaway fuel costs, intense presidential race, natural disasters, et al. — enough to make anyone exclaim, "Bah, humbug!" — security technology managed to march onward. Breakthroughs in

video imaging and storage, wireless communications, and IP connectivity paced the advances.

All are well represented in the Top 30 (space omits scores of other worthy offerings), which runs the gamut from solutions aimed at the high end of the marketplace to modest installation tools. They offer exciting opportunities and benefits for owners/operators, salespeople and technicians alike. Also, some are just downright nifty.

So in the spirit of season, SSI Technical Writers Bob Dolph (of "Tech Talk" fame) and Steve Payne ("Convergence Channel") along with Editor-in-Chief Scott Goldfine, give you, in alphabetical order under each tech expert's top 10 picks, the 2008 Top 30 Technology Innovations. Now, have you been a good security contractor this year?

SSI Technical Writers Bob Dolph and Steve Payne and Editor-in-Chief Scott Goldfine can be reached at secsales@bobit.com.



Brivo Web-Based Access Control System

What happens when you mix the power of an access control system with the Web 2.0 flexibility of the Internet? You get a product that adds several extra dimensions to the conventional access control system. This is the case with the ACS OnSite™ system from Brivo of Bethesda, Md.

I was impressed with the versatility of the ACS OnSite system. No longer do you have to have a dedicated PC and equipment location for a card access system. This system is Web-based and can be securely accessed from anywhere in the world with the proper credentials. The system uses an expandable IP-based control panel that has the capacity of up to 30 readers, with optional remote door controllers.

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Byte Brothers Power Panel Testing Device



In the tradition of "Tech Talk" I must keep everyone up to date on the latest in test equipment technology. That is why I have selected the Power Panel™ from Byte Brothers of New-castle, Wash. I love it when a company takes a good look at what is needed for testing systems in today's high-tech IP-based world.

The Power Panel does a lot of cool things. It is a test device with a big, easy-to-read display, a small footprint and many test functions. It can test for power over Ethernet (PoE) and pairs used (end or mid span); phone line voltage and pairs; and network speed, duplex and pairs. It can also force linking with network switches; simulate voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) phone or camera, and prompts PoE power from the network.

The device comes in a couple of different flavors that allow for DSL and inline connectivity, a feature that, from a tech's viewpoint, I especially like.

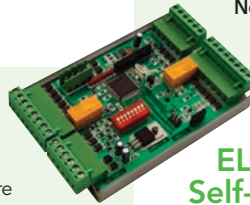
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Cypress Computer Supervised Extender Access Line

Cypress Computer Solutions of Lapeer, Mich., is one of the companies you might not hear much fanfare about, but it has always made a great product line. If you are a regular of "Tech Talk" you have heard them mentioned. I have selected the company's Supervised Extender line as a product pick for 2008.

One of the challenges of access control systems is establishing a reliable and secure communications connection between the reader and controller. Cypress' Dual Supervised Reader Extender line comes in both hardwired and wireless varieties. The wired version is fully supervised RS-485 twisted pair with a range of up to 10,000 feet. The wireless version allows for two readers, is 900MHz and fully supervised with a range of 5,000 feet. The product line comes with devices for twisted pair, Ethernet, coax and fiber optics.

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ELK Products ElkGuard Self-Contained Wireless System

Can you stand it? Here is another ageless, quality company, Hildebran, N.C.-based ELK Products, providing yet another exciting and versatile new product: the ElkGuard®. This new self-contained wireless security system provides extreme flexibility in many ways.

The system can be set up in minutes; the remote wireless control can operate up to three months without AC power; it provides GSM cellular communications; is easy to operate remote arm/disarm; and has a very loud internal siren.

Your first impression might fool you as it also has a unique, very secure corner mounting configuration. The ease of installation and portable use makes the ElkGuard system ideal for construction sites, rentals and homes without landlines.

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Inovonics Wireless Software Development Kit

Two key areas for overall performance of wireless security systems are reliability and versatility. One company that keeps rising to the top is Louisville, Colo.-based Inovonics. The selected product is the SDK9000, which is a software development kit (SDK) for the company's EchoStream wireless product line.

