

# SECURITY SYSTEMS NEWS

THE BUSINESS NEWSPAPER FOR THE SECURITY SYSTEM INTEGRATOR & INSTALLER

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# Monitoring & GPS Sourcebook



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# Enhanced verification among the drivers toward adoption of video monitoring

By Joanne Friedrich

What was once a niche market is now becoming mainstream as more dealers, central stations and other participants in the security industry embrace video monitoring, in large part because of the need for video verification of alarms.

Video can be a great solution to the false alarm issue, said Avi Lupo, whose Massachusetts-based company, OzVision, is providing the technology that brings video services into central stations. "Cities are going to non-response or delayed response (to alarms), so the industry is needing to make major changes," he said.

The ability to get video clips both before and after the alarm "are a good way to do verification if it's a real alarm or false one," Lupo pointed out.

Video is also replacing guards or supplementing guard services as well as providing security or operational and management services to a host of small to mid-size companies that don't have the manpower to



*"Cities are going to non-response or delayed response (to alarms), so the industry is needing to make major changes."*

— Avi Lupo, OzVision

handle these services in house, noted Michael Upp, vice president-business development for Westec InterActive of Irvine, Calif.

Westec services primarily retail clients, Upp said, ranging from malls and convenience stores to full-service and fast-food restaurants. New clients are hotels and auto dealerships.

While security has been the main reason for using interactive video, Sandra Smith, vice president-product development at Westec, added, "A lot of companies are asking us to look at their operational and management needs."



As video verification gains popularity, more and more central stations are offering additional services, such as enhanced event verification and guard tours, to their customers.

For example, Upp explained, one customer wants checks of whether the fire exit is blocked within the store. If it is, an e-mail alert to the owner goes out immediately. Another is using video to determine if stock is cleared by a specified time each day.

"We believe this side of the market is every bit as big as security," Upp said.

Even as Westec operates its own video monitoring center, alarm central stations are getting into video services as well, having identified an opportunity to expand upon their basic burglary and fire alarm business.

"As a third-party contract monitoring station, we must strive to develop technologies that keep our dealers competitive with the large players within the industry," explained Patrick Devereaux, senior vice president for Emergency 24.

Emergency 24, he said, began developing integration software to monitor video in 2000, with monitoring starting in 2001.

Devereaux said the central station provides verification and look-in services, but can also do guard tours, guard services and access control.

Centra-Larm, a New Hampshire-based central station, became interested in video a few years ago, noted Amanda Helmig, director of sales and marketing.

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## MONITORING &amp; GPS

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Enhanced verification and the verified response issue were the initial drivers behind offering video. But Helmig said being able to provide guard tours and video guards that can offset the cost of these services for end users is another factor in the decision to offer video monitoring.

### THE MOVE IS ON

Alarm monitoring is definitely moving in the direction of video, said Cindy Smith, vice president-operations for Alarm Monitoring Services in Metairie, La.

She said alarm verification and guard tours are popular services for commercial customers. "And I do see that (verification) moving into the residential arena," Smith added. As products become more affordable, she said, consumers will consider using outdoor cameras for residential video monitoring.

Both Helmig and Smith said video monitoring is a small fraction of their current business—probably less than 10 percent—but has the potential for growth.

Devereaux said the opportunities presented by video are twofold: lower costs for customers and better service.

"Most business entities are constantly striving to reduce the costs for outside service," he said, "and for doing business in general. The proper integration of video monitoring into their security systems can significantly reduce the overall costs while providing as good or better security."

There is also the issue of avoiding conflicts of interest when guard services are also doing the video monitoring. "If the same company is providing guard service along with video monitoring," Devereaux asked, "will they dutifully inform the customer if they find one of their guards sleeping? The third-party central station certainly would because of the nature of the relationship with the customer."

Devereaux noted those monitoring video are sometimes required to make a judgment call, which takes a different level of training than making the standard calls associated with traditional alarms.



The greater skill level required for video monitoring operators often translates into higher pay for those employees, according to Michael Upp, vice president of business development for Westec Interactive.

that have been made, ranging from equipment to software to training.

"It's a whole other area of training," said Helmig, adding that video-related training and even cross training between conventional alarm monitoring and video "is essential in any organization."

Devereaux noted those monitoring video are sometimes required to make a judgment call, which takes a different level of training than making the standard calls associated with traditional alarms.

