

Meet the installer

Security life with Tim Lamb of FSE Security Systems

Do you use a distributor or buy direct?

A bit of both really. Standard equipment is usually purchased through a local distributor but more specialist items direct from the manufacturer, such as Videcon or Honeywell as we are a Notifier distributor.

Is third party accreditation beneficial to your company?

Yes, on both sides of the company; fire and security. It allows us to enter into tenders that require specific accreditations and also helps potential and existing customers recognise our high levels of service and quality management. Unfortunately we still see companies out there with no accreditation winning fire and security projects and this is something that we have to inform our customers of and the value of using an accredited company.

What would be a typical project for you?

Our core projects are commercial sites and new builds. Starting with the main contractor we like to discuss the design and then install the systems from start to finish. The end user of course is our icing on the cake as this offers the ongoing maintenance and monitoring. There is no typical project as we are happy to offer our services right across the board.

Are there any common requests from customers that give you problems?

I wouldn't like to say 'problems' as most things can be resolved by open and honest communication but the most common challenge is customers wanting it yesterday and then



Name: Tim Lamb

Job title: Director

Time in security/fire: 33 years

Company: FSE Security Systems/FSE Fire Safety Systems

Location: Nottingham

Areas of expertise: Design, installation, maintenance and monitoring of electronic fire and security systems.

Accreditations: NSI Gold, BAFE, Safe Contractor, BAFSA, LPCB

wanting a discount! There seems to be a professional "delay of payment schedule" so that can be frustrating as any little detail is being used to put off a payment due.

Is there is a security skills shortage?

There is a definite shortage of skilled engineers in this industry and others. We are now starting to see the impact of a lack of apprentice training programmes and the youth of today seem to expect it all on a plate. Existing engineers are therefore demanding higher rates and agencies are prowling around and trying to pick these off. Recruitment is a concern and it does prove problematic. A lot of negotiation is required! We do try and take on apprentice engineers and at present this seems to be the only viable way forward to get a decent engineer with good skill sets for the future. We look outside the box slightly as well; engineers from similar electronics industries for example with electrical knowledge can easily be trained. ➔

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"I'd like an all in one, detector, camera, taser with remote viewing and control. Don't come near or you'll be tasered!"

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What will be the impact of smart/home automation on the security sector?

Home automation is starting to grow quite readily now and has to be seen as an advantage to the security sector. With experts saying that this trend will continue to shape the home security industry in the upcoming years, more and more home security companies will integrate home automation devices into their security systems.

With more child safety, audio and video features, home automation technology is becoming very popular. Home automation will become bigger and better in 2019, and this will help make security systems safer and more efficient.

What is the industry's biggest myth?

I would probably say that most people outside the industry watch Hollywood movies and see security systems regularly being beaten and circumvented. This is a definite myth and if it was that easy then security systems would prove to be completely inadequate at their job in the real world. The security industry spends all its time and efforts producing systems that can't be fooled so easily.

However, we shouldn't rubbish TV and films too much, after all these mediums have helped to bring public awareness to the types of systems available and how they can offer a formidable barrier to intruders and criminals.

Are you concerned about Brexit?

Not really. I'm sure it will affect us all to start with but I really do think it's like the Y2K scenario, everyone was panicking and thinking all the

computers/alarms etc would crash and nothing actually happened! I'm sure we'll all wake up on Saturday morning (30/3) and everything will be just the same. They need us more I think.

What would make your job easier?

I'd love to say more hours in the day but that's not what we really want! Training others is very important and giving them the autonomy to be responsive by trusting them. I look back at the days when we operated by a pager and we had to pull over and put 10p in a phone box to make a call. In a very demanding and responsive industry, everything is now so much quicker and the demand for speed sometimes causes mistakes. If I could, I would slow everything down a bit and outlaw emails!

What is your ultimate/fantasy electronic security product?

Electronic security has come so far these days and with Apps now available to log in and view whenever you want it's hard to think of something. I'd like an all in one, detector, camera, taser with remote viewing and control. Don't come near or you'll be tasered!

Will England ever win the football World Cup again?

I was born in 1966 and apparently saw the Final (I don't remember of course) but I'm adamant I will see it again, so yes, England will win it again.

If you won £25,000 what would you do with it?

Have a great holiday, buy a new hot tub, carry out some house alterations and save a bit.

