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c|m|s central monitoring services

Think you need a change?



Neville Kiely
Managing Director

THIS has been a year of many changes, which for some have created opportunities, uncertainty for others.

No doubt in the coming year consumers will be tempted to change monitoring services.

Often, it is for a price or a product by those who seek to gain advantage - rather than maintaining the security and comfort of a reliable alarm operation and a monitoring service that adds value.

Telcos, for example, (albeit it has taken over two years for them to do so) are beginning to admit that some of the VoIP or IP services they provide do, in fact, interfere with alarm system performance. Such services, therefore, may be cheaper, but at what price?

The thing is, when times get tough it is so comforting to know that at least the house, business, family and employees are protected.

The reality is, too, that it is cheaper now than it has ever been

CMS have been in business over 20 years and monitoring fees are now 50 per cent lower than when we started. In a world where Governments put up prices by 50 per cent and a cup of coffee costs \$3.50 or more, changing monitoring to save a \$1.00 per week saving makes little sense.

Especially since there can be a hidden cost. We are constantly reminded by Police all around Australia that they are not there to be a "free" service in the monitoring process, so there is an expense to the wider community in responding. Not to mention the cost entailed in risking ignoring a genuine break and enter. Besides, it is mainly poorly operating or maintained alarms that result in false alarms and unwanted alarm response costs.

To be sure, there may be good reason for changing monitoring services, such as a change in lifestyle or location, but some things you should consider before doing so are:

- If changes need to be made for technical reasons, make sure your decision process includes your security as a priority not a hopeful add-on.
- Buy a security solution and not a product. Consultation with your alarm installer or CMS is a must here.
- If your lifestyle changes where you think that security monitoring is no longer a high priority, such as retiring and being home more, you may be as well to consider a medical monitoring service. It often makes sense.
- Whatever the end result, ensure you fully understand and agree with your alarm company what alarm response instructions are in place and what is available.
- Consider the condition of your alarm system and the last time it was maintained. While an alarm gives a better life span than, say, a computer or mobile phone, expectations should not exceed five years for a low risk service and one year for a high risk situation.

In the final analysis, you have got to ask yourself: Is it better to stick with what you know works well? We know that 90% of CMS monitored clients come into this category and those that change for the wrong reasons usually come back in a very short time. So, why go through the hassle?

That's why we at CMS look forward so much to providing continued second-to-none monitoring services to our customers over the coming year and wish them all the happiest of Season's Greetings.

— Neville Kiely

Australian Security medals unveiled



THE Australian Security Medal Foundation Inc has unveiled the design of the two new medals, which will be struck ahead of the Foundation's inaugural awards early next year.

There are two medals that have been designed: the Australian Security Valour Medal (ASVM), which recognises security operatives for outstanding acts of valour; and the Australian Security Medal (ASM), recognising the outstanding career and character of a security professional.

CMS, along with other companies, is a proud sponsor of the Australian Security Medal Foundation Inc.

Nominations are still open and, if you would like to nominate someone you know for this prestigious award, forms can be accessed through the website www.australiansecuritymedal.com

"Nominations for the medals are encouraged from both within the security industry, as well as outside from employers, corporations, governments and the public," says the ASMF Chairman, Craig Millar.

This year's judges will be Steve Jackson from Qantas, Craig Millar from Citigroup, Nick Stramilos from Westpac, Brian Sankey from BAT and Sal Perna from the Victorian Racing Commission.

The awards will be announced a charity black-tie dinner at the Sydney Town Hall on February 19, 2011, with the proceeds being donated to Legacy.

Better education under SLED

NSW police are promising the newly formed Security Licensing & Enforcement Directorate (SLED), which takes in the operations of the former NSW Police Security Industry Register (SIR), will be much more customer-orientated with a direct focus on education.

In a recent interview, Cameron Smith, the new SLED director says that they will also hold educational seminars that will be taken to venues around the State.

"So, we are going to have a better-staffed call centre, for a start, a couple of dedicated correspondence officers to improve the timeliness of our correspondence handling, and also, importantly, a customer relations officer who will be responsible for a regular industry newsletter," says Smith.

