

Cutting edge tech for effective facilities management

CAT YONG on Friday, May 29, 2020 at 12:16:45 am



As humans distance themselves according to World Health Organisation guidelines, IoT sensors and automation have become more relevant, and maybe even essential. But even before the coronavirus outbreak, these technologies have already been contributing to effective and efficient building and facilities management.

Gabkotech Innovations (Gabkotech) was founded in 2012 with the objective of providing integrated smart solutions for the buildings and facilities management sector.

Founder and CEO, Aaron Lee had witnessed for himself how labourious and manual-intensive daily workflows can be for facilities and buildings management.

He said, "I started Gabkotech to help transform the industry by harnessing the boundless capabilities of mobile technology, automation, artificial intelligence (AI) and cloud."

Using these cutting-edge technologies, Gabkotech's customers now can automate their processes and workflows for improved productivity and efficiencies, which leads to lower total cost of ownership.

Its key solution is iRep Security, a mobile app that enables security personnel to record suspicious activity as they go on their security rounds of an area like a residential neighbourhood, or a commercial property, and so on.

"Management will know when security personnel have arrived and when they have left the site. More importantly, personnel can capture images of anything that seems out of place, and post it to our cloud system, immediately."

In this way, the security agency's HQ would be alerted, after which they can file a report to the facility's management, or send in additional resources to investigate the matter.

Unique propositions

According to Aaron, "We are supporting security agencies and facilities management companies in Singapore, with about 50-percent share of the total market."

Another solution they have is iREP Workforce, which is suited for providers of services revolving around the management of facilities and buildings, for example cleaning companies, landscaping companies and so on. It complements another m2Sense, another Gabkotech solution for machine-to-machine sensing.

For example, a mechanical engineering firm uses iREP Workforce to digitally inventory all the firefighting equipment on a university campus. This enabled the company to more accurately inventory the firefighting equipment as well as record maintenance activity of each and every piece of equipment.

Overall, this has helped to ensure the compliance of these firefighting equipment with fire safety regulations in Singapore.

Aaron shared, "They found it so useful that they have extended our contract and requested for proposal for another 92 schools."

As an established provider of solutions for buildings and facilities management, Gabkotech also found itself naturally evolving its solutions to address the current pandemic situation of lockdowns and social distancing.

For example, its most recent solution is PeopleSense, a smart platform that tracks human traffic, records temperature, as well as provides real-time counting of human traffic.

"It doesn't matter how many entrances the shopping mall or building has. You can place a PeopleSense booth at each entrance or exit, and they will all communicate with each other," Aaron pointed out.

Better together

PeopleSense together with Visitor Management System (VMS), a function in iREP Security, are actually suited for contact tracing efforts.

Aaron explained, "When an individual enters a building or area, if they wear a device or through their smartphones allow themselves to be registered with our system, we can trace them via GPS."

He also talked about [SafeEntry, a national digital check-in system](#) that Singapore mandates for visitors or staff entering business or commercial venues, and even wet markets.

Working with GovTech, a Singapore government agency, Gabkotech has integrated SafeEntry with PeopleSense and VMS, so that visitors to business venues or buildings, need use only one platform to satisfy requirements by the government and also building management/organisations, around contact tracing.

This negates the need for a building security personnel for example, to manually take and record other critical visitor information like temperature, and their prior locations, and so on.

"This is how we are working with authorities to enhance contact tracing solutions to the next level," Aaron said.

Roadmap

Aaron has identified Malaysia, Thailand and Australia as markets that Gabkotech wants to expand into. It's not only because of their geographical proximity.

Aaron has identified Malaysia as having a large untapped market for their solutions, while Australia has regulations which are as, if not more, strict and stringent as regulations in Singapore.

"We have developed our entire licensing framework, so we are looking for partners to license, and work together with.

"Once the lockdown is lifted, we would like to get in touch with potential partners, systems integrators, security agencies, facilities management companies and so on, so we can introduce our technologies to them, and see how we can help them do more with less," Aaron concluded.