

Flash Video-Supported Network Cameras

A Step Forward into the IT World

In this article, we review the current state of the video security industry and the relationship between the video security industry and the IT industry. The importance of anticipating customer wants and need is considered, and we analyze how Flash Video Technology helps to address one customer problem.

SUBMITTED BY SUNELL

The Current State of Video Security Industry

The video surveillance industry can be roughly divided into three time periods or stages according to technology development and uptake. The first stage began with the invention of video surveillance technology and proceeded until the year 2002. During this period of time, cameras and recording equipments used analog technology. The second stage, from 2002 to 2007, is called the analog-digital technology mixture stage. At this point, although digitally-based DVR were a great success, analog cameras are still dominated the market. The third stage was started from 2008, and has seen the maturation of network cameras as they became the hot spots of the industry.

Some may think that the ability to connect cameras directly into the network may have been the final frontier. We believe such a sight is too narrow - what is happening today is only the beginning. In our opinion, the video security industry will merge completely into the modern IT industry and become

a part of IT world. Another industry that has already experienced this kind of dramatic change is the mobile phone industry. The cause of that revolution is the ability of smart phones to access the Internet. Similarly, cameras now also have this function. Upon opening the window to Internet, dramatic change for the whole industry will be inevitable.

Successful IT Companies Listen to Customer Needs

In the recent years, IT world is undergoing severe changes. The biggest shock has been the dissolution of the Wintel alliance. The two traditional dominators of IT industry, Microsoft and Intel, have lost ground to Apple and Google, the innovative pioneers. In the PC era, the Wintel owned CPU and OS were the core computer technologies. However now, in the Internet era, information has become readily available. People are no longer interested in technology itself; instead they hope that technology can help to make their lives simpler and easier. Only companies that focus innovation on the needs of customers will be successful.

Problems with Current Network Video Viewing

Network cameras have a web server and a homepage inside and customers can view video streams simply by a Web browser. The common way to use this technology is for the homepage of the network cameras to be embedded with an ActiveX Plug-In. However, this means that users must download the ActiveX Plug-In and install it into their computer first before they can view the video. If the user only wants to view the video once, or if the users have cameras from many different manufactures, this method may be less than ideal. Another problem with ActiveX Plug-In is that it is a Microsoft dedicated technology, which means only the Microsoft web browser IE is able to support the plug in. If a user decides to use another web browser, he will be unable to receive the video. As described in the above section, the Wintel alliance has dissolved and is no longer dominant. IE is not the dominant Web browser. Other Web browsers, such as Chrome, Safari and Firefox, have also obtained large market shares.

The old method of tying solutions to Microsoft technology will only frustrate customers now. To overcome this problem, some companies supporting Quicktime Plug-In. Though Quicktime Plug-In is compatible with more web browsers, it still requires installation of Quicktime Plug-In.

Flash Video Improves Video Viewing

Flash technology comes from software company Adobe Systems. Currently flash technology can be used by most web browsers, though Safari is a notable exception. According to statistics, 98.7% Web browsers in use are Flash-supported. A major advantage of flash technology is that it embodies video decoding and display functions, which means video decoding is an intrinsic capability for a flash-supported web browser. If a network camera can stream a flash video to the network, all of flash-supported web browsers can decode and display its video stream directly without requiring any Plug-In. In conclusion, flash technology has two advantages, compatibility and no Plug-In installation needed, which can be used to overcome the challenges of streaming network video quite well.

Improving customers feeling is a major design philosophy for Sunell R&D groups. Upon realizing the interesting feature of flash technology, the company has made all of network camera



products flash video streaming enabled now. To overcome the shortcoming of Safari not supporting flash technology, R&D groups of Sunell have developed a dedicated application for Apple iPhone and iPad. By these two ways, customers can use Sunell network cameras easily.

Further Information

The world of IT is amazing.

Customer feeling is something that sounds simple but is actually quite challenging. In this article, we discussed how flash technology can make using video technology easier. There are many things worth noting in this article, including OS compatibility (Windows, Linux, MacOS etc.), and HTML5 (the new generation of Web standard). [a&S](#)



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