Using the SDK interface library, developers and integrators are no longer burdened with the raw detail of EchoStream message formats, bit fields and RF network operations — saving days, weeks, even months of software development time. The SDK supports a variety of Inovonics' EchoStream wireless products. From wireless pendants and contact closures to environmental and utility measurement devices, the SDK makes it easy to integrate a wide range of life-safety, security, temperature, humidity and utility consumption applications into customized software.

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NAPCO iSeeVideo Ethernet Over Power Video System

I am always attracted to products that use the latest technologies and make life easier for not only the end user but the installer. On top of this, if it can bring you additional recurring monthly revenue (RMR) then it is truly an exciting find. This is the case with the iSeeVideo system, a versatile IP-based, line-carrier video system from an old-time, proven company, NAPCO Security Systems of Amityville, N.Y.

You have all heard of power over Ethernet (PoE), but have you heard of Ethernet over power (EoP)? In this case, the IP video is sent over common AC power connections. With the iSeeVideo system, if you want to add a camera you simply plug it into the nearest AC outlet. Now you can provide remote video monitoring with minimal installation overhead and add the profits to your RMR reservoir.

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STI Universal Button Duress/Egress Component

You have heard the saying, "Good things come in small packages"? Well I don't think you can get much smaller than a pushbutton. One of the most innovative companies in the security industry — Safety Technology Int'l (STI) of Waterford, Mich. — has put together a really nifty package for the integrator who has to constantly confirm to duress and egress button design and specifications.

STI's Universal Button, or UB-1, kit has been put together with some real thought and planning. It has everything required to provide just what a customer wants in one convenient package. The hardware is UL Listed and includes LED indicators, faceplates with standard signage, multiple colors and labels for virtually every application, including translucent blanks for customization. There are many more options than can be described here, so look them up.

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Videofied GPRS Camera/Sensor Unit

Video is literally everywhere now. One product that has been around for a while but took some time to make the big stage is the Videofied product line from RSI Video Technologies of White Bear Lake, Minn. Specifically, I have selected the Videofied GPRS module.

The dewice is integrated with a GPRS SIM card for worldwide compatibility. The unit is battery-powered and, as with all the Videofied modules, communicates bi-directionally with 128-bit AES encryption and 25-channel RF spread spectrum. The camera/sensor units have been improved to provide reliable coverage both indoors and, especially, outdoors. The system is very good at providing basic video coverage used to help verify an intrusion.

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Xspot Products Xspot Installation Tool

You've heard the saying, "X marks the spot"? There is a company I have run across that takes that literally. Xspot Products of Gold Canyon, Ariz., and a division of Prime Industrial Design LLC, has a very handy installation tool called the Xspot™. This product line allows anyone working in construction to quickly and precisely locate prewired termination points after sheetrock, wood or plaster is in place.

The Xspot mini devices are snapped onto their counterpart Xstrap or Xbox and attach to your precise location on any framing member. After the area is covered the installer can go back with their Xtreme locator device and find the buried location within one-quarter inch. Making a precisely drilled hole uncovers the equipment location, and the Xspot device can be retrieved for future use.

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Winland EnviroAlert Wireless Monitoring System

I am always excited when a company brings the best of all technologies together. This is the case with Mankata, Minn.-based Winland's EnviroAlert EA800 wireless system. Many of you, including yours truly, have used Winland temperature gauges for years. This new digital wireless system takes environmental monitoring to the next level.

The system has cool new features such as data logging, wireless sensors and 4-20ma sensors. Additionally, it has four hardwired and four wireless zones, and is easy to program and operate. You can also transfer logging data to a USB thumb drive. This system is the perfect monitoring application for food service, convenience and grocery stores, greenhouses, commercial businesses, specialty retail stores, medical/pharmaceutical firms and residential applications.

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Brijot BIS-WDS GEN 2 People Screening System

Orlando, Fla.-based Brijot Imaging Systems' BIS-WDS® GEN 2 people screening system is comprised of a real-time radiometric scanner that images electromagnetic millimeter wavelength energy, an integrated full-motion video camera, onboard computer and intelligent video detection engine. The device (shown without its cover) sees through clothing with low resolution, catching things that X-ray and metal detectors miss as quickly as half a second while still preserving privacy and modesty.

