

## Network Camera Technology - Applications

The way network cameras work has expanded the range of applications in which cameras can be used. In addition to the traditional use of a camera as a security measure, cameras are used more and more as a management tool. The reason for this is a network camera's typical feature of providing visual access to remote and distant locations. Examples are the use of network cameras in the following applications.

### Remote project management

A good example of network cameras being used as a management tool is the use of cameras on construction and building projects. The installation of network cameras on a construction site allows managers to view the progress of their projects from the comfort of their office PC. The instant availability of 'remote visual access' reduces the need for managers to travel and saves time and cost.

### Remote operational monitoring

Network cameras are often used by companies for monitoring their core operations. Examples are:

**Sensitive and high risk areas** - Network cameras give remote visual access to critical areas such as server and machine rooms, warehousing facilities and storage areas.

**Production lines** - Network cameras are used to remotely monitor automated production lines and factory floors.

**Health & safety** - The (increased) responsibility of employers for the health and safety of their staff has seen many companies choose to use cameras to monitor employees' activities, and behaviour ensuring compliance with company health and safety policies.

**Lone worker** - Remote monitoring of lone workers in small retail outlets, such as petrol stations, chemists and off licences add to the comfort and piece of mind of both employer and employee. An automated visual alarm would allow a manager or a colleague in another location to act swiftly in case of an incident or emergency.

**Activity** - Network cameras are used to monitor activity and activity levels on a remote location. For example, cameras are used to gain information about in-store customer behaviour, the number of customers visiting a store or to see how busy the car park is.

**Access control** - Network cameras allow access to buildings and premises to be controlled by security staff based on a remote location. One person would be able to manage multiple remote locations.

**Hazardous areas** - Hazardous areas with restricted access to humans, such as, for example, container terminals and chemical processing plants, can be fitted with network cameras to enable monitoring of operations and processes from a remote and safe location.

**Visual alarm verification** - Whenever an alarm is raised (e.g. a fire, smoke or intruder alarm), network cameras allow instant 'visual verification' of the incident. This visual information can be made available to any authorised person, assuring that the correct action is taken within the shortest possible time frames.

### **Online promotion using live webcams**

Within the tourism and leisure sectors live webcams are used more and more for the on-line promotion of attractions, beauty spots, areas of interest, leisure activities, hotels and city breaks. Webcams can also be used to attract increased volumes of traffic to a company's website.

### **Stakeholder relations**

Companies and organisations often benefit by providing insight into their internal operations to their closest stakeholders. So do construction firms, who provide their clients with access to live images of building projects. Webcams also are used on building projects when the build affects the local community. An increasing number of manufacturing firms provide transparency by allowing customers to view the factory environment or check the progress of their order on the shop floor.

### **Remote troubleshooting and expert advice**

Often, the 'person that knows' is not on the same location as where a problem occurred. Network cameras allow the right person (expert) to visually assess the problem from a distant location and provide immediate support to staff dealing with the problem on the ground.

### **Event broadcasting**

Live webcams are used for the webcasting (broadcasting over the Internet) of conferences, trade shows, exhibitions, workshops and other events and activities.

### **Staff training**

Where in the past video tapes or CD-ROMS were distributed to provide training, now a training video can be made available via a company intranet at the fraction of the cost.