

Islander April 2006

SECURITY SYSTEMS AND NEW SOUND SYSTEMS

1. Thermal Imaging Technology and Low Light Camera Systems

In today's climate of fear, there are many owners and Captains looking to *new* technology to improve security for themselves, their families, crew, charter guests and yachts. For over 4 years, Night Vision Technology Inc. (NVTi) have developed and sold a range of multiple camera systems specifically designed to improve the navigation, security and surveillance capability on a modern, well-equipped luxury yacht.

Although many of you may have been aware of the existence of this type of technology for some time, it has only relatively recently become available to the general public and is no longer just the domain of the military sector. Even companies such as Mercedes Benz are offering options such as their "Night View Assist" cameras on their "S" class.

As a market leader in the US, NVTi's product range uses different technologies to cover the widest variety of marine applications:

- Thermal Imaging (infrared) - Works in all light conditions: full-light, mixed-light, no-light.
 - Infrared images penetrate smoke, dust, weather (thick fog can act as a thermal barrier)
- Light Intensification - Used in many military applications, this technology works in extreme low-light conditions
 - Presents information in a manner the eye is used to seeing. This technology provides more detailed picture than infrared but cannot be used in daylight (smoke, fog, snow and rain reduce effectiveness)
- Low Light Cameras - Produces TV quality B&W pictures with lots of detail
 - Works well in the rain (smoke, fog, and snow reduce effectiveness) but it needs some ambient light source.
- Colour Video – A TV Quality Picture that the human eye is used to looking at.
 - All colour cameras are auto focusing and have a 220 times zoom capability (22 x optical, 10 x digital)

NVTi have been totally focused on the leisure market over the past 4 years and have now established themselves as market leaders. Their anchor product is the 1018i which is now available with a new thermal camera providing an incredibly improved thermal picture. At an increased 640 x 480 pixel resolution, images are crisper than with the 160 x 120 pixel resolution capabilities of the previous model.

Five different lens options offer longer detection ranges and wider frames of view. Lenses are available with focal lengths of 5.8 mm to 25 mm, offering field of view options from 11° to 50° and the ability to detect human activity up to 475 meters away.

For increased security the 1018i is capable of continuously rotating 360°. The new feature allows operators to have full pan control, increasing vision and situational awareness capabilities.

The pan and tilt camera head is remotely mounted and, unlike handheld units, it can be operated and monitored in a location protected from the harsh marine environment. Objects and activity are easily observed in total darkness, daylight or mixed light surroundings.

2. New Sound System

We're always scouring the market for new products which enhance your audio-visual pleasure, and have come across a brilliant product which allows you to play any tracks from your music collection independently in different rooms throughout your house, garden, terrace or yacht, and it is all cable free! Can this be true, I wondered?

Sonos is the first and only digital music system that lets you play all your digital music, all over your house or yacht—and control it all from the palm of your hand. Best of all, you don't need a PC in every room, a music server or a wireless network. Just a Sonos™ ZonePlayer and speakers in the rooms of your choice, plus a Sonos™ Controller in hand to access all your digital music, no matter where it's stored—on your PC, Mac or Network Attached Storage box.

The clever chaps at Sonos have launched a very simple, wireless system that connects to your existing PC, Mac, iPod or dedicated music server and uses all your existing downloaded music as your “juke box”. Their system connects to your PC which then provides a wireless gateway to the rest of your house or yacht. By simply plugging in (up to 32) Sonos ZonePlayers (into the power socket only) in a selection of rooms, terraces, decks or garden you can access and play the music from your PC.

The Sonos System does more than just distribute and play music throughout your house. It amplifies it, too. With the ZonePlayer's high-performance built-in amplifier, you can enjoy superior audio quality – with low distortion and a high signal to noise ratio - in every room.

Sonos puts the control of all your music and all your rooms, wirelessly, in the palm of your hand. With the Sonos Controller and their secure wireless mesh network, you can instantly access your entire music collection from anywhere using the large colour LCD and scroll wheel. No more running to your PC to turn

on, change or turn off your music. No need for pointing or line of sight. Use one Controller for your entire house, or several for added convenience.

The Sonos speakers are high-performance bookshelf speakers providing great sound in a small space, and they look good. Alternatively, you can connect your own speakers to the system, and you can use other speakers such as "rock" speakers for the garden.

The Sonos product has been conceived and built by a couple of very clever guys. They have created the perfect product for everyone who has ever lusted after a Linn system with AMX or Crestron controls, and made it both affordable and easy to install. It may not be quite as sophisticated and the audio quality is not quite as good, but it is still of a very high standard. You can also start slowly and buy for a few rooms to start with, adding further rooms when you can afford it. Alternatively, you can also connect it into your high quality, favourite 5.1 system, with DVD in your sitting room. We hear that video will be available soon.

We were so impressed with both the Sonos sound system and NVTi cameras that we have taken on the dealership for Mallorca and Spain in both these products. Contact us for a demo or more information.

By Roger Horner of E3 Systems

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