

## A ROADMAP FOR SUCCESS

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Although the following article was presented to the Texas, USA Chapter some time ago, the views contained in it are still very pertinent today. We are grateful to Chapter 208 member Mark Rowan of HMA Consulting, Inc. for obtaining the author's permission to reprint the article.

We've come a long way in the security business, making progress in various aspects of the industry that potential clients should know about. One of the latest advances is the call for Now recognized as an essential element to success for any project, a security risk assessment is completed to ascertain the perceived risks for a facility, how to mitigate the security related vulnerabilities and how to reduce their probabilities of occurrence.

### Security Master Plan

Simply put, this type of assessment should leave you with a clear definition of what your exposures are, what can be done to reduce their impact on your operations and what your priorities should be for related expenditures. Born out of the initial analysis should be a security master plan. This master plan will serve as your roadmap to follow throughout the implementation process that develops. A master plan should outline the design intent which will identify how a facility should be staffed, what technology should be considered, what architectural features should be in place, and what future capabilities need to be considered.

### Technological solutions

The results of most risk assessments and security evaluations often call for technology based solutions. While the probability and critical impact of many potential loss events may be reduced with architectural or operational changes, technology solutions can be a vital part of that mix. Technologies such as access control, intrusion monitoring, closed circuit television, voice and video recording can all be integral parts of the whole solution. Deciding on the right level of technology solutions is critical to the success of a project. How the devices will operate, how they will be maintained, and how they will be monitored are also critical to the success of the installation. Will there be adequate monitoring and recording facilities in place to capitalize on the systems? Is there a good balance of technology and manpower? Are the appropriate response procedures in place for each anticipated event? These questions and more should be answered before any product is ordered.

### Second best option

Randomly throwing security devices at a problem frequently exacerbates the problem. We, as engineering consultants, want our clients to benefit from the latest technology solutions available in the market place. However, we must be prudent in our recommendations. The continuing evolution of technology provides many new product innovations that can include enhanced features, reduced costs or both. While you might want the latest car model available, you may not want the newest products available. You have probably heard the old adage we want the second one available. Most of us want the latest technology, but we want someone else to live through the troublesome period of assisting manufacturers debug their

products. It is essential to provide a thorough analysis of a new product offering. Is the new product totally new or an improvement of a current product offering? Does the new product provide significant improvements for your application? Is the new product manufactured by reputable and reliable sources? Can the product be obtained from multiple distribution channels? Has the product been through a thorough alpha and beta testing period in real life applications? Has the product been applied in the same manner as intended for your application? Is the product capable of being integrated into systems offered by various manufacturers? These questions should be answered before going forward down the road to your success.

### Selecting an installer

Let's assume that you have a handle on the product offering, now you need to select an integration firm to provide the installation of the systems. Another due diligence should be performed on potential integration firms. How long has the firm been in business locally? Is the firm a factory-authorized representative or have they been trained on the new technology? Who will be my account representative and what is their experience and background? Check the firm's references for recent work and find out what past client experiences have been.

### Bidding

Your next stop on the road is bid the work. Any bid package should include clear definitions of what you expect from the integrator. This should include details of the technology solutions and how they will perform, unit pricing or price guarantees, documentation requirements, completion schedules and time frames. It should also detail work periods that you will allow work to take place within your facility and what components, if any, of your existing installation will be allowed to be reused or should be integrated into the final system solution. It is greatly beneficial if you can identify what you are willing to do to assist in the process. Does your company have any internal expertise or resources that may be cost effective to tap into that will save money or time?

### Commissioning

Once the installations are finalized, a complete and thorough commissioning process should follow. This will ensure that the independent subsystem installations are operating properly and any integration between those subsystems is functioning as intended. This process also provides a benchmarking of the systems installations for ongoing maintenance. The conclusion of this process is to revisit the original design intent documentation and hopefully discover that all of your expectations for the work had been met.

### Successful conclusion

The above process should apply in some form or another for almost any application. Following this roadmap should provide you with a clear definition of what you need and why you need it, how the solutions are to be implemented, what your expectations are from outside sources. Unwanted surprises should be eliminated and you should have a successful conclusion to your project.

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