

On the Job

Sandra Jones, founder of Sandra Jones & Co.

From her office in quaint, rural Chardon, Sandra Jones, founder and principal of Sandra Jones & Co., keeps her finger on the pulse of government, corporate and industrial security nationwide.

The 12-year-old firm, one of the top high-tech electronic security consulting companies in the country, provides research, information technology services, product marketing and strategic planning to leading security companies such as AT&T, Diebold Inc. and Brinks Inc.

On the heels of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the meaning and significance of security and facilities management have broadened. As a result, the security industry will change at an unprecedented pace as businesses scramble to reassure their publics, Ms. Jones predicts.

"The focus has now shifted from theft prevention and asset protection to preventing terrorism," she said. "The challenge for the security director has become how to make stakeholders feel safe again."

This new era of heightened security in America already is raising issues about personal rights and freedoms, and achieving a balance between privacy and technology is developing into a major issue.

"We need to enable the government to use more technologies in public spaces," Ms. Jones said. "The industry is working hard with the ACLU on how we can do that without infringing on privacy."

She already has seen heightened interest among security buyers and producers in technology and its more extensive application.

"State-of-the-art cameras, for example, are leading-edge technology," Ms. Jones said. "At very low cost, one person can be watching hundreds of people. The newest models have computer chips that allow images to be saved and transmitted across the Internet to remote locations." Cameras with these capabilities are available for less than \$500.

Since the terrorist attacks, Ms. Jones also has observed renewed interest in biometrics, the use of physical characteristics to recognize individuals. Biometrics technology has been available for several years, but concerns about privacy and personal rights and freedoms have prevented it from being used widely except in the most private, top-security situations.

Ms. Jