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CAUTION IS NEEDED WHEN CONSIDERING VIDEO

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The market for video-surveillance equipment and applications is exploding. It is expected to grow to \$10 billion by next year, up from \$73 million in 2000, said Rich Feeney, technical sales specialist for IP video system vendor **Inscope Data**, who recently participated in a panel discussion on the topic at the **International Wireless Communications Exposition** (IWCE) in Las Vegas.

While the hype surrounding video is well founded, it is diminished considerably when one contemplates the realities surrounding its use. Governance and privacy are among the issues must be considered, said Rick Burke, managing partner of wireless communications consultancy **Televate**, who participated in the same panel discussion.

"There are regulatory concerns in any jurisdiction over the deployment, storage and use of video," Burke said. "Big Brother is looking over our shoulder," is a concern of any city council on behalf of its citizens."

Governance is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the challenges of making the most effective use of video systems, according to Jasper Bruinzeel, vice president of marketing and sales for wireless video solutions vendor **CelPlan Technologies**.

"If it's not designed correctly, video truly can be a killer application for a wireless network," he said.

A case in point: Though wireless broadband has been around for a while, most wireless data networks traditionally have been designed for e-mail and Internet browsing and not video, which generates exponentially more packets that are inherently more time sensitive.

"In video, if packets get lost or delayed, you'll see pixilation or freezing of the screen," Bruinzeel said. "So, video is very sensitive to latency and delays."

Video quality is another significant concern, according to Paul May, business development manager for **Tyco Electronics Wireless Systems** (formerly M/A-COM).

"There should be some sort of quality assurance placed on that network, because video surveillance isn't very effective — or worthy of being used as evidence in court — when you start dropping frames because you're running other applications on your network and not protecting your bandwidth," May said.

Bandwidth is yet another concern, as video applications take up a lot of it. For that reason, Ron Merchant, CEO of video surveillance system vendor **Eye3Data**, recommended that any agency thinking about taking the plunge first develop a thorough capacity plan.

"You have to look at the video stream of each individual camera, because every camera has a different rate," he said. "Some cameras are very bandwidth intensive."

See the April 2009 edition of Urgent Communications for an expanded article on this topic.

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