



By William Pao
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Singapore-based Ademco touts VCA as an effective preventive technology

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Video content analysis (VCA) is seen as an effective technology to prevent accidents or disasters on public transportation, said Patrick Lim, Director of Group Sales and Marketing at Singapore-based Ademco Security Group.

"It is a good tool for situational awareness such as detecting erratic crowd patterns, overcrowding, and illegal parking situations that may indicate pending emergency or impede evacuation," he said. "By detecting unusual crowd patterns, VCA can possibly inform operators prior or minutes after an actual emergency. This can be vital as we have seen situations where local detection by human can be very unreliable, making the situation worse."

However, Lim reminds that VCA is not a "magic bullet" that solves all the problems. "VCA is a good enabler for identifying suspicious characters and activities, but deployment and expectation must be practical. Trained criminals or extremists know how to defeat VCA," he said.

To ensure safety on metros and buses, a good evacuation system is also needed, Lim said.

"Evacuation is sometimes the next best thing when prevention fails. An effective evacuation system cannot just depend on one system but must be designed according to the architecture of the premise and use several other systems to provide an intelligent and robust system," he said. "Human-centric technologies can predict overcrowding and provide situational awareness to warn operators in case of an emergency."

If certain conditions are programmed, the system can automate communications and exit controls to direct the best method of evacuation, he said.

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