



THE BOTTOM LINE

IN ASSOCIATION WITH CSL DUALCOM

The interview that gets the facts from the top

This month Simon Banks talks to Terry Hewitt, Managing Director of Chevron Alarms. Terry started the business in 1982 and later teamed up with co-Director, John Kelvey. Chevron owns its modern premises in Egham, Surrey and is one of the premier NSI NACOSS GOLD Security Systems companies for London and the home counties.



■ **Very few Installers believe that the 21CN programme to update exchanges hasn't begun. What is your view?**

Like most of the industry we have followed the ongoing saga of 21CN with cynical interest; we still remember the Y2K 'hype'! Responsibly, we drafted a mail shot to target our older digital communicator systems. We likened 21CN to the switch-over to Digital TV to help our end-users understand the process. We had planned to send these out in the New Year in line with the perceived start of the 21CN roll out across the country. Then we heard of BT's desire to update exchanges on an ad-hoc basis without notice. This left us feeling extremely perturbed.

■ **How did you know that your local exchange(s) had been updated to 21CN?**

In October our engineers started to report that some of our digital communicators had 'stopped' working. At first we did not consider 21CN because of the delayed start. We wrongly assumed that it must be a broadband issue and fitted ADSL filters to no avail. By coincidence, at this time, the local area was targeted by members of the criminal fraternity whom

broke open BT manhole covers and stole large amounts of copper cable. BT replaced these with fibre and whilst talking to their staff we learned that the local exchange had already been upgraded.

■ **You have experienced first-hand transitions to BT's 21CN network – how have you dealt with it?**

Now we had the knowledge that a 21CN upgrade had happened in our area we started to look at solutions. The DigiPlus seemed to be the ideal choice. We trialled a couple of DigiPlus units on the systems that were no longer sending signals and the problem went away. We carried out a mailshot of all of our Digi-Com customers offering them the product and also pointing out the added advantage that this would drastically cut the cost of their phone bills whilst making their systems 21CN proof. The uptake of these DigiPlus units has proved to be very successful.

■ **Do you think the Industry is taking the 21CN issue seriously?**

We believe that the industry has taken the issue of 21CN as seriously as it can. With various manufacturers and trade organisations involved in testing their products to the best of their abilities against a backdrop of the 'limited' information

forthcoming from BT. All installers need to be aware that this is happening now and should take steps to inform and advise their customers so as not to get caught out when 21CN happens in their area – whenever that might be.

■ **Will the current economic downturn make it more difficult for customers to upgrade their signalling?**

I am a great believer in not 'talking down' the market and always tend to look for positives in any situation. We have always strived to give our customers the best value for money products and services. With our established management team of Mike Tugwood, Matt Richards and Phil Layden, we liaise with our customers and advise on the various signalling options now available to them and the added advantages of being able to cut phone line rental and call costs.

YOU SAID IT!

"We use DualCom as our primary signalling as with GradeShift® we can offer the right product on any grade of install"

MATHEW BAKER, OPERATIONS MANAGER, HS SECURITY SERVICES
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