

To Catch a Thief

Utilizing innovations in security at your premises can actually increase your revenues. Here's how!

BY MICHELLE KEADLE-TAYLOR



For many auto recyclers, their business is not just a business, it's their baby. They have nurtured it through sweat and tears, and lots of hard work.

They've watched it grow from a fledgling business of one or two employees to a thriving business with multi-locations and over 20 employees. For some, they have grown it alongside parents and grandparents, and helped bring it into today's technology-driven marketplace.

So, when theft occurs, it is not something that is taken lightly. It not only hurts the business, but it emotionally feels like an attack.

A recent study conducted by the American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS) International and the Institute of Finance and Management (IOFM) found that the total market for security goods and services in the United States is estimated at greater than \$350

billion, with the private sector spending at \$281.61 billion, and the federal government at \$68.9 billion. What this means is the private sector is spending four times more than the federal government on security equipment.

Most recyclers have taken some measure to prevent theft, but often this isn't enough and the bottom line of the business is adversely affected when theft occurs. It's up to you, the recycler, to decide how to best protect your company from theft and what combination of security systems would be best for you.

To bring awareness of what is possible, we interview two ARA associate members who both serve our industry specifically and offer the latest in security options. Each has its own approach and view to attacking the problem of theft and has demonstrated success in its field, with high endorsements from their customers.

While they have different approaches, both of these companies agree on two basic things:

1) Putting a basic fence around your property is a good first step, and 2) most of the time, a basic fence will not be enough to stop today's cunning thieves.



Vumii Thermal camera systems (inset, and on pole) rely on the infrared energy emitted by all objects to create an image that contrasts warmer objects within a cooler background. Because it does not rely on visible light, this type of imaging provides superb contrast irrespective of the lighting conditions.

EyeMax Security

“Many times auto recyclers don’t realize the extent of the theft that is occurring on their properties until they install a security system and suddenly see their revenues increase, for no other reason than theft is being prevented,” said Bob Stanley, CEO, EyeMax Security. EyeMax Security is a technology-driven company dedicated to providing video surveillance and security guard surveillance protection to automotive dealerships, recyclers, and automotive salvage yards, nationwide.

According to Stanley, there are common problems that recyclers face when it comes to theft. First of all, most recyclers are dealing with a totally dark environment, often with many acres, and all kinds of ways that people can steal from them. Secondly, he says it is common for people to hide in vehicles until the recycler closes or to find ways to get into the premises after hours to steal parts.

“While these are common problems that recyclers face, there are also common ways that many attempt to prevent theft,” said Stanley. He points out that the difficulty with many of the products currently in use is that they are outdated and ineffective, and cause issues like false alarms where managers receive calls in the middle of the night. “Eventually, the managers ignore the calls,” says Stanley. Furthermore, if the police come to the premise to answer a false alarm, the customer can be billed for it.

“Recyclers use security guards and/or guard dogs, but thieves have figured out ways to avoid the security guards and a guard dog can easily be bought off with a large piece of meat. On-site guards can be expensive and guard dogs can be a liability,” says Stanley. “Another common way to prevent theft is by installing cameras. While they have value during the day, cameras often produce grainy images at night when most of the theft occurs.”

EyeMax Security, which was established 15 years ago, offers auto salvage yards security solutions by offering convenient and cost-effective video surveillance systems and video surveillance services. Through advanced technology, including thermal cameras for totally dark facilities, its remote video surveillance center is instantly made aware of any activity on a customer’s property and its trained security guards monitor the situation and advise any intruders immediately that they are under surveillance.

They continue to monitor the situation until the intruders have left the property or, if needed, notify the local authorities to take action. Stanley says the



Surveillance video from EyeMax Security's cameras catch a thief at an auto recycling yard throwing stolen items over a fence. The police arrived shortly after.

thermal radar cameras have helped clients to reduce theft and increase revenues.

“Our thermal cameras are mounted on a telephone pole and turn 360 degrees to detect the heat coming off a person,” said Stanley. “It detects body heat and enables EyeMax Security Guards to literally see intruders in total darkness.”

“They quickly allow us to identify where the intruder is and to alert police. One of our clients in Chicago didn’t realize theft was such a big problem until we put 10 people in jail in one month for stealing from their salvage yard. With the arrests, the owner saw a corresponding increase in their revenue. In another location in Colorado, our security system helped prevent theft and put 20 people in jail in a year.

“Obviously there is a human side to this and I don’t enjoy putting people in jail. But, I do enjoy helping my clients to protect their business and watching their revenues go up.”

EyeMax Security installs both traditional cameras and thermal cameras, and custom tailors a surveillance system based on each recycler’s needs.

“We never install the same system twice,” said Stanley. “We pride ourselves on being innovators in the technology arena and therefore stay current on the latest trends. Systems change because technology changes so fast. We come up with the right solution for each recycler based on their needs and budget.”

According to Stanley, some of the advantages of using the EyeMax Security Systems include:

- Stop theft and vandalism before it occurs.
- Involve law enforcement immediately when appropriate.
- Most cost effective solution for security.
- Management is advised of all security threats on a daily basis via email.
- Management can use the cameras during operating hours to improve management practices.
- Included mobile app allows dealership personnel to monitor cameras 24/7/365.

EyeMax also offers a specially-designed thermal energy fire detection camera that detects smoke and fire and alerts the surveillance center. EyeMax Security Guards then directly contact the fire department. This allows the fire department to arrive faster and to prevent the fire from spreading quickly.