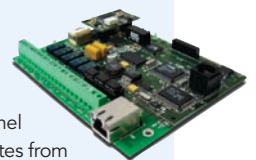


The system includes a simple graphical interface and has been designed to accommodate integration with other devices as part of a layered security approach. Sure, it's pricey, but if the application calls for it there's no substitute on the market.

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Fire•Lite IPDACT-2UD IP Communications Module

Imagine how much time and money could be saved if you could conveniently download alarm panel data and upload information such as program updates from a PC via any Internet or intranet connection. Well that dream has become reality thanks to Northford, Conn.-based Fire•Lite Alarms' IPDACT-2UD, the first fire alarm IP communications module that enables complete upload/download capabilities via any IP connection.



As part of Fire•Lite's FireWatch™ Series of alarm communicators, the device connects to a fire alarm panel's standard telephone port; no changes to the panel's existing configuration are required. The IPDACT-2UD is listed to UL 864 9th Edition standards as compatible with multiple new and legacy varieties of Fire•Lite alarm panels.

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NVT 16-Channel DigitalEQ Receiver DA Hub

The NV-1672 self-adjusting DigitalEQ™ Receiver DA Hub from Menlo Park, Calif.-based Network Video Technologies (NVT) takes all the guesswork out of using unshielded twisted pair (UTP) cabling. With automatic cable distance compensation and adjustment that doesn't make the picture flash or fight the camera's AGC (a problem with all previous products that included this feature), UTP video has been made truly "plug and play."



The 16-channel unit includes built-in distribution amplifiers, and even automatically corrects for backwards polarity. Using an internal power supply (no "wall wart") is icing on the cake, and extensive independent bench tests have found this fine product to be without a hitch.

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OnSSI Ocularis Video Management Platform

Ocularis from On-Net Surveillance Systems (OnSSI) of Pearl River, N.Y., is a video management system that is incredibly simple to use, integrates everything under the sun and is truly an open standards product. It is a nonproprietary video-centric software platform that allows users to view, manage and record video from an unlimited number of IP and non-IP video surveillance cameras.

The product enables management of short- and long-term video storage, with the capability to correlate and fuse video and nonvideo events and alerts, resulting in automatic video delivery to subscribers of interest. Add-on modules include video content analytics; video wall management; transaction systems; and GIS mapping.

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Nitek VR124COAX Ethernet Extender

From Rolling Hills Meadow, Ill., comes Nitek's VR124 Ethernet extender — a handy box that removes the 100-meter limit from copper cables carrying Ethernet signals. While there have been other products that have performed this task, this unit is the first to be UL Listed, has greater distance limits (3,000 feet over coax and a mile over UTP), runs on the same voltage as virtually all popular cameras, is self-healing, and is priced competitively.



Great for video, the system can also be used to transmit any computer network signal from server, or electronic device, over coax. The unit has connections for the network cable and coax, with LEDs to indicate the presence of a network signal for easy troubleshooting.

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Pelco Esprit Ti Thermal Imaging System

Thermal imaging, always the plaything of big-budget military applications, becomes suitable for mere mortals with the Esprit Ti system from Clovis, Calif.-based Pelco. The product combines advanced thermal imaging with a fast, accurate pan-and-tilt positioning system to capture video of targets even when hidden by obscurants like fog,

smoke, steam or lack of ambient light.

The system delivers 320 X 240 TVL of thermal video and supports 2x digital zoom. Esprit Ti accelerates and decelerates swiftly and smoothly, with a "creep mode" that moves just 0.1° per second. The unit can also function in environments ranging from -50° to 122° F.

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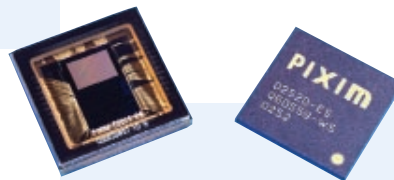
Pivot3 RAIGE Video Storage Architecture

The RAIGE™ (Redundant Array of Independent Gigabit Ethernet) distributed storage cluster from Spring, Texas-based Pivot3, creates a large data storage array that is protected not only on the disk drive level (like RAID-5 or RAID-6) but on the box level. This prevents the failure of hard drives or whole drive arrays to keep data from being at risk.