"We will be looking to host some industry forums... but we

will have the ability to put those on ourselves and, particularly important, doing some of those out in regional areas, where perhaps they don't get to come along to those sessions very often."

Smith says that the SLED will no longer operate just as a licensing body.

It will be an educator but also ensuring compliance with the new industry requirements.

"It will be our job to ensure compliance with those requirements, whereas previously that was a requirement of the industry associations. So... industry, users of security services, and the public at large will have a single, recognised regulator to whom they can report concerns and instances of non-compliance, and they will have the comfort of knowing that there is a resourced body to address those matters."

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How to get ready for the summer

SUMMER is a time when thoughts turn to holidays, family, relaxation and sport, making it precisely the time when you rely on your alarm system more than ever to keep your premises safe.

It is well to remember that the hot summer months may not only leave you feeling a little

pushing up the number of unwanted alarms coming into our monitoring centre," says Neville Kiely, managing director, Central Monitoring Services (CMS).

"For example during a recent summer, two customers' alarms were triggered by stormy weather prompting them to be activated 5,500 times in two hours. Needless to say CMS was swamped and the CMS traffic from the alarms was only fixed by disconnecting the accounts."

On that occasion, the alarms were automatically logged and checked, but the service still had to be disconnected and, in any case, the time taken up by attending to false alarms directly affects service levels to every customer.

"For everyone's benefit, now is the time to address those issues, and check that alarms are installed correctly, to CMS standards which aim to minimise disasters, allow our operators to prioritise the alarm action and not to waste time on false alarms," says Kiely. All it takes is a few moments for a quick action and maintenance plan to help you keep your alarm in top working order by considering the following.

"For everyone's benefit, now is the time to address those issues, and check that alarms are installed correctly, to CMS standards..."

bushed but they seriously affect your alarm systems too.

"Extreme weather conditions like heat and wind, can wreak all sorts of havoc with electronic systems

Light up your Christmas the right way

CHRISTMAS decorations are traditionally strung around homes and offices may look nice and create a seasonal atmosphere, but remember that balloons and hanging Christmas decorations can also set off motion detectors and trigger a false alarm.

The hot weather may also mean pumping up the air-conditioning. Not only can this mean moving decorations, some security systems are so sensitive that even a sharp breeze from a fan or an air vent can trigger their sensors.

"When you are not in the building and the security system is armed, air conditioning units should be shut down because changes in air temperature can cause a false alarm," says Kiely.

Make sure, too, that all motion sensors are pointed away from air vents, ceiling fans and windows.

Going away for the holidays?

Basic preparation can be cheap insurance against break-ins and false alarms



IF you are planning a well deserved break during the holiday season take a few precautions.

Let your neighbours or local police station know that you will be away from the premises.

Arrange for someone to check the letterbox to make sure it is not overflowing - a sure sign that you are away from the property.

Before you leave, stop those pesky unwanted visitors settling in your absence by spraying some surface bug spray around motion detectors.

"Insects and spiders love to crawl in behind detectors and their movements and webs can trigger false alarms," says Kiely.

"It is a good idea to also make sure insect screens on your windows and doors are sealed and don't leave lights on at night near your motion detectors in case they attract moths."

Remember to let CMS know who will be taking the alternate holiday response instructions in your absence and then tell your key-holders they are in charge.

"Customers may want to consider nominating a patrol

service, in case their key-holders decide to go away at the same time," says Kiely.

"In any event, it is crucial to ensure that you update your key-holder response list and advise us who will be the temporary key holders while you are away."

If your system is due for a service, call the alarm technician now and book it in - don't wait until the last minute before you go away.

"Alarm installation companies can get flooded with work this time of year, especially if premises are carrying extra inventory or shutting down over the holiday period," Kiely points out.

"The only way to make sure they have time to check your system is to get in quick. It's a phone call, in most cases, and can save a lot of hassle and, ultimately, expense."



This letterbox is a sure sign of absence.



The movement of spiders can set off motion detectors.

