The access control industry tends to be more conservative when it comes to the adoption of new technology and services for end users, but that doesn't mean that 2019 won't provide a significant amount of progress through emerging trends taking shape in the industry.

In addition to the increased adoption and acceptance of the cloud, mobile credentials and biometrics are becoming more mainstream, and integrations between manufacturers will take centre stage. Here, we take a look at these and other trends helping to shape the coming year.

Cloud-Based Products
We're continuing to see a demand by end-user customers for customized responses to certain actions within an access control system.

For many access control manufacturers, the core of the business is in more traditional products, with a high percentage of installs continuing to be these kinds of projects. However, over the last couple of years, cloud-based products have emerged as a viable option for customers.

We've seen more of a willingness for end-user customers to inquire whether this is an option for them, citing ease of use, remote management, cybersecurity and more as part of their foray into this branch of access control. The cloud has established its reputation as being quicker to install, more flexible for customers to access and manage both their access points as well as the video associated with these doors, and placing less pressure on internal (or in some cases, non-existent) IT teams to help set up and manage an access control system.

**Mobile Credentials Applications**

We're continuing to see a demand by end-user customers for customized responses to certain actions within an access control system. For example, if there's an alarm set off during the day along a perimeter, the ability to automatically execute a lockdown and simultaneous email or message to everyone within the building alerting them to the issue is critical.

The desire for this kind of flexibility within a system is prompting manufacturers to build new simple to use graphical tools into their systems that allow customized action responses that are proportional to the level of alarm. There's a strong desire by many of today's companies to be able to use mobile phones for access control and as such, manufacturers are either developing their own mobile credentials applications or integrating their systems with these kinds of products.

**Future Of Biometrics**

As companies start to ask about whether their facilities are safe enough, they're often more willing
to consider access control that takes security to a new level, such as the implementation of biometric readers. Biometrics is getting more usage in professional security applications and many customers want to move away from using physical cards for access control.

Manufacturers that don't currently have biometric hardware in place are starting to integrate with readers designed to offer this functionality in an effort to meet the demands of customers. The dramatic rise in facial recognition biometrics is something that will likely shape the future of biometrics as costs start to decrease. While the access control industry is highly fragmented, we're seeing a trend toward increased partnerships and open-platform technology that helps end users achieve the kind of comprehensive security that they desire.

Video Management Platforms

We're seeing a trend toward increased partnerships and open-platform technology that helps end users achieve the kind of comprehensive security that they desire

For example, there are a number of access control providers that are providing paths toward full integration with lock manufacturers and vice versa in an effort to meet the needs of clients who may have purchased locks but a high powered access control system to properly manage them.

There's also a large shift toward full integration with video management platforms and access control systems to fully integrate the two into a single, user-friendly experience and give end users more control over both. Additionally, manufacturers are looking to provide customers with a single system that meets the needs they have with regards to video, intrusion and access control. Right now, I don't think there's a system that can fully deliver on the promise of being exceptional at all three, so integrations and partnerships remain important to achieve that end goal.

Access Control World

An increasing number of end users are realising the holes in the current Wiegand protocols that
have been in place since the 1980s, along with the large number of ‘off the shelf’ equipment that's now available to allow outsiders access through readers that operate under these protocols.

As a result, in the last decade or so, OSDP has come onto the scene and is growing in popularity. One of the most important steps for access control manufacturers in 2019 will be to listen to customers who are concerned with this vulnerability and work toward fully supporting OSDP in an effort to protect these access control systems.

It's an exciting time to be a part of the access control world, as we finally see results from all of the hype centred around the cloud, biometrics, mobile credentials, hacking protection and strong partnerships come to fruition. As 2019 begins, look for these trends to grow in popularity and for manufacturers to really listen to the end-user customer they serve and respond in kind.

Author Profile

Andrew Fulton

Andrew is an experienced senior leader in the electronic security industry. As Co-founder of CEM
Systems he has 30 years of successful experience in the manufacturing of access control products sold into the most complex situations worldwide. Over those years, he covered a broad spectrum of roles including software design, product design, project management, sales and CEM Managing Director (before its acquisition by TYCO.) Working for 13 years within TYCO as a senior sales director Andrew successfully delivered year on year growth of CEM products.

With in-depth, valuable knowledge particularly within aviation, gaming banking and infrastructure security systems, Andrew has a great insight into the changing needs of today’s access control systems and credentials.

For the last year, he has been head of product management for access control at Vanderbilt International and is now moving internally to Director of Business Development for Access Control.
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