Said to deliver more than 16 times the performance at half the cost of traditional solutions, the architecture can meet the storage needs of capacity- and bandwidth-intensive environments like gaming, homeland security, law enforcement, education and transportation.

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Pixim Enhanced Flicker Reduction Technology

Mountain View, Calif.-based video surveillance camera chip manufacturer Pixim has rewritten the imager game by introducing V3.2 firmware for its Orca chipsets featuring Enhanced Flicker Reduction (EFR). The imager is sold to camera manufacturers that incorporate it into their products; Ikegami was the first to market it in four of its cameras, but others are on the market as you read this.

Long known for breakthroughs in wide dynamic range performance, Pixim's EFR reduces flicker caused by fluorescent lights, as well as eliminating the color shift that comes from them, and problems caused by LED-type lights such as traffic signals. This technology is extremely timely as energy efficiency concerns are leading to large-scale replacement of incandescent lights worldwide.

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System Sensor CO1224T Carbon Monoxide Detector

A string of tragedies in recent years have caused carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning to receive much greater attention, with an increasing number of states making their presence mandatory in occupied structures. This is opening up a hot market for life-safety dealers, and System Sensor of St. Charles, Ill., has stepped forward with an innovative offering.

The company's CO1224T CO detector features RealTest™, the first test of its kind for a detector's CO sensing cell. It reassures customers that in addition to the electronic components the actual sensing cell is ready and able to detect CO. A tiny spray of canned CO into the gas entry holes at the top of the detector determines if the sensing cell is doing its job.

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Winsted Sight-Line Command Center Consoles

The Sight-Line Series from Winsted of Minneapolis provides security command and control center designers and users with a host of appealing options. The high-end console eases cable management challenges and boasts tremendous configuration alternatives, including an almost unlimited amount of LCD monitor mounting choices via the Versa-Trak system.

The consoles come standard with the exclusive TruForm work surface and decorative end panels, both of which are available in many colors and shapes. Custom work surfaces and end panels are also available in laminated MDF or solid surfaces. Sight-Line is designed with the proprietary Insta-Lock fastening system to greatly reduce installation time.

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Avigilon 16MP-HD-PRO Megapixel Camera

Megapixel cameras have become the "next big thing" in the video security industry. The ability to have a single camera that can cover the area of three or four standard resolution cameras is a huge savings on labor and infrastructure costs. The biggest question with megapixel cameras as they've become more popular has been, "What do I do with that much video?" Avigilon of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, has a good handle on that question.

With an end-to-end solution, Avigilon has been able to engineer its video codec and storage solutions to provide the performance you need and expect from a video system. With a four-camera encoder as well, Avigilon offers an excellent migration strategy for analog customers. With a resolution of 4,872 X 3,248, the 16MP-HD-PRO camera can replace up to 50 standard VGA cameras, and can transmit over a single 100MB connection using JPEG2000 compression.

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Comnet CNFE10MS Managed Ethernet Switch



For traffic and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) video, it is crucial to have environmentally hardened switches out in the field. Some of these switches sacrifice performance or features for environmental conditioning. Danbury, Conn.-based Comnet's CNFE10MS managed switch manages to meet the rugged requirements of an outdoor network switch, but also hangs on to performance-enhancing technologies.

The CNFE10MS supports many open network standards, such as SNMP, RMON and multicast. It also provides port-based VLAN and VLAN trunking, DHCP services and port based security. Configurable via CLI, Telnet and Web browser interface, this device is a flexible and powerful choice for a copper/fiber switch.

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DNF Security Eagle Series IP Video Storage

Also answering the "What do I do with all that Megapixel video?" question is DNF Security of Hayward, Calif. DNF specializes in both large, external storage solutions and turnkey recording systems. Compatible with all the popular IP cameras, DNF storage systems, such as its Eagle Series, offer up to 10 petabytes (10,000TB) of storage!

Along with that large amount of storage, DNF has engineered security and high availability technologies such as redundant array of independent disks (RAID) and data caching to protect your valuable video, as well as store it for extended periods of time.

