



The Ongoing Value of Video Surveillance as a Service

By Jesse Crawford

Subscription-based service models are increasing in the security industry. Shifting to video subscription as a service (VSaaS) or SaaS in general involves changing the mindset that one is receiving a service rather than a product. What organizations want is a system that is always current rather than a product that can quickly become out of date or is not functional when it matters most.

In a traditional model, a business purchases a product, a video surveillance system with cameras and recorders that are connected to software. There often is no ongoing service relationship between the end user, channel partner and technology provider. Perhaps there is a software support agreement or an annual fee or add-ons for software updates or technical support. In this case, the installer is largely delivering a product and walking away. Selling and delivering a service is a better, ongoing value proposition to the end user.

With VSaaS, a business can have confidence that the software managing its surveillance system is always updated to the latest version, which means it maintains the highest level of cybersecurity, feature sets and functionality.

Benefits of the subscription model

- Easy subscription renewal
- System software always current
- Lower startup cost
- A value-added service contract

VSaaS enables a business to better budget for the cost of the service and allows for easy renewal of subscriptions.

Software can be kept current remotely on devices in the field, which prevents systems from becoming outdated and lengthens their service life. A cloud-based subscription model also reduces the burden on IT as they are not required to own and manage software. System security is further enhanced if there are no requirements for opening inbound ports, multifactor authentication, NIST-compliant data encryption and transport layer security.

Because users pay as they go, they are not required to make a large initial investment in software to implement a system. Subscription plans often charge per channel, so users don't pay for more than they need. They are also available at different tiers.

The level of service a dealer provides leads to additional value being delivered to the end user. For example, with preventive maintenance, a dealer can inspect and clean hardware once or twice a year to ensure equipment is clean and in good working order. This also helps ensure the best image quality.

A cloud-managed VSaaS can offer other benefits, such as real-time alert notifications on system health and events, remote diagnostics and software updates, as well as video verification. A video management system with the right integrations can provide data from sensors, cameras or recorders, from an alarm panel alert to video loss.

Overall, VSaaS enables more efficient diagnostics and service than the traditional dealer-end user arrangement.

8 features to look for in a cloud-managed video surveillance solution

Managing a video surveillance through a cloud platform offers a number of benefits, including remote software updates, remote user management, video verification and more.

Analytics

Analytics, from motion detection to person and vehicle classification to point-of-sale data, provide the actionable intelligence a business needs to make informed decisions or take actions. They can be at the edge or on a recorder and processed on a bridge or in the cloud. The more data points obtained, the clearer picture a business has of its operations.

Clip storage and sharing

If an incident occurs, users want to find associated video, save it and share it with fellow staff members, insurance companies, law enforcement or others. Streaming all video to the cloud is expensive and requires bandwidth. Being able to search for video quickly and determine which clips to save and share optimizes the process.

Continuous and remote software updates

Within a VSaaS model, users expect regular updates and improvement. In the case of recorders, for example, administrators can receive notifications when software is updated and initiate updates with the click of a button. Being able to update software remotely prevents service technicians from having to do so on-site and without the use of removable media, which can be a security risk.

Health monitoring

Active system health monitoring enables preventive maintenance rather than reactive maintenance. Organizations will know that cameras are seeing what they are supposed to be seeing, whether they are blocked, out of position or off. The system also can show if a recorder's hard drive is close to capacity

or if a processor isn't working. Push notifications will let a user know immediately whether a camera or recorder has gone offline, so the problem can be fixed.

Multifactor authentication

As an added layer of security, a cloud-managed video system should offer multifactor authentication (MFA). If a user accesses the system through a public computer, they will be challenged to verify their identity.

Reporting and alerting

Reports provide a clear picture of the business while alert notifications enable security and facilities personnel to know when an incident happens. Reports and notifications that are delivered automatically provide a clear picture of the system to the channel partner and end user and enable them to take action quickly if needed.

User management

Users are managed in the cloud and can be managed remotely, and they can set permissions and groups. If a system utilizes a third-party identity management service and an employee exits the company, for example, they can be deactivated. Centralized management in the cloud streamlines operations.

Single sign-on

With single sign-on, users log into the system with their email address and password, whether they are accessing the system through a thick client, web client or mobile app. User profiles should be tied to logins, so that they are visible regardless on which device a customer accesses the system.



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About OpenEye

OpenEye, the cloud video platform company, provides solutions for video security, business intelligence and loss prevention. For over 20 years, it has been committed to developing an easy-to-use, comprehensive video management system backed by Heroic Customer Service® and support. OpenEye's solutions are available globally through a trusted network of certified service providers. Visit openeye.net.

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