Westec's Upp said as a result of the higher skill level required for video monitoring, he looks for individuals with law enforcement or crisis management backgrounds as well as requiring extra training before they work in the central station.

This greater skill level, which translates to higher-paid employees, along with the longer involvement with a video event, results in a "direct correlation between the cost of doing business and the cost to the customer," Upp said.

Devereaux concurred that the time spent on a video alarm "may take 10 to 20 times longer for a monitoring staff member to complete all the task required."

Other costs experienced by central stations include marketing the services and legal costs to develop dealer and subscriber contracts, Devereaux said.

Still, all those involved said they expect to recoup their investments as the video market takes off.

OzVision's Lupo said central stations should view video as an opportunity to build their business. While a CCTV system is a one-time sale, video monitoring is linked to recurring revenue, he said.

The challenge, he added, is keeping costs to central

Continued on page 4

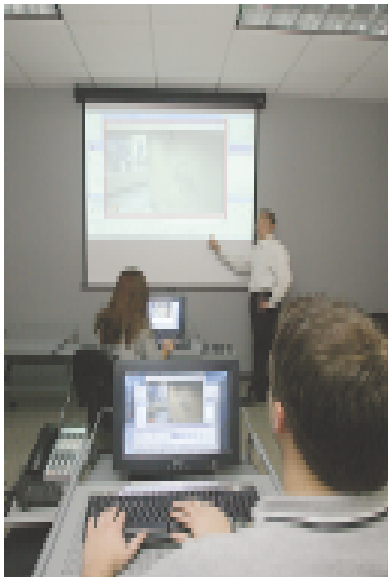


Photo courtesy National Monitoring Center

National Monitoring Center in Alisa Viejo, Calif., has added a room to its facility for training its operators on video monitoring.

### TRAIN AND TRAIN RIGHT

While central stations see the potential benefits of video, they also agree there are significant investments

## MONITORING & GPS

*Continued from page 4*

stations in line to get them on board for video. He said he looked to develop a solution that was easy to install and required few, if any, changes in how central stations handled alarms. “Dealers and installers know little about computers,” Lupo said, so, taking all of this into consideration, he developed a product that put video events on the same screen with other alarms.

Also important, he said, was integrating with the central station software providers such as MAS, Dice and Bold, “so when you get the latest version, OzVision is part of the software.”

### INTEGRATION OPENS DOORS

Bruce Brosius, vice president-business development at Monitoring Automation Systems, said integration is easing the way for greater use of video. “We’re developing integration with various video suppliers,” he noted, which means video monitoring is possible regardless of the equipment. “We’re really an implementer and integrator,

so the challenge is to keep up with the devices and the equipment out there,” he added.

Lower costs and higher-quality video have heightened the appeal of interactive video applications, Brosius said. He said he’s seen a lot of activity in the video market in the past six to 12 months “and I expect it to continue.”

Cliff Dice, chief executive officer of Dice Corp., said his company has developed “a ton of interfaces” for video products. “I’ve seen a huge influx of new and enhanced products,” he said, adding the category is growing as more people become aware of it.

Like others interviewed by *Security Systems News*, Dice said “verification is just the beginning” for video. Other uses driving the segment include interaction with employees, guard management and the like.

Dice said where video isn’t expanding at this point is in residential service. “The technology infrastructure isn’t there to support it at home today,” he said. “There needs to be high-speed connectivity, and we’re not even close today.”

Company	No. of central stations	Range of monthly monitoring fees	Monitoring services:										Customer services offered:									
			Video	Two-way voice	Long-range radio	Cellular	Internet monitoring	GPS monitoring	UL certified	FM certified	IQ certified	CSAA 5-Diamond certified	Dealer program	Billing services	Financing	Internet/electronic account access	Electronic account activity reports	Answering service	Equipment discounts	Training	Installation leads	Technical support
AAA Alarms Winnipeg, Manitoba 204-949-0078 www.aaaalarms.com	1		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•						
Acadian On Watch Lafayette, La. 888-558-9911 www.acadianonwatch.com	1		•	•		•	•	•	•						•	•	•					
ACM UL Monitoring Phoenix, Ariz. 800-422-0205 www.acm-ul.com	1	\$2.50-\$6	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•	•					
ADT Security Services Boca Raton, Fla. 800-238-2727 www.adt.com	5		•	•		•	•	•	•	•					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Affiliated Central Inc. Sheepshead Bay, N.Y. 800-296-9000 www.affiliatedcentral.com	1	\$3-\$6	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Alarm Monitoring Center Greer, S.C. 800-535-2478 www.amc-sc.com	1	\$3-\$5		•	•				•					•	•	•						

The following monitoring listing is compiled from a survey conducted by *Security Systems News* and sent to contract central stations known to the staff. Inclusion in this section is based on companies responding to our request for information, with information included in the listing provided by the individual companies.