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Fluidmesh 2200 Duo Wireless Mesh for Video

Wireless is fast becoming the transport medium of choice for municipal and large campus installations. One obstacle to its widespread adoption, however, is the ability of a wireless link to successfully send large amounts of video. The 2200Duo from Boston's Fluidmesh has been specifically designed for video security applications.

The 2200 can detect and prioritize video packets, knowing not only that they contain video, but also what type of video they are, and optimize the link accordingly. These systems also support multicasting, which can have a big effect on bandwidth usage in large systems.

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Fluke Optiview Enterprise-Class Network Analyzer

Every network geek such as me loves a new toy. For us, the coolest toy is the Optiview Network Analyzer from Fluke of Everett, Wash. More than a toy, however, Optiview is an extremely powerful enterprise-class network analyzer. Being able to rapidly determine the topology of a network, utilization of the network and even determine the protocols in use on the network, Optiview puts more power in the hands of a network admin than a whole stack of software applications.



New features include IPv6 and VoIP device discovery, device diagnostics and even wireless LAN diagnostic options. The price is high, no question, but the power is worth every penny.

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Middle Atlantic MW-CFRD Series Rear Rack Doors

One concept relatively new to the security market that is unfortunately slow to be adopted is proper thermal management. Getting warm air out, up and away from a rack of devices is crucial to the long life of any equipment. The MW-CFRD Series of rear doors from Fairfield, N.J.-based Middle Atlantic Products is an amazing tool to aid that goal.

Fans mounted in the rear and a split door pull heat right from the backs of the equipment rapidly. More than just removing the air, the fans actually guide the air upward — not just into the "hot" aisle — right into the return space. Up to 10 fans can be added to move a full 3,250CFM of air! That'll keep those drives (and everything else) cool.

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Hubbell Premise Wiring Mid-Span PoE Injector

There are lots of mid-span power over Ethernet (PoE) injectors on the market, and with the growing use of IP cameras, that is a good thing. However, with that market growing, and the huge adoption of voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) phone systems, more than just PoE is needed.



The Powertrac from Stonington, Conn.-based Hubbell Premise Wiring offers not only power for the devices, but also a strong asset management database. The Powertrac can learn exactly what device is plugged into a given port, and notify an admin if that device changes. The product can provide 802.3af power to 48 ports. As an additional benefit for VoIP systems, it maintains a location database that can be utilized by E-911 applications.

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Napera N24 Network Access Control Appliance

As network security equals or, in some cases, exceeds the importance of physical security to business today, customers are looking for devices that can provide the biggest bang for the buck, and not require a CS degree to operate. The N24 from Mercer Island, Wash.-based Napera Networks is primarily a network monitoring device, but it does a lot more.



More than just a network switch, the N24 provides health monitoring, access control, reporting and logging for both Windows™ and Mac™-based computers. Guest access to the network can also be controlled from this device, offering different levels of network access. New features will include VPN control as well as built-in firewall and DHCP functions, all in one box.

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Quintron Systems AccessNsite Cross-Platform Software

Quintron Systems of Santa Maria, Calif., is a name I've been familiar with for a long time, having provided NASA and other launch facilities with voice systems for more than 40 years. "Cross platform" is a buzz term that has a great deal of mean-



ing for me with regard to network systems and technologies. Putting both together is a winning combination for me.

The company's AccessNsite access control software is a robust, feature-rich, cross-platform (Windows™, Linux, Mac™) system that can meet the needs of almost any

client. With a wide range of reader compatibility and video integration (with or without a DVR), AccessNsite is an integrated systems solution in every sense of the word.

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Ultracell XX25 Fuel-Based Power Solution

With today's increasingly green business climate, finding alternative ways to power devices is fast becoming a priority. For remote video applications, especially for locations off the grid, it is an absolute necessity. Solar, battery and generator systems are seeing more utilization, but each has its own restrictions. Cost, size and renewability are factors in all those cases.

An emerging technology, the fuel cell, stands to conquer a large part of that market. Providing between 25 and 75 watts in a small footprint, the XX25 fuel cell system from Livermore, Calif.-based Ultracell can power devices for extended periods of time. Beyond the remote surveillance application, fuel cell technology can also power personal devices like laptops and test equipment. Oh, and did I say "green"? The main byproduct of this methanol-based fuel cell is water vapor.

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