Who to call

IF you accidentally set off your alarm call 1300 655 009 and quote your voice-code as authorisation for the system.

Plan maintenance

WHY not start the New Year off by putting in place a yearly service and maintenance plan to reduce breakdowns or failures of equipment?

The service will test for problems in cabling or wiring, check that the backup batteries are working and that detectors are working efficiently.

After all, if you need your alarm, you want to make sure it is in good working order and sending the correct signals for assistance.

It is also important to remember that some insurance policies have an "out" clause relating to security system maintenance - so if you haven't done your maintenance properly, you might not be covered.

Your holiday alarm check list

1. MAKE sure that alarms are installed with a lockout on a zone so that only one alarm is received per zone, per armed period.

Extra zone alarms being received indicate movement of intrusion within the premises.

A restore of that zone means the alarm has been reset and gives real meaning to operators setting alarm priority.

CMS action the first alarm received but additional alarms received from the same zone actually slow down the response from the operator activity which is the opposite of what some think is the purpose of multi-break.

2. Alarms need to be followed by an opening or cancel code to be rightly recognised as an authorised and legal entry.

However, there have been examples of incorrectly setup alarm systems which require servicing to ensure the entry and exit paths are correct. If it is not set up correctly, it is more likely that errors are going to happen at the worst possible time - when a real illegal entry is underway.

3. Ensure that the person arming and disarming the security system know how it works, and whether it has any duress or panic buttons.

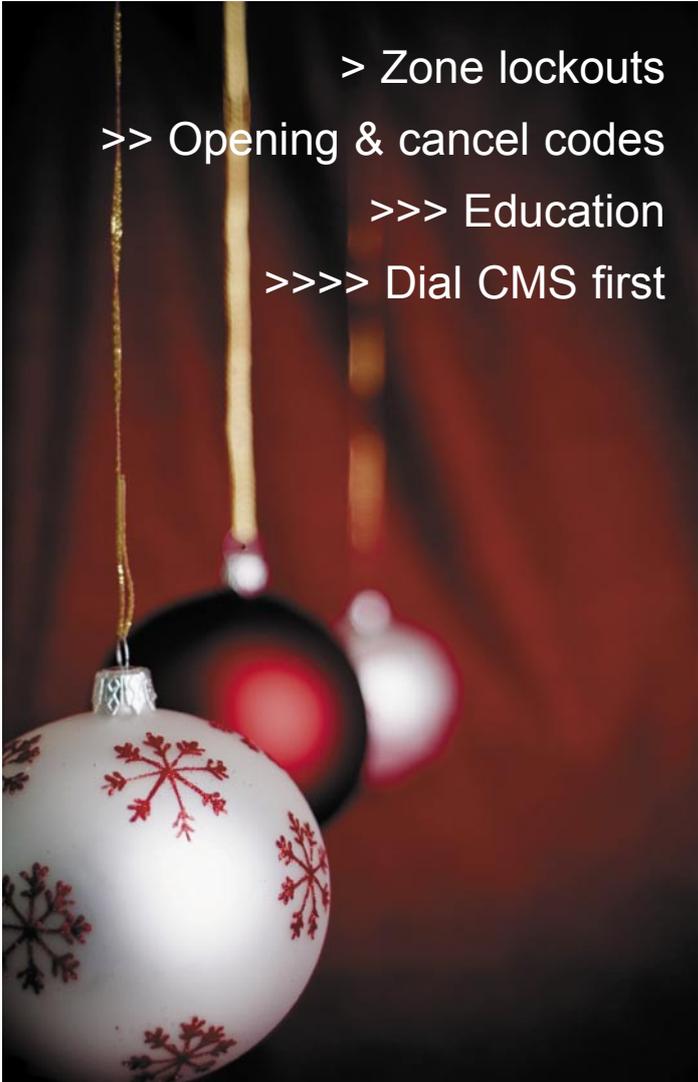
Educate them about the things that trigger a false alarm like a hot wind and open windows.

