WHITE
PAPER

LifeSafety Power®

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**Make Way for Power Monitoring:
Your New Managed Service**

How to expand your value proposition with intelligent
power solutions

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Introduction

It's a familiar story: hardware profit margins continue to erode and security integrators struggle to add value and profitable revenue streams to the business. The stark reality of the integration business today is that hardware margins once typically 40 percent or so are now reported as eight to twelve percent. The only way to compensate is to pick up the slack in follow-up services, which can be an oxy-moron while trying to cut expenses for techs and truck rolls.

It doesn't have to be this way. Now, there are new ways to add recurring monthly revenue (RMR) and become a more efficient company through proactive service and customer care plans. The new game in town? Adding remote monitoring, testing and diagnostic capabilities to your security and life safety power systems to generate cost savings and boost RMR, while making your services more valuable to the customer.

Power solutions as a managed service

The power supply is a critical part of the interoperability of any security or life safety system and now remote monitoring of power solutions can be your new managed service. Remote monitoring as a managed service ensures the entire installed solution receives the power needed to operate correctly. Integrators also have, through these total solutions, the ability to generate new billable services through remote reporting, while remote test and diagnostic functionality further saves technician time and labor.

A connected solution promotes ongoing uptime—and now you can help provide better reliability to the end-user customer and boost your company's value proposition through intelligent, network-connected remote power solutions. In the field, systems integrators and end users are taking advantage of remote monitoring of power solutions:

• Jim FitzGibbon, Security Division Operations Manager for **CM3 Building Solutions Inc., Fort Washington, Pa**., says remote monitoring makes it easier to interact with the solution, while adding value to both their business and the physical security at the end-user location. "We do a lot of access control and use different custom configurations with Mercury Security controller hardware and hyperlink to LifeSafety Power network modules. It's beneficial to us and our technicians and we can see doors that may not be working properly." FitzGibbon says remote monitoring and networking capabilities are especially important for customers such as school districts, with a number of different buildings and

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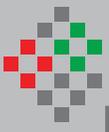
locations. "We repackage this as a solution to our customers and have taken it a step further in making it completely modular. I can design a solution for anything and that's what I need to do for our users. There's so much flexibility in the LifeSafety Power solution. We have certain configurations we use for everyday access control and have the ability to do the custom configurations as well. We make every output independently fused, so we know immediately if there is a service issue." FitzGibbon says the company not only has the ability to set system faults and other issues remotely, but adds value and a dollar amount to the solution to the customer, with that amount dependent on the nuances of the entire system and the amount of control the integrator or the end user dictates.

• **Houle Electric, Vancouver, B.C.**, offers intelligent power to its customers. The company believes putting smarts into the management of power systems makes sense both to their electrical contracting and security division firm as well as its customers. With its deployed power solutions, Houle Electric measures load distribution and peak usage, among other things, which helps meet requirements of LEED projects and green objectives. It also helps the company better plan for and anticipate any challenges or issues with remote monitoring of product solutions.

• **Preferred Technologies Inc., (Pref-Tech), Houston, Texas**, has implemented a connected power solution along with a comprehensive, self-tailored security management platform to assist in providing proactive service and maintenance plans to enterprise and other customers. The company has integrated LifeSafety Power's NetLink remote monitoring module alerts and communications so specific information on power solution health is instantly displayed on the security management software's graphical user interface – showing power solution status, alerts and ongoing connectivity. Shaun Castillo, President of Pref-Tech, says one of the biggest overlooked but most critical features is the ability to monitor power solutions over the network. "We can receive a proactive health report or diagnosis that a magnetic lock has failed or is beginning to fail, prior to a security issue or loss." Pref-Tech has taken its remote monitoring capabilities one step further – the company has engineered a custom task inside a graphical user interface of the security management system platform to view status instantly, all in one place.
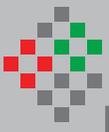
SIEMENS

• **Siemens Building Technologies, Buffalo Grove, Ill.,** has deployed a vast, interconnected, networked base of power solutions across the campus at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to keep this technology-centric customer up and running as it continues to upgrade its access control and security solution.

