Can **technology** beat fraud?

Piracy, screen-hopping, non-paying customers and employee fraud translate into revenue-loss and exhibitor management nightmares. To minimize them requires an accurate, reliable, user-friendly and affordable system. Video surveillance – no longer technology used only to protect sensitive government sites and cash-registers – is the answer for cinema applications.

The many forms of fraud – piracy included – that rob our industry of untold profits can be combatted successfully from within our cinemas' walls. **Shariq Hamid**, President of Texas-based iCount, explains how.

Machine Vision Cameras

Patented software has been developed to monitor theatres using Machine Vision technology. This is accomplished by installing a Machine Vision camera connected to a computer inside the auditorium. Using the software, images are taken periodically, or on-demand, during all shows. The images, delivered via text or e-mail to any site, local or remote, are then retrieved at the click of a mouse. The data is then matched with box office sales totals to identify discrepancies and sends automated alerts.

Besides seat-occupancy count – one feature able to mitigate exhibitor-distributor conflict – the system serves as a deterrent for fraud, illegal recordings, vandalism and other cinema-related crimes. It is a tool useful in determining also if an auditorium has been properly cleaned before each show, as well as ensuring complete evacuation at the end of the day. Satisfied customers from North America to Asia are experiencing great success in eliminating box office fraud while enjoying the peace of mind that comes with remote theatre-monitoring capabilities.

In-house Detection

The Machine Vision camera captures what's happening in your theatres between patrons and employees. When employees are acting strangely, it presents different challenges to employers. And until those challenges are identified and resolved, not only can profits suffer but so too does company

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morale. Other employees are usually aware of the wrong-doing but may feel powerless to speak up. In some situations, then, video surveillance provides the irrefutable evidence.

This sophisticated counting and interactive technology has proven 99pc effective, cuts operational costs, provides greater security and means increased profits for theatre owners. It offers additional, practical uses, and provides easy monitoring of your business from any location where a computer is available. Once installed, exhibitors may wonder how their theatres had ever managed without this technology. S

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