**MONITORING & GPS**

Company	No. of central stations	Range of monthly monitoring fees	Video	Monitoring services:								FM certified	IQ certified	CSAA 5-Diamond certified	Dealer program	Billing services	Financing	Customer services offered:								
				Two-way voice	Long-range radio	Cellular	Internet monitoring	GPS monitoring	UL certified	Internet/electronic account access	Electronic account activity reports							Answering service	Equipment discounts	Training	Installation leads	Technical support				
The Command Center Inc. Corona, Calif. 909-739-6300 www.thecommandcenter.net	1	\$4-\$15	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•								•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Cooperative Response Center Austin, Minn. 800-892-1578 www.crclink.com	1	\$2-\$8		•		•				•		•					•									
C.O.P.S. Monitoring Williamstown, N.J. 800-367-2677 www.copsmonitoring.com	2	Volume based	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
CPI Security Charlotte, N.C. 704-945-6245 www.cpisecurity.com	1		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•						•									•	
Crime Alert Monitoring San Jose, Calif. 800-829-8877 www.crimealert.com	1	\$4-\$28	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•						•	•	•	•	•	•				•	
Criticom International Manasquan, N.J. 800-654-7907 www.criticominternational.com	3		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
CSSS Inc. Anaheim, Calif. 800-843-8526 www.central-station.com	1	\$4 and up	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•													•
Dehart Alarm Systems Inc. Sarasota, Fla. 941-365-1991 www.dehartsystems.com	1	\$5 and up			•	•				•																
Electronix Systems Huntington Station, N.Y. 631-271-4000 www.electronixsystems.com	1	\$5 and up	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•												•		•
Emergency24 Chicago, Ill. 800-827-3624 www.emergency24.com	4		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
ESC Central Birmingham, Ala. 800-268-3453 www.esccentral.com	1	\$4-\$6		•		•				•							•									
General Emergency Monitoring Indianapolis, Ind. 317-925-8919 www.gemalarm.com	1	\$5 and up				•						•														•
General Monitoring Services Long Beach, Calif. 800-839-7212 www.gmscentral.com	1	Call	•	•		•				•							•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Grand Central Station Hayward, Calif. 800-230-1654 www.gcsmonitoring.com	1		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•														•		•
Hackett Security Inc. St. Louis, Mo. 314-432-4200 www.hackettsecurity.com	1	\$6 and up	•	•		•	•	•	•	•						•										•
Infinity Monitoring Services Inc. Elk Grove Village, Ill. 847-879-8500	1	\$5-\$7		•	•	•	•	•	•	•																
Knight Security Center North Hollywood, Calif. 800-222-2296 www.knightsecuritycenter.com	1	\$4.50 and up	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•							•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Marlin Central Monitoring Kissimmee, Fla. 888-775-0770 www.marlincentral.com	1	\$3 and up	•	•		•				•							•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Maximum Monitoring Services Ltd. Aurora, Ontario 905-841-2490 www.maxmonitor.ca	1		•			•	•	•	•	ULC																

# GPS services, monitoring finally on the map

## Increased interest from central stations contributes to rise in technology's usage

By Joanne Friedrick

In the global positioning systems arena, a series of ups and downs are contributing to its greater use within the security marketplace.

The "ups" are the rise in terrorism and other post-Sept. 11th events that have put an emphasis on new ways to protect and track of assets and people, along with the improvements in GPS technology. The "downs" are the falling prices of GPS that make this option more viable for a larger segment of the public, as well as the smaller size of the units themselves, which makes them more attractive for different applications.

Add to that the increased interest from security dealers and central stations looking for new revenue streams and the result is a formula that has put GPS squarely on the map.

### EXPANDING INTO NEW AREAS

GPS tracking for fleet management has been around a long time, noted Gary Russell, president of GeoSentry, an Irvine, Calif.-based company. But what is new, he said, is the portability and transportability of GPS devices.

