ANPR with intelligence

Genetec has announced the next generation of its IP-based automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras, the AutoVu Sharp and AutoVu SharpX

The new cameras enable the concurrent detection of number plates from a greater variety of models, capturing number plates from different countries (or states) on the same system. In addition users can also benefit from access to new vehicle behaviour and characteristic analytics, and the ability to deploy up to four high-resolution ANPR cameras on a vehicle, for near-360° capture.

The Sharp and SharpX can analyse a scanned vehicle to identify its make and the number plate state or country of origin. The direction and speed of vehicles can also be detected with a single ANPR camera, allowing controllers to collect and review trends over time and automatically detect suspicious behaviours.

"We believe that the value of ANPR extends beyond number plate analysis, and our latest generation of AutoVu Sharp and SharpX cameras is a gateway that offers those extended features for identifying vehicle trends and patterns," said Stephan Kaiser, AutoVu General Manager, Genetec. "Whether in a city setting or on a private property, the analytics in the Sharp and SharpX introduce important new methodologies for detecting complex automotive behaviours, along with new data mining possibilities," added Kaiser.

The SharpX is also now available in a new portable mobile kit, containing up to four cameras, a pre-wired processing unit and all necessary cables, allowing users to move their ANPR equipment rapidly from one vehicle to another as required.

PSI CAUGHT UP WITH STEPHEN KAISER TO FIND OUT MORE:

How do the cameras/analytics vary from previous versions?

The latest generation SharpX ANPR unit provides greater processing power, giving us the flexibility to support up to four VGA ANPR cameras or two XGA ANPR cameras on a processing unit with a single processing module, decreasing the overall TCO. This additional power also provides us with long-term flexibility so that we can continue to add new analytics, improve country specific contexts and make other enhancements.

Are the new analytics functions created as a result of user feedback/research?

Customer feedback is an integral part of our approach to product development. To extend ANPR's value we have looked at customer needs related to traffic management, vehicle access control and other scenarios involving vehicles. Single-speed camera estimation, for example, was developed to address multiple customer needs, from traffic management to security awareness. Including this analytic within our ANPR cameras provides additional value to customers, who might have only been looking at ANPR for list-matching purposes. Customers previously had to deploy dedicated equipment to gather data on vehicles' speed and direction. With our new ANPR cameras, they can gather this information alongside license plate reads, without deploying additional equipment.

Do you see any differences in the use of analytics across the globe?

Some countries, such as the United Kingdom, have been leveraging ANPR for law enforcement purposes for a long time, and are now pushing for advanced and creative uses of ANPR – from dynamic congestion charging to traffic management. That said, we also see a lot of interest for advanced analytics and data mining features from emerging markets, who are trying to balance accelerated motor pool growth with sustainable city planning.

What are the non-law enforcement uses of the cameras? (ie apart from police applications)

ANPR is increasingly part of a city's fabric. Beyond assisting law enforcement to detect wanted or stolen vehicles, ANPR has the potential to enhance traffic management such as optimising vehicle flow. ANPR is also helping private entities to automate vehicle access control. One of the main market segments we address is the Parking Enforcement space. We are seeing more and more demand for ANPR in parking to increase efficiencies and provide a better customer experience, combining ANPR with analytics for Parking is proving valuable to a lot of our customers.

Other markets where ANPR can be of value include gaming establishments, hotels and entertainment venues where ANPR can notify staff of the arrival of guests and VIPs, while directing guests to reserved parking. Retail establishments also use ANPR to track returning patrons, identify where customers originate from, and record delivery vehicles' arrival and departure times. And, with our unified platform combining video surveillance and ANPR within a single interface, all these applications can be enhanced with live and recorded video footage.

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