These and similar scenarios play out daily across the technology integration community, because the future of the industry is grounded in services that yield a stronger bottom line and a more efficient and effective systems integration business.

The real crux of the story is that savvy systems integrators can elevate their business to new levels, garner more RMR and help keep the customer's system healthy and ready at a moment's notice during a security or life safety event. Remote monitoring, added to customer care or proactive service plans, elevate the stature of the company in the eyes of the end user – making the company the total integrated solution provider every user wants.

Not only does this proactive, service-oriented model give systems integrator a differentiator in a competitive marketplace, but it often allows the company to save a truck roll. Industry estimates vary on what the loaded labor costs are to roll a truck. In smaller cities and towns, the costs can be $250 or greater per site visit. In larger metropolitan areas it may cost double that amount. In New York, for example, where parking is at a premium, companies may have to dispatch two technicians – one to troubleshoot the system while the other drives the streets looking for parking or waiting for the other installer to finish their work.

The amount of RMR generated is subject to many factors, including the specifics of the deployed solution and the number of 'points' being monitored. Remote monitoring adds value to the entire solution and can also be included in upfront installation costs. But like interactive services, the monthly RMR can range from a low of an additional $15 to $20 per month per connection to hundreds of dollars per month especially for multiple location accounts. When the user finds value and can better control the uptime of the solution, adding RMR to the service and maintenance contract is easy do.
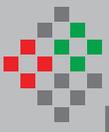
How does remote monitoring of power solutions work?
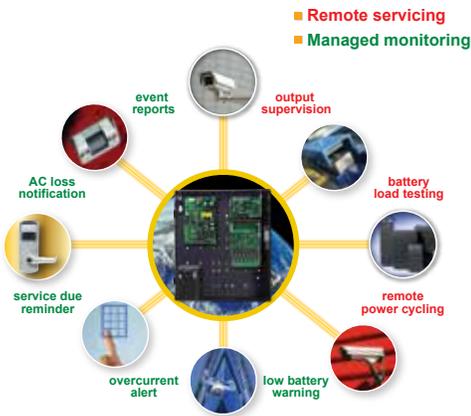
Remote monitoring makes integration firms more proficient in the field, and that translates to more money to the bottom line from direct time and labor savings. Several of the managed services you can provide with remote monitoring include: remote battery testing; power recycle; information on trouble alerts; remote diagnostics; report generation at will or on schedule; and system health logs.

Here's how remote monitoring of power solutions works: You are notified by email, text or while online that one of the power solutions is running hot, the access control won't engage, or the security solution might somehow be compromised should a real emergency occur. You can remotely, from anywhere, access the graphic user interface, assess the system health, and even reboot or reset necessary components. If a visit is necessary it can be scheduled immediately if necessary or conveniently the next business day. The proper parts and accessories can also be planned for, so ideally the visit is accomplished during a single call.

Here's what intelligent remote monitoring brings to the table for both integrator and end user:

Reduced service calls

As the IoT progresses, sophisticated electrical components will need to be up and running consistently. When there is a problem, the ability to remotely service connected components, such as power solutions, will become increasingly important. No longer will technicians have to trudge out to the field during regular and even off hours, because many problems can be solved over the Internet and with a simple-to-use graphical user interface. That's a huge savings for the integration company. Truck rolls are expensive, and instead of having technicians drive to a job site to fix a problem, they can do it from a tablet, laptop or even a smartphone, and save their drive time instead to put a new customer online.

- Remote servicing
- Managed monitoring

event reports
output supervision
AC loss notification
battery load testing
service due reminder
remote power cycling
overcurrent alert
low battery warning
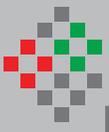
The ability to perform remote diagnostics and tests

Being able to track devices on the network is a value-add for the systems integrator and the customer. A quick look at system health is possible at a moment's notice, and trouble conditions come in real time. Solutions from LifeSafety Power have the ability to monitor and test batteries and provide real-time status and system alerts on individual output conditions for a comprehensive look inside system health.