No longer confined to being a fixed option within a vehicle, Russell said the ability to make GPS portable opens up new avenues for short-term usage. Also improving its marketability as a security tracking option is the reduction in size. Russell said GeoSentry is offering products that are either the size of a book, or as small as a deck of cards.

"We work in areas where previously we thought we couldn't work," he explained, such as briefcases and fanny packs.

While Russell said smaller units open up the opportunity to track individuals, he characterized this segment of the market as still problematic and therefore not a focus for GeoSentry.

The issues, Russell said, are that while people may want to use a tracking device for a teenager, child or Alzheimer's patient, "operationally it doesn't work." Even at a relatively small size, few people want something tethered to their body, Russell said. And there is also the issue of keeping the battery charged so the unit remains operational.

Russell said the move toward E911, which requires that cellular phones provide GPS positioning, will take care



The portability and transportability of GPS devices have led to increased uses for the technology beyond traditional vehicle-tracking applications.

Photo courtesy ACH-JL

of the personal emergency tracking market for the most part. E911 is slated to be implemented by December 2005.

Where Russell does see potential, however, is with high-value asset tracking and recovery as well as surveillance for criminal justice.

A new beacon option, used in conjunction with a handheld device, can hone in on a GPS device where previously they could only get close, Russell said. This is critical, he noted, in cases where they are trying to recover assets that may be hidden within a vehicle.

"GPS alone will get you really close," Russell said, "and for many applications that's good enough." But in instances where they need to find the exact spot, beacon recovery is necessary.

On the criminal justice side, Russell said the smaller, waterproof units, which can stand up to harsh environments, are designed for surveillance situations. A strong magnet is all that's needed to attach the unit to a vehicle for covert tracking, he said.

Other markets GeoSentry is exploring, Russell said, include temporary tracking, such as cars or boats that are being tested, at-risk individuals and general tracking for couriers or other assets on the move.

Taking a somewhat different approach to the market, Rob Goehring, vice president-product management and marketing for Guardian Mobile Monitoring Systems, in

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## MONITORING &amp; GPS

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Santa Monica, Calif., said Guardian's focus is on building residential and commercial coverage, including vehicles, people and even pets.

Guardian's approach, Goehring said, is to "work with existing security companies, who are the best providers of security and safety solutions."

By bundling services and providing central stations with a software via the Internet, as well as reducing hardware costs, GPS "is coming down within reach of the mass market," Goehring said.

Applications for residential customers, Goehring noted, can range from vehicle tracking to personal locators. Customers who are really safety conscious, he said, don't just want to track a vehicle if it's stolen, but they may also want to monitor the driving patterns of the user, such as a teenager, as to how fast the vehicle is going and where it's headed.

#### TRACKING NEW DEVICES

A new hybrid-assisted GPS device, designed for children and Alzheimer's patients, would use GPS when available, such as outdoors, but also provide a signal that is accessible deeper indoors. This small, lightweight, longer battery-life option is in development. "We think this will drive child location," Goehring said, "and we believe we will be the first to market with it."

Also under development is a low-cost option to track pets. The challenges here, he said, are that the device must be smaller, with better battery life, as well as being waterproof and chewproof.

On the commercial side, Goehring said the cost of fleet management via GPS is coming down to the point where small and medium-size owners can now provide it for their drivers. The upside, he said, is improved safety along with better productivity.

Asset tracking is another category for growth, Goehring

said, and can range from pallets of products such as food or electronics to building materials at a job site. "Users can buy a pool of devices and attach them to the assets they want to track," he said.

Goehring said Guardian has worked to make the addition of GPS monitoring as seamless as possible for cen-

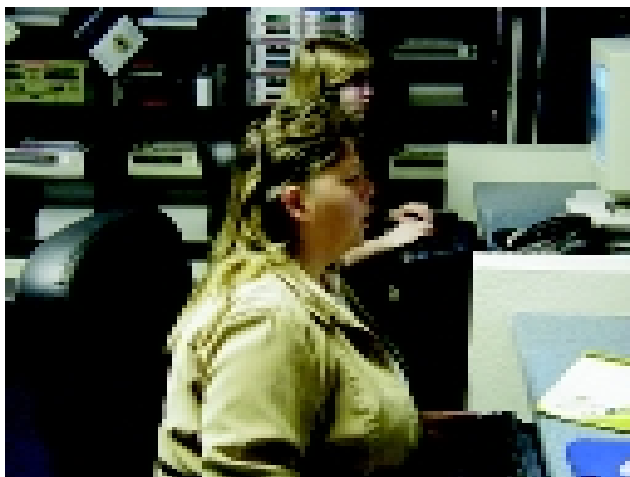


Photo courtesy Total Monitoring Services

911, which requires that cellular phones provide GPS positioning, is scheduled for implementation by December 2005. That will take care of the personal emergency tracking market for the most part, according to GeoSentry's Gary Russell.

tral stations. "There's no investment in the IT infrastructure for the central station," he explained. "We provide the capabilities and pricing and mapping technology. We host this on behalf of the client."

Guardian also works on training, sales and marketing, he said. "We learn what works in markets and share that—in aggregate—with our partners," he explained.

One of those partners is Alarm Monitoring Services in Metairie, La. Cindy Smith, vice president-operations, said the central station is launching the Guardian product this year.

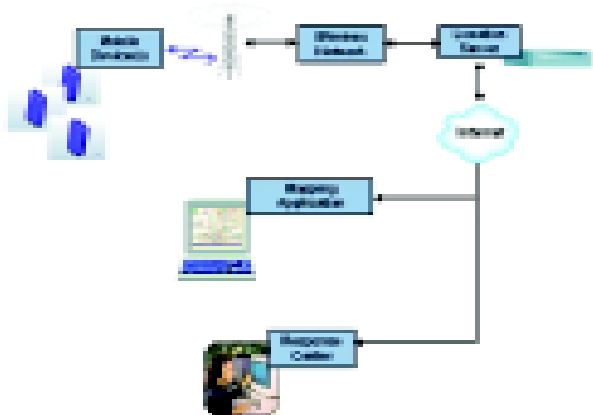
"We believe the future is going to be in new technology," such as GPS, said Smith. "Monitoring is going beyond homes and into assets."

She said AMS is monitoring assets, tanker trucks and trailers via GPS. "We have really wanted to get into this (GPS)," she explained, but had experienced issues in the past with hit-or-miss service. If the service doesn't work, she added, "you can't possibly sell it to the dealer."

GPS is a fraction of the monitoring that they do, but Smith said "as costs come down, it will pick up."

Cliff Dice, chief executive officer at Dice Corp., said the industry is beginning to bundle alarm and GPS monitoring. "People are starting to go for it," he said, adding the type of monitoring fees tied to alarms are being

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GPS provider GeoSentry can send signals through the Internet to either a mapping software application or a response center.

**MONITORING & GPS**

Company	No. of central stations	Range of monthly monitoring fees	Monitoring services:										Customer services offered:									
			Video	Two-way voice	Long-range radio	Cellular	Internet monitoring	GPS monitoring	UL certified	FM certified	IQ certified	CSAA 5-Diamond certified	Dealer program	Billing services	Financing	Internet/electronic account access	Electronic account activity reports	Answering service	Equipment discounts	Training	Installation leads	Technical support
Mecco Alarms Inc. Erie, Pa. 814-455-6056	1	\$10				•			•													•
Metrodial UL Central Station Hicksville, N.Y. 516-681-8877 www.metrodial.com	1		•	•	•	•	•		•						•	•				•		•
Monitoring America Alarm Co-Op Tulsa, Okla. 800-879-1438 www.monitoringamerica.com	1			•	•	•			•						•	•	•					
Monitronics International Inc. Dallas 866-664-8766 www.monitronics.net	1			•	•	•	•		•						•	•		•	•			•
National Alarm Computer Center Irvine, Calif. 800-482-9800 www.nacchq.com	1	\$2.10 and up	•	•	•	•	•		•	•					•	•	•	•	•	•		•
National Monitoring Center Aliso Viejo, Calif. 800-662-1711 www.nmccentral.com	1		•	•	•				•	•					•	•					•	•
Paragon Monitoring Center Albany, Ore. 866-936-6648 www.wemonitor.org	1	Varies	•	•		•			•						Call	•	•	•			Some	•
Professional Security Monitoring LLC Nutley, N.J. 888-443-1100 www.psmonitoring.com	1		•	•	•	•	•		•						•	•	•					•
Property Protection Monitoring Lowell, Mass. 978-459-3344 www.mammothfire.com	1		•			•			•						•	•					•	•
Protection One Topeka, Kan. 800-438-4357 www.protectionone.com	4	Varies	•	•	•	•	•		•	•					•	•					•	•
Protectron Inc. Montreal 613-228-2400 www.protectron.ca	4		•			•	•	•	ULC						•	•					•	•
The Quick Response Monitoring Alarm Center Cleveland 800-462-5353 www.quickresponse.net	1		•	•	•	•	•		•						•	•					•	•
Rapid Response Monitoring Services Inc. Syracuse, N.Y. 800-558-7767 www.rrms.com	1	\$6 and up	•	•	•	•	•		•	•					•	•	•	•	•	•		•
RFI Security San Jose, Calif. 408-293-5400 www.rfi.com	1	\$5-\$7.50	•	•	•	•	•		•						•	•						
Securion Central Control Inc. South St. Paul, Minn. 651-450-4853 www.securioncentralcontrol.com	1	Varies		•		•	•		•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Security Associates International Arlington Heights, Ill. 800-323-7601 www.sai-inc.com	2	\$2.25-\$5.75	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Security Central Statesville, N.C. 800-438-4171 www.security-central.com	1	\$5-\$15	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•	•		•
Security Consultants Inc. Memphis, Tenn. 901-327-2450	1	\$3.50 and up		•	•				•	•					•	•					•	•

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received for GPS, or “moving security.”

In the long run, Dice said, GPS, which is an end-user consumer service, has the potential to attract more business than video. “It’s where you get the masses,” he explained.

It’s also a “much cleaner way of doing business,” he said, because there is no false alarm activity with GPS. “Only when they push the panic button does it go to the monitoring center,” he said.

Through its Dice Wireless division, the company is able to receive and then stream wireless GPS signals to monitoring centers, Dice said. “All we do is take the signal and send it where it needs to go,” he said. “We view ourselves as a switching, routing agent.”

Dice said he has witnessed a 60 percent to 70 percent increase in wireless device monitoring. Going forward, he said, the focus will continue to be on taking mobile and wireless signals and helping central stations monitor these.

#### **END-USER, MONITOR THYSELF**

GeoSentry’s Russell said most users of his products are able to conduct the monitoring on their own, using an Internet-based system. However, he added, “we are setting up relationships with responses centers for the security officer who doesn’t have the time or inclination to monitor it himself.”

While GPS is garnering more attention because of heightened security and lower costs to produce the devices themselves, Russell said the market is still “an extremely uncrowded field.”

He said the current players in the market have plenty of business without going after each other’s business.

“The real challenge,” Russell said, “is convincing the security director there’s a need at all.”

Guardian’s Goehring agreed the “the time is now” for GPS services. “A lot of security companies have heard about GPS for some time. What we have to do is fight the legacy of people who have tried to bring it to market and failed.”

**MONITORING & GPS**

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Security Partners LLC Lancaster, Pa. 800-551-7879 www.securitypartners.com	1	\$3 and up	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•	•	•					
Security Response Center Sarnia, Ontario 800-333-7721 www.src.net	1	\$5 and up	•				•	•	•					•	•	•	•					•
SecurTek Monitoring Solutions Yorkton, Saskatchewan 877-777-7590 www.securtek.com	2	Depends			•	•			•					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sentinel Alarm Montreal 514-737-1010 www.sentinelalarm.com	1		•				•	•		ULC				•	•	•			•			•
Sentry Net Pensacola, Fla. 800-932-3304 www.sentrynet.com	2	\$50/year	•	•	•	•			•	•				•	•	•	•				•	•
Southwest Dispatch Center Richardson, Texas 800-683-6773 www.southwestdispatch.com	1		•	•	•	•	•		•					•	•	•	•					•

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Superior Central Station Inc. McAllen, Texas 800-873-6005 www.superiorcentral.com	1				•	•	•	•							•	•	•				
Total Monitoring Services Sacramento, Calif. 888-610-4377 www.tmscentral.com	1	\$4-\$12	•	•		•	•	•					•	•	•	•	•		•		
USA Central Station Alarm Corp. Port Chester, N.Y. 800-422-2300 www.usacentralstation.com	3		•		•	•	•	•		•				•	•	•				•	•
United Central Control San Antonio, Texas 888-832-6822 www.teamucc.com	1		•	•		•	•	•					•	•	•	•	•	•			
United Monitoring Services Columbus, Ga. 800-582-2459 www.unitedmonitoring.com	1	\$3-\$5	•	•	•	•		•			•			•	•						•
WH International Response Center Rockford, Minn. 763-477-3144 www.whirc.com	1			•		•	•	•						•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•