



## **Commercial Instruments & Alarm Systems, Inc.**

The Hudson Valley's premier  
**NOTIFIER**  
Fire Alarm  
Provider

2 Summit Court, Suite 306  
Fishkill • New York • 12524

**Locally owned, nationally recognized**

495 Main Street  
Catskill • New York • 12414

# Interactive services offer comfort and peace of mind

The security industry has come a long way in providing you with unparalleled piece of mind and the comfort and luxury of home automation and interactive services.

Smartphone apps allow you to control your home or business from anywhere. Use your mobile devices to arm, disarm or check the status of your security system.

Your security system can do so much more than just monitor people coming into your home or business. New touchscreen keypads can serve as the central hub for all your home electronics.

Automation allows you to program your system to turn on and dim lights, lock and unlock doors, turn appliances on and off and even adjust your thermostat.

What can be controlled?

### **Lighting/Appliances**

Manage your lighting and appliances from where ever you are in the world using Z-wave technology. Control individual lights and appliances located in different parts of your home or business from your bed, kitchen, car, or even while on the other side of the world.

### **Cameras**

Log into your video surveillance system and visually see, in real-time, specific areas of your home or business while you



are away. Rotate, reposition, record, zoom, and snap photos all from the palm of your hand.

### **Thermostats**

Maintain a comfortable environment within your home or business from your fingers tips. A remote controlled thermostat allows you to operate your heater or air conditioner from the confines of your bed, or while traveling. Receive alerts when temperatures get too low or too high.

### **Security & Access Control**

Remotely open a garage door or unlock/lock a specific door within your home or business.

Give us a call today to see how interactive services can help you.

## Recent video hacking incident

The world's largest manufacture of video equipment recently announced that hackers have found a vulnerable point in their equipment. The company quickly responded and has supplied a firmware update to resolve the issue.

Any equipment connected to the internet has the potential to be hacked or become the subject of a virus. Updating all equipment to the latest available firmware is an effective way to safeguard equipment from cyberattacks. System owners should also make sure that they have a reasonable level of network security and firewall equipment for their systems.

CIA Security can assist in updating firmware on your video surveillance system. If you're experiencing any unusual operation of your cameras or have any questions, please contact our service department.



## Protect against smash-and-grab

While alarm systems and safes are essential in protecting your home or business, these security measures offer little when it comes to combatting smash-and-grab crimes. With smash-and-grabs, a robber will smash a window or display case, grab items and flee the scene as quickly as possible.

There are things you can do to protect your home or business from a smash-and-grab robbery.

- Do not leave expensive items out. Put away laptop computers, purses and jewelry. Businesses should not leave items in showcases or on work benches overnight. Store all merchandise in safes and vaults overnight. If a robber does not see anything that is easy to take, he is less likely to break-in.
- Normal glass can be shattered, but there are ways to strengthen it. You can apply impact resistant glazing materials or use laminated glass on windows to prevent loss.
- Consider a video surveillance system. Cameras and clearly visible signs indicating a video surveillance system is present help to deter would-be robbers.
- Businesses should consider installing metal bars or grills behind all glass windows and doors and place bollards in front of the business to prevent criminals from using a vehicle as a battering ram.

## Verizon phone lines go down again affecting alarm systems

A Verizon phone issue left customers in the mid-Hudson Valley with sporadic service on their landline telephones.

Problems included phone calls not going through, ringing fast busy, and customers receiving a voice recording of James Earl Jones welcoming them to Bell Atlantic. Bell Atlantic merged with GTE in 2000 to become Verizon.

The problems began Saturday, Sept. 30 and lasted four days before Verizon officials were able to identify a software issue in their phone server.

The event is once again highlighting vulnerabilities in alarm systems that report using only a telephone line.

Hundreds of Verizon's customers were affected. CIA's Monitoring Response Center received numerous reports of systems being "late to test" meaning those panels were unable to transmit the regular daily test signal because of the Verizon phone issue.

Security or fire alarm systems connected to Verizon's telephone lines could not communicate with our Monitoring Response Center. That meant that if their alarms activated, the alarm signal may not have been transmitted to CIA's Monitoring Response Center to dispatch emergency personnel.

Alarm systems that use radio communication were still able to connect with our Monitoring Response Center. An estimated 40% of our customers use radio communication and are not relying on Verizon for alarm reporting.

At one time, phone lines were the most reliable form of communication for alarm systems. But phone line problems are occurring more often. In February 2015, Verizon's phone lines were down for six hours across the Hudson Valley. That same month, residents in Manhattan went almost the entire month without phone service. The FCC has allowed phone companies to stop maintaining their copper lines, meaning more outages and problems are inevitable.

CIA's radio communicators can be added to almost any alarm system to protect against future phone line issues. Contact our sales offices for more information.

### CIA in Action

A mattress fire inside of a home activated the home's fire alarm system in early July. CIA's Monitoring Response Center called the fire department which was able to quickly extinguish the fire once on scene.

The fire alarm in a hospital was activated when a fire started in a laundry chute. The fire was able to be quickly extinguished before causing major damage.