Batteries are more stable than ever, but now, with a remote load test or pre-programmed time to service notification it's possible to know when they are at the end of their lifespan. Other components of the connected solution may be to blame as well, but this look inside from a distance also allows technicians to accurately assess what equipment they might need to change out or bring to the customer location if an on-site visit is required. Networked, intelligent power solutions allow integrators to remotely test and assess battery system health and any potential issues in many instances without a site visit and truck roll. These remote diagnostics mean more money in the pockets of the integration company and consistent uptime for the customer.

Instant, remote notification of trouble alerts

When there's trouble with a networked solution, the systems integrator should be the first to know, not the customer upon failure. Intelligent, networked power solutions allow trouble alerts to be sent automatically and immediately, so the integrator is the hero and not the bad guy. Now you can detect problems before or as they occur, so the customer is assured that their system is operational 24/7 and especially in the event of a security breach or life safety event. Intelligent power system solutions will regularly assess power operation and the health of connected solutions and pick up failures immediately. For example, a short circuit or integrated lock that is running "hot" and could present a fire hazard will instantaneously generate an email alert or Simple Network Management Protocol "trap" to notify the integration company or end user of a potential problem

Comprehensive system health log

Customers like metrics and data, and today's connected power solutions allow systems integrators to generate detailed reports on the operating status of devices. These health reports can be produced on demand, daily, weekly, monthly or scheduled at intervals the customer desires. Reports can be saved for yearly status updates or other accountability purposes, such as in meeting compliance or regulation requirements.

Example of how remote monitoring assists the customer:

Locking devices today use two coils for operation at either 12 or 24VDC. If one of those coils sustains an open or a short circuit it will cause improper operation of the lock or a fire hazard. Either of these conditions can be picked up on the occurrence and immediately be remedied before a more serious condition results.

Lower total cost of ownership (TCO) is also attainable with remote monitoring, another added selling point in customer care plans. When the end user can have more reliable connectivity, their TCO is lower. One problem that can be solved remotely can significantly lower overall system cost. In addition, planned maintenance can be scheduled as needed, without the escalated cost of unanticipated weekend, evening or holiday visits.

Making remote monitoring part of your customer care plan

Responsive, proactive service is a critical part of today's managed services. Integrators can reduce their internal costs to service customers, and that means stronger profits to the bottom line. More RMR is possible by adding features and functionality to a customer's proactive care plan. But most of all, the integrator becomes the single, total solution provider the end-user turns to for ongoing service, year after year.

Conclusion

Making remote monitoring part of your customer care plan is the only way for systems integrators to guarantee future success and profitability. Responsive, proactive service is a critical part of today's managed services. Integrators can reduce their internal costs to service customers and that means stronger profits to the bottom line. More RMR is possible by adding features and functionality to a customer's proactive care plan. But most of all, the integrator becomes the single, total solution provider the end-user turns to for ongoing service, year after year.

About LifeSafety Power — Power is Knowledge™

LifeSafety Power is the leader in Smart Power Solutions and patented remote monitoring capabilities, providing modular AC, DC, and PoE power systems that meet the growing needs of the life safety and security industries. Realizing that network technology presents new opportunities for active monitoring and management of power supplies connected to access control systems, fire systems, video surveillance and more, the company has built its products from day one with intelligence and functionality in mind. LifeSafety Power's current product offering and planned future innovations in battery test, display and diagnostics represent an important step in providing overall system reliability and uptime.

All of the product features discussed in this white paper are available within LifeSafety Power's product line.

Visit www.lifesafetypower.com for more information, or check these links for additional information:

http://www.lifesafetypower.com/support

http://www.lifesafetypower.com/learning-center

Contact:

Joseph Holland, VP of Engineering
jholland@lifesafetypower.com
888.577.2898

For more information about the FlexPower Power System, visit
www.lifesafetypower.com