Also make sure whoever is operating the security systems understands the implications of false alarms and how to deal with them to stop a response from security or the police.

Remember police will issue \$200 fines if they are called to more than one false alarm at the same building within 28 days.

4. Check that the alarm system is programmed to dial CMS's primary phone numbers for the first three attempts.

Then the alarm should dial the secondary number for the next three attempts. CMS engineer the amount of lines connected to each receiver and review traffic weekly.



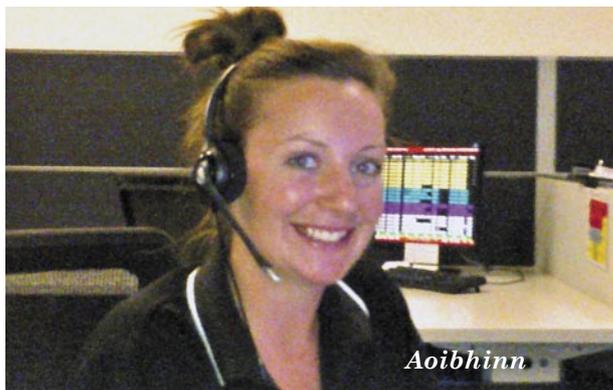
> Zone lockouts
>> Opening & cancel codes
>>> Education
>>>> Dial CMS first

Working together

AT the end of the day, unwanted alarms cost everyone.

"It is not only about making sure you avoid being fined by police, it is about working together and not putting a drain resources, which we all pay for in society," says Neville Kiely.

So, be a good sport: ensure your alarm works properly and have a great holiday.



Tip o' the hat

WELCOME back to Aoibhinn! Having returned from her travels, she is working really hard and sharing her cheery attitude giving a lift to everyone at CMS.

Cindy has been acting in a supervisory role and is doing an excellent job.

Tracey has been working really well with the rest of the Admin staff. With a number of people off, she has taken on more roles and responsibility and is excelling.

Well done team: keep up the great work!

What our customers say

MR Harris thanked CMS for being "very efficient" and providing prompt response.

Gail Metcalfe thanked CMS for all our "hard work" when the rear door of their premises was kicked in.

Julie-Anne said CMS have "great service".

Mrs Rooleht said that CMS are "absolutely wonderful and positive people" and she gives great recommendations about CMS to other people.

Rob Wilkinson thanked CMS "for being so efficient".

Lori Van Den Bos thanked CMS for such "a quick response time to their home alarm".

Anthony from Bridgebanks called to advise that he is "very impressed" with Jesse, and passed on many compliments - Good one Jess!

Lynette Beltran from Stella Aluminium said that CMS does "a great job".

Chris from Peninsula Saws, advised that CMS are always on the ball and "so quick and efficient".

Richard Lennox said he is "very happy" with CMS work.



Monitoring Centre Shift Managers

OUR Shift Managers are responsible for the running of the monitoring centre, they are constantly reviewing all activities to reduce false alarms and improve our customer service. They make sure that we have the right amount of staff and along with the Training Manager ensure everyone is correctly trained in CMS procedures.

CMS has been providing a "Bench

Mark Service" for alarm monitoring to the community since 1989 and we are committed to continuing our high standard service levels.

Should there be anything that Central Monitoring Services can do to assist with your alarm monitoring, please do not hesitate to contact Customer Service Manager Suzette on 02 9809 9288.

Better education under SLED

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But Smith says that police will be targeted with education programs about modern security.

"We have actually been doing that effectively for about 12 months now, where we have been working with the education arm of the Alcohol and Licensing Enforcement Command, and we have developed a training program for licensing police.

"I have personally been involved in delivering that. We have probably delivered it to about 80 to 100 officers, already, both here in Sydney and at Goulburn. And, that is continuing. Our focus is on, obviously, licensing police who are out there in Local Area Commands responsible for day-to-day interactions with the security industry."

For information on the SLED go to www.police.nsw.gov.au or contact SLED by phone (1300 362 001, 8:30am - 4:30pm Monday to Friday), fax (1300 362 066) or email (sled@police.nsw.gov.au).