

Digital Surveillance: Software or Hardware?

If you are considering installing a surveillance system in your organization, you are probably deciding between the two types of solutions: hardware or software. With each approach having its pros and cons, what will you choose? This article is about to help you make a weighted decision.

If you are managing a condominium and want a video camera on the front door, or when you need a garage monitoring system for an underground parking area, you are pretty much forced to use a set of recording video cameras. But do you want a video surveillance system in your office?

While video surveillance may increase the performance and discipline of your employees, it can also have a negative impact on the psychological climate among employees. Hardware-based video surveillance is easy to abuse, and you must know and comply with the appropriate laws and legislations. Hidden video surveillance is illegal pretty much everywhere, so you're losing an opportunity to catch a dishonest employee selling off your trade secrets or telling your competitors about your plans. Finally, hardware-based surveillance can't record anything meaningful from the computer screens. You'll see dark and bright spots at best, and will never know what programs were opened, what Web sites were visited and what was typed in that chat window.

Software surveillance, on the other hand, is still unregulated by the governments and can be used without making your employees aware. Surveillance software disciplines your employees without causing the negative reaction to video surveillance and apparent video cameras. Finally, it is virtually impossible to abuse software surveillance because it works only on the employees' computers that are supposed to be used for only one thing: work. Consider surveillance software a performance control tool and not a system to monitor employees.

Besides the legal and psychological benefits, the importance of which is hard to evaluate, software surveillance provides a number of direct benefits. With computer surveillance software you can record your employees' activities down to the last keystroke and mouse click. This low-level control is there if you need it, but if you don't you can always revert to the more convenient, higher level control. Good surveillance software recognizes popular chats and instant messengers such as AIM, ICQ or MSN and logs the conversations, allowing you to access formatted chat logs that are easy to go through.

If you decided on software surveillance against a video monitoring system, there's only one thing left: what surveillance software to choose from the many offerings? While there is no lack of software surveillance solutions, KGB Spy <http://www.refog.com/> conveniently integrates the things that are most important to corporate users: security, convenience and features. Being a fully featured software surveillance system, KGB Spy offers all the usual gimmicks such as keystroke capturing, application logging and Web site monitoring. However, being a corporate-oriented product, KGB Spy goes even further, providing features such as remote access to logs via email or FTP, instant remote alerts on pre-defined events such as certain key phrases, and complete environmental control. KGB Spy makes periodic captures of the computer screen, showing you detailed snapshots instead of the blurred spots you would see on a video camera. Finally, KGB Spy is virtually undetectable and practically impossible to remove without knowing the administrative password.

And here's one last yet most important feature of software surveillance: you can download, install and evaluate a complete surveillance system for absolutely free! Get your copy of KGB Spy from <http://www.refog.com/> and get comfortable with the advanced surveillance features before paying.

About the Author

Professional IT security consultant. During my career I have worked on engagements at clients in a wide range of industry sectors, from a variety of financial institutions, to entertainment and media organisations.

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