

Smart CCTV 'thinking' to tackle terrorism

A breakthrough in surveillance technology from Kent-based Viseum UK Ltd has secured astonishing reductions in crime during police trials. The smart closed-circuit television (CCTV) system, which can think for itself and react accordingly, has the potential to provide legal evidence, and prevent terrorist attacks.

Closed-circuit television has become an important weapon in the battle against local and international law-breaking, but image quality and operator fallibility can undermine its impact. 'It is virtually impossible to ensure that operators will always be looking at the right cameras at the right time,' says Stuart Thompson, the technology's inventor and Viseum's Managing Director. As a network solutions expert, Stuart Thompson knew that video content could be used to drive a moving camera; he used this understanding to design a CCTV system capable of providing a 360-degree view, concentrating 100 percent on key actions and capturing incidents in sharp focus.

Viseum's video content analysis system provides automatic scene event examination, with a ring of fixed static cameras controlling a moving camera which can lock on to and zoom in on any 'hot spots' detected. The system knows at any time where all subjects in its field of view are, where they have been and their potential actions. With this information it intelligently decides what to do and acts on the basis of pre-programmed decision rules. Thus the system can respond to suspicious behaviour, street crime or potential threats such as a person leaving a bag in a public place, tracking and recording high quality images – which can be sent to a computer, palmtop or mobile phone.

'The system excels in situations where the level of crime is serious and where resources are stretched or non-existent,' says Stuart Thompson. 'It's like having a highly skilled team of operators available to fight crime at the click of a button.' Not surprisingly, UK police forces have been among the first to trial the system, using it both proactively to catch criminals in the act but also as a deterrent. 'The unit has multiple cameras and a moving camera and it is very obvious what it does'.

He adds, 'In one pilot project a high-crime residential area has become a 'no-crime' area, with the system very quickly catching two serious incidents including a break-in and an assault.'

“Viseum technology is proven to spot crimes missed by other CCTV systems, recording consistently high quality evidence”

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