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CYBERPOL

**What we need
to know about
the Newer,
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in 2021**

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Subcontracting as a Revenue Generator

A hand holding a lit cigarette is the central focus in the foreground, with the smoke rising. The background is a blurred street scene at sunset, with a white car in the lower right and a house in the upper left. The lighting is warm and golden.

The Many Faces of the Security Survey

BY ANTHONY LUIZZO



Over the years, I have written several articles on the art and science of preparing single-client, multi-client, access control, and community-wide security surveys (1-8). This article details how this diverse set of surveys is applied. The rationale behind why security assessments are crucial can be found in a paper by Shlomo Angel, "Diagnosing Crime Through City Planning"-Berkeley Institute of Urban Planning and Regional Development, University of California, 1968, when he describes in some detail how crime rates are related to the social and physical environment, to territoriality, accessibility, and to behavior of victims. "Proactively seeking out crime exposures before they strike is truly a prescription for good crime control planning," further reinforcing the age-old adage: "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

INNOVATION DRIVES CHANGE

It is said that innovation is the engine that drives change. Looking back to the early days of our nation, our founding fathers used newspapers to get the word out to the public about national issues of importance. In the 1940s, President Franklin Roosevelt used radio (Fireside Chats) to get his message out. In the 1960s, President John F. Kennedy used television as his media carrier. In the new millennium, President Donald Trump took our nation totally digital and the tweet became the new media venue. Like media innovation, the security field has also undergone tremendous change. Just a few short years ago, the only way to lock and/or unlock a door was by physically doing so, the only way to surveil a premises was to physically watch a video replay, and the only way to take a photo was via camera. Today, remote locking and unlocking, real-time video surveillance and instant photo availability via smartphone is a way of life. With all this innovation abounding, the security survey has joined the march to tomorrow. Yesterday's simple single client often straightforward security survey of buildings, hospitals and businesses has expanded into full blown security assessments of multi-client commercial centers and community-wide surveys of neighborhoods, gated communities, industrial parks, business improvement districts, and enterprise zones.

THE BIRTH OF A NEW BREED OF SECURITY SURVEYOR

Over the last fifty years, a new breed of ci-

vilian security specialist has emerged. These people have their roots in various fields, including economic development, city planning, academia, engineering, and architecture. They also include citizen volunteers - community organizers and activists seeking to create safer neighborhoods and commercial/industrial centers. Prior to these specialists joining the crime control continuum, security surveys were almost always performed by law enforcement and private security.

EVOLUTION OF THE SECURITY SURVEY

The actual birth date of the security survey is difficult to ascertain since many forms of crime-related risk assessment studies have been ongoing for centuries. Early references to crime deterrence efforts can be traced to the Roman Empire when during field battles, Roman sentries surrounded their camp with geese to forewarn of an impending encroachment. In the 1960s, the more modern security survey was born, championed by research conducted by the National Institute of Law Enforcement & Criminal Justice (NILE), which is under the jurisdiction of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), part of the U.S. Department of Justice.

In 1968, LEAA issued its report, "The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society," which led to funding for community not-for-profit organizations, anti-crime studies and related academic research. These texts and monographs from LEAA and NILE eventually led to the establishment of the National Crime Prevention Institute. In 1971, The National Crime Prevention Institute (NCPI) - a division of the University of Louisville's School of Justice Studies, College of Urban and Public Affairs -- was established to serve as the nation's educational and technical resource for crime prevention programming. Over the past half a century, NCPI has been hard at work teaching law enforcement, corporate security, community organizations and private citizenry the art and science of proactive security programming techniques and technologies. Writing security surveys has been and continues to be an important tool used in the proactive crime control discipline.

WHAT IS A SECURITY SURVEY?

A security survey has many meanings to many protection practitioners. To some it is a tool used *after* a security initiative has failed. To others, it is a tool to evaluate existing programmatic initiatives. To the more seasoned security professional however, the survey is a medical CT Scan (Computed Tomography) that can scientifically diagnose frail security programming.

DEFINITION OF THE SECURITY SURVEY

The generic definition of a security survey is an onsite examination of a physical facility (home, business, industrial plant, hospital, community complex). In practice, trained surveyors from both public and/or private entities search for crime-related risks, hazards and weaknesses and devise preventative measures to remove and/or mitigate frail security inequities. The security survey is the fulcrum on which proficient security is erected.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE SURVEY

Writing a security survey is not rocket science, one need only understand that there is a methodology behind effectively writing security studies. Most standard security officers can be sent to the scene of a security breach to document a problem, but it requires years of study in the proactive security discipline to sit down and draft full-blown multi-client and/or community-wide /neighborhood crime impact statements (aka security surveys). Writing these broader studies starts with first knowing what types of data will be needed for each type of survey prior to commencing the endeavor. In single client studies, the surveyor need only have some knowledge of how security technology functions. In the broader studies however, surveyors need to examine land use and crime analysis data, ethnic and age breakdown studies, canvass business owners and legitimate area users, traffic flow patterns, building construction schematics, and area housing and employment statistics. All in all, the surveyor spends hours examining and reexamining this treasure-trove of data before taking pen in hand to begin piecing together his or her report.

THE SINGLE CLIENT SECURITY ASSESSMENT

By and large, the philosophy behind drafting a single-client assessment is for the surveyor to maintain a private interest viewpoint. For the most part, the focus is very straightforward, and solutions offered are almost always of the ‘target hardening’ variety. In single-client security surveys, the facility under scrutiny (business, hospital, store) is always analyzed as an independent entity and the wisdom applied is to design a strategy to make that structure more safe and secure.

To do this, the surveyor analyzes existing security in relation to profit for business and/or lifestyle for residents.

In these surveys, the surveyor considers a multitude of crime risks including but not limited to theft, fraud, forgery, arson, burglary, employee safety, executive protection, etc. Once a strategy is devised, it is time for promulgating remedies.

THE MULTI-CLIENT SECURITY ASSESSMENT

A multi-client security survey involves piecing together a security package for a number of independent stand-alone facilities such as a residential complex, a strip of commercial retailers, a shopping mall, and retail outlets. Herein, the single-client’s security concerns are still important, but the object of the survey is to collectively improve the overall security and safety of the entire cluster of clients. In these wider studies, the surveyor is interested in reducing both property and personal crime for everyone who occupies or uses the complex. The philosophy in these broader studies shifts dramatically from a private to a public interest perspective. One of the biggest differences between performing a single client vs. a multi-client survey is that the focus of the assessment is to identify crime risk exposures that affect both the individual client and the commercial strip they are all located in. *As such, the practitioner’s mindset requires that he or she understand that the individual entity and commercial strip are one interrelated unit, and that a quick fix target hardening upgrade will not make the cut.*

THE ACCESS CONTROL SURVEY

An access control survey is a very narrow form of assessment and is usually triggered after a security breach has occurred at one or more ingress

and/or egress portals. Once the extent of the breach is determined, it is usually rectified.

THE COMMUNITY AND/OR NEIGHBORHOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT

A community-wide neighborhood assessment in many ways is similar to the multi-client survey, save that the main focus of these assessments is to try to engineer strategies that zero in on high-risk neighborhood crime hot spots. Oftentimes these locations include crowded bus stops in remote locations, commercial corridors with long histories of assaults, burglaries, robberies and related crimes, desolate areas often used as “lowers’ lanes”, and other commercial and industrial high crime risk locations like methadone clinics and marijuana sales stores, etc. On average, single client surveys may take about a week to complete, multi-client surveys about two months to complete and community-wide assessments between three to six months or longer to complete.

THE MECHANICS OF PERFORMING THE SECURITY SURVEY:

The single-client security survey: *Step one:* the surveyor performs an onsite examination of the entity under review (business, residence, etc.). *Step two:* the surveyor diagnoses the security issue. *Step three:* the surveyor writes the prescription to correct the problem. *Step four:* enhancement strategies often include “target hardening devices” such as: alarm systems, locking systems, steel store curtains, etc.

The multi-client security survey: *Step one:* the surveyor meets with the project manager or official representative to discuss project parameters, obtain letters of authorization, acquire construction blueprints and site maps. *Step two:* the surveyor performs both day and night site inspections, interviews all project participants, determines project essentials. *Step three:* the surveyor diagnoses the existing security problem, approves security installations, obtains governmental approval letters, performs final step-test inspections. *Step four:* enhancement strategies often include lighting upgrades, establishing centralized monitoring networks, erecting anti-crime signage, hiring external security guard services, establishing an on-going liaison between merchants, mobile security patrols and local police.

The community-wide or neighborhood survey: *Step one:* the surveyor obtains community profile data (land use, age and employment), traffic flow schematics, mass transit schedules, current and future construction investitures, local police and area FBI crime reports. *Step two:* the surveyor performs both day and night inspections, canvasses property owners and legitimate users, interviews public service providers. *Step three:* the surveyor diagnoses the crime problem. *Step four:* enhancement strategies often include: installing improved community-wide lighting, improving security on mass transit systems, relocating bus stops to well lighted areas, synchronizing traffic signals to better control vehicle concentration at vulnerable high crime incident intersections, creating safety cul-de-sac termination points, installing municipal surveillance systems, conjoining municipal CCTV systems and local CCTV merchant systems, changing traffic flow patterns to increase vehicle concentration and visibility, encouraging local mounted police patrols in high crime business sectors, devising community-based crime prevention networks linking residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, private and public law enforcement into a cohesive neighborhood-wide system of crime control, establishing strategically designed lighted corridors (pedestrian walkways) linking business centers to mass transit points.

DIAGNOSING AND PRIORITIZING CRIME RISKS

Once the examination phase of the survey is concluded and all pertinent data is catalogued, it’s time for rigorous analysis. The process begins by

logging each risk and subdividing the various risks into “low”, “medium” and “high” risk categories - forming a risk grid. It is through this analytic process that the amplitude of various crime-risk exposures is evaluated. Oftentimes, surveyors list risk and enhancement strategy side-by-side in priority order. This helps to ensure that critical data is always front and center and never lost in the details!

A FINAL WORD

In the court of protection wisdom, private investigators would be wise to reach out to their corporate clients to ascertain if they perform annual security assessments on a regular basis. Pulling that thread even further, they should advise their clientele that security is fragile, and it needs to be treated with extreme care! **PI**

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