Meet the installer

This month we talk to Robert Moore of Boston Networks

Do you use a distributor or buy direct from manufacturers?

We buy from both direct manufacturer and distribution partners. We have forged strong relationships with a number of key industry manufacturers and as such can offer customers a varied range of solutions. We've found that no matter whether we work direct or indirect, our partners offer exceptional pre and post-sales support to ensure the end customer receives the best solution and service. Our engineering team regularly attend manufacturers training, as part of our partner strategy we proactively invite key partners to deliver educational sessions to ensure the full team, from sales to engineers, are kept up to date with the latest products and industry developments.

Is third party accreditation beneficial to your company?

Absolutely, third party accreditations deliver incredible value, they not only demonstrate that a company has been independently audited, but that their work is delivered to industry standards – giving customers peace of mind. Achieving key industry accreditations such as NSI Gold has been extremely beneficial to Boston Networks as it's allowed us access to new markets and further demonstrate our expertise and professionalism to both current and prospective customers.

What would be a typical project for you?

Due to the nature of our business projects vary vastly – from a small IP CCTV solution to a large multimillion pound integrated security deployment encompassing 450 wireless access points, 75 video door entry devices and over 500 IP cameras, which we recently delivered at the South Glasgow Super Hospital Campus.

As a company, Boston Networks is quite unique in that we specialise in the design, delivery and maintenance of fully intelligent and integrated solutions. We don't have a typical project as such, but work across both the public and private sector to understand our customers' business challenges and to deliver fire safety and security systems, intelligent building solutions, and fixed and wireless networks, to clients such as the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and Ryder Cup.

Are there any common requests from customers that give you problems?

No, not really. From the outset we work closely with clients to understand their unique business challenges and project objectives. This approach permits our project teams to appreciate the wider challenges faced, and to propose a tailored solution to meet their individual needs and expectations in terms of performance and results.

Do you think there is a skills shortage in the industry? Any trouble recruiting?

Unfortunately, the answer to both is yes. It's not a new problem, but it does appear to be a common frustration across the industry. We are very fortunate in that we identified the shortage of skilled engineers soon after entering the fire and security market. As a result we expanded our apprenticeship schemes and invested in training to educate our engineers in the required disciplines. This has paid dividends in that it has led to the formation of a strong, dedicated team of highly trained professionals, who have studied the theory at college and then put into practise on the job under the supervision of our experienced team leaders.

What is the security industry's biggest myth?

It would probably be that no specialist expertise is required to install and manage devices on an IP network. The security markets move to IP adoption and migration is a result of the advancements in technology and the realisation of the multiple associated benefits. Security cannot solely be managed by Facilities or IT teams as expertise in both fields is essential when selecting modern solutions that use the network for connectivity and operation. Specialist experience of both is imperative and should be enlisted when designing and deploying these types of systems to achieve maximum benefits and return on investment.

Name: Robert Moore

Job title: Fire & Security Systems Director

Time in security/fire: 20+ years

Company name: Boston Networks

Location: Headquartered in Glasgow, with regional offices in Livingston, Aberdeen, Bolton & Gateshead

Areas of expertise: Fire safety systems, IP CCTV, access control, intruder detection, fixed & wireless networks, intelligent building systems

Accreditations: NACOSS Gold, BAFE, CHAS, Safe Contractor Approved, CSCS, ISO 14001, ISO 9001, Achilles Approved for UVDB, FPAL & RISQS

What would make your job easier?

If it was possible for architects and consultants to engage with installers and integrators earlier in the design and specification process. They have an incredibly tough job managing all aspects of a build specification, being involved earlier would allow us impart knowledge on our ever changing field of expertise and engage in a consultative dialogue – speeding up and streamlining the design and specification process. We recently launched an educational programme, to support the consultants and architects we work with, where we deliver tailored and informative training sessions to help make their (and ultimately our) life easier.

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What is your ultimate/fantasy electronic security product?

That's a difficult question to answer as the industry has come a long way in the last few years thanks to the use of IP and Ethernet technology. I think we will see the day, soon, where it will become commonplace for access control cards or even mobile phone devices to be used instead of keys, and with the real emergence of usable analytics in video surveillance the possibilities to support everything from community safety to traffic control are endless.

However, collaboration of companies and technology providers is required now in order to create a single unified transmission platform to allow the real convergence of systems and intelligence -instead of the use of various system protocols.

Will England ever win the football World Cup again?

In short, I would say no. Given the level the current home nation teams are at compared to world football I don't think any of us have a chance of winning - although some may have more of a chance than others!

If you won £25,000 what would you do with it?

It would have to split between a staff event and a donation to Cancer Research. The team love to fundraise and regularly host charitable events, such as bake offs and Halloween competitions to raise funds for Cancer Research - a charity very close to a number of the team's hearts. We also love to have fun and enjoy spending time together, so we would have to organise a big team night out too!!