EyeMax also plans to introduce another innovation in 2015 that uses thermal radar cameras. Stanley says this will be the most effective solution for protecting both the exterior and interior of recyclers’ yards.

“We are currently taking security equipment that is used by the military and border guards and commercializing it,” said Stanley. “The thermal radar cameras can scan the yard by turning 360 degrees in about five seconds, constantly scanning the yard. I really feel this is the best solution for protecting the yard inventory and we can install IP cameras to protect the interior facilities.”

As an additional bonus for ARA members, Stanley is giving a free personal thermal device that you can put on your iPhone to members who signed up for a system at the convention. The device can be used for personal protection when facing an intruder by detecting body heat up to 300 feet in front of it which helps to locate the intruder where they are hiding.

EyeMax believes in protecting its customers, including their identity, especially where arrests have occurred. One customer in Phoenix, AZ tells of their increased profits. “I own and manage a fifteen acre auto salvage yard. EyeMax Security has been providing Security Guard Surveillance for my facility for five years and I couldn’t be happier. Since EyeMax took over, they have participated in multiple arrests and my profits are way up. I have recently expanded my yard and EyeMax is installing a thermal camera that can see in the dark. EyeMax Security is a valuable partner with me in running my auto salvage yard.”

Electric Guard Dog

The Electric Guard Dog is a multi-layered, solar-powered, perimeter security systems solution. It provides a physical deterrent with a free-standing, 10 ft. tall electric security fence that is installed inside the customer’s existing fence. One valuable feature is that it also features multi-lingual warning signs to deter would be criminals. It operates on a pulsed shock system that issues a safe but memorable shock every 1.3 seconds upon contact, making it difficult to climb or cut.

Jack DeMao, the company’s CEO, agrees that the nature of auto recycling often makes it hard to detect theft easily.





“Auto recyclers, like all recyclers, store products outside,” said DeMao. “As a result, their most valuable commodities – like catalytic converters – are visible eye-candy for thieves who aren’t swayed by the presence of security cameras or alarms. They get in and out of a recycling yard unnoticed because it’s so big and there are plenty of places to hide. Conversely, our warning signs alone tend to dampen a thief’s enthusiasm.”

In fact, Electric Guard Dog’s history comes out of the very same issue that it now attacks head first. In the 1970s, Bill Mullis, who became the founder of Electric Guard Dog, owned and operated a guard dog company in Columbia S.C. He, himself, became a victim of theft and as a result of that theft, developed and patented Electric Guard Dog fence in 1991. He felt that the solar-powered electric security fence provided such good security 365 days a year that the guard dogs were eventually phased out, and the company became Electric Guard Dog.



Mullis retired in 2007, and the company was purchased by private investors, with Jack DeMao hired as President and CEO. DeMao has since developed a nationwide network of technical support staff and outside sales representatives, with his philosophy being “so customers can enjoy face time with their security partner, no matter where they’re located.”

“It is our mission to stop crime before it happens,” said DeMao. “We are the number one deterrent service in the country. Our flagship product, the Electric Guard Dog, provides incomparable theft deterrence for the automotive recycling industry because it provides yard security. With our electric fence based security system, clients receive true theft deterrence: a full 95% of our customers say goodbye to external theft issues after installation.

“We are our customer’s security partner, and we take our responsibility seriously by employing the largest field technician and customer service team dedicated to electric security fences in the U.S. We are now integrating new technologies into our world-class system to create new, innovative and cost-saving solutions for our customers’ problems.”

In a 2010 independent survey, 95% of Electric Guard Dog customers stated they’ve had *no* external theft since installing The Electric Guard Dog electric security fence system. The remaining 5% said the company had helped to reduce theft overall on their site.

“We have three layers to our system,” said DeMao. “The free standing fence itself is daunting to potential thieves because it’s ten feet tall and has yellow warning signs about the 7,000 volt electricity. This takes care of 95% of the work that the security system sets out to do as a deterrent to crime. The next layer of security is the shock deterrent and the third layer is the alarms going off and the customer being notified. We are able to check the entire perimeter every 1.3 seconds, and because it’s solar-powered it never goes down, even when the electricity goes out.

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“For example, when Hurricane Sandy hit New York, looters took it as a holiday spree because security systems were down due to the power outages. Our systems kept on working thanks to being solar-powered.”

According to DeMao the advantages of the Electric Guard Dog security system include:

- Free installation and technical maintenance
- Customizing each fence around property lines, terrain, and building positions.
- Heavy-duty wiring: 20 durable wires /steel and fiberglass frame.
- Multi-lingual warning signs
- Solar-powered: Your electric bills never increase, yet your security is always on, even in the event of a power failure.
- Detection alarm: Scaling or cutting will trigger an audible alarm.
- 24-hour monitoring
- Low false alarm rates
- Nationwide network of skilled technicians, for troubleshooting at no extra cost.

Mark Gluschenko, Manager, Auto and Scrap Recyclers, says that he has been very happy with the Electric Guard Dog and has already seen it pay off.

“We have five properties in Wisconsin, and before installing the Electric Guard Dog fence, we had people trying to steal from us on a weekly basis at one location,” said Gluschenko. “Since installing the fence we have no more thefts. Most of the time the appearance of the Electric Guard Dog fence is enough to scare off potential thieves, but we even saw how it really worked in case someone tries to get in. We had a case where someone was trying to get in and the alarm sounded and we were able to catch them. People can’t throw things like radiators or other parts over the fence without getting caught.

“I feel like it’s a worthwhile investment because we invest a lot into our business – it’s a big business. It makes sense to protect it.” ■

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