



HOOSIER SECURITY

Making It Personal

By Symone C. Skrzycki

Like a camera soaking up everything in its line of vision, one's eyes scan the room upon entering Hoosier Security.

Donning his trademark flat cap, Armando Perez chats with a colleague.

Across the room, a design studio serves as a build area to test camera placement, bandwidth calculations, storage, infrastructure and cybersecurity.

A metallic sculpture displaying "dead" security equipment adorns the wall.

Perez founded Hoosier Security in 2009. Soft spoken and sociable, he's passionate about security. It hits close to home.

"(Hoosier Security) started out, for me, as a response to some events in my personal life and me having to satisfy that need to protect people, protect things, protect property. Mostly, it was individuals at that time ..."

About four years ago, the organization began specializing in commercial security.

"I had to come to terms with a couple things," Perez recalls. "One was that people deserve to be safe at work as much as they deserve to be safe at home. But also that I had a commitment to my employees that was equally important to my commitment to myself to solve problems.

"Once I came to terms with that, the team became much more

cohesive. The mission became much more cohesive and we've been growing at a rate that is not common in this industry."

Special home

The historic Circle City Industrial Complex (CCIC), which houses Hoosier Security, is a repository of innovation.

Perez dubs the building (a former manufacturing facility currently under redevelopment) as "at the intersection of artistry and craftsmanship."

Tenants include manufacturers, businesses and more. Examples are a brewery, ice cream parlor, distillery and fabrication company. In addition, the CCIC boasts more than 40 in-house artists.

"This is our third office (it's always operated out of the CCIC)," Perez marvels. "This building is something really neat. If you haven't had the chance to walk through here, I would. There's all kinds of really good stories in here."

Hoosier Security initially occupied a 600-square-foot office. Less than a year later, the company tripled its space.

Growth continued when the team of 12 moved into its new headquarters in 2016.

"We had this space built," Perez comments. "And I decided that if I was going to have a space built, I was going to have it built to the way we operate."

The layout and technology allows clients to see different real-world scenarios as they consider what security equipment best fits their needs.

"Here's the real world," Perez shares. "Here's what you're going to see when you're looking past an open door in from a dark warehouse. Here's what you're going to see when you've got motion in the middle of the night. Here's why you want a PTZ (pan-tilt-zoom) (camera). Here's why you don't want a PTZ. And take that

power that the salesperson normally has in making those decisions for the client and put it in the client's hands."

Aesthetics and function are only two of CCIC's draws. Another is its proximity to where Perez (who earned a music degree from Indiana University) spent countless hours honing his saxophone skills and bonding with Indianapolis jazz musician and composer Frank Glover.

"I studied with him many years ago. He lived in the neighborhood across the street. Back then, I was trying to make a living playing music. I couldn't pay for the saxophone lessons, so I'd trade manual labor," he recalls, before breaking into laughter. "There's a lot of memories of going to The Chatterbox and listening to him play, and then going to his house, taking a lesson and digging up part of his crawl space."

Today, Glover travels to Hoosier Security every few weeks to mentor Perez, who took a break from the instrument and no longer plays professionally.

"It had been probably four or five years

since I'd picked up the horn and really played. It's been challenging, but I'm doing it again."

Cybersecurity concerns

The good news: Installing security devices can safeguard businesses from outside attacks. The bad news? If installed improperly, they can make them even more vulnerable to hackers.

"The ability to work with a client's IT department, the ability to properly secure devices – and still allow (the information) to be viewable by the people who are supposed to view it – is a major threat," Perez emphasizes. "And it's probably going to be the biggest thing for the next year or two as far as differentiating the security companies that are going to make it and the ones that are not."

Logistics and manufacturing operations comprise Hoosier Security's biggest customer base; however, it serves a variety of industries.

"We've been in everything from a bakery to a distillery and farms – you name it," reflects director of business development

Alex Uelk with a smile. "I've always found myself surprised at the wide variety of different customers we get to deal with and the ways they use our products to help them in whatever it is they're doing."

Things are as they appear

Want to know the latest security trends? Ask Perez.

"What we're most excited about is (video) analytics and machine learning," he pronounces. "We're a certified Avigilon partner and Avigilon is kind of leading the way in this."

Self-learning analytics enable software to detect specific people or vehicles automatically and generate alerts in real-time.

"For several years, we've been able to teach a system to identify a human being. Now we're getting to the point where in professional grade, but consumer-available systems, we can identify an individual," Perez differentiates.

"Whether that person is wearing a jacket in this screen shot ... and they take their jacket off, we can still identify that as the same person because of the way the appearance search catalogs facial features. Same thing with vehicles. We can identify a specific vehicle – not just a red vehicle or a blue vehicle, but *that* vehicle."

The next step, he asserts, is taking the data and applying it to abnormal motion, which involves technology that recognizes patterns of activity over time. It will be released this summer.

"It's (security technology) really moving from saving video so you can see what happened into an active solution to stop future events," Perez comments, before adding, "Really exciting stuff if you're a geek."

'Where the magic happens'

A soft buzz fills the build room, which is a collaborative work space for Hoosier Security's 3D designers and clients.

"We get equipment in through our shipping and receiving. It all gets processed, brought in here, assembled, tested (and) programmed. This is essentially where the magic happens – the stuff that turns it from a part into a solution."

In the shipping and receiving area, two covered sports cars await their next ride.

"Everybody's got their thing – I have a thing for '80s Toyotas!" Perez quips. "It could be worse, right?"

At press time, Hoosier Security was preparing to expand once again.

"In 30 days, we take another 2,500 square feet," Perez declares (adding to its current 4,800 square feet). "That will be our fourth add. We've been very lucky and we've worked very hard."



Technician Justin Dingo works on a mobile surveillance unit, which is used in settings such as construction sites and public events.



The build room features five camera systems (up to 256 ultra-high resolution cameras apiece) that run simultaneously. Pictured are president and general manager Armando Perez (right) and director of business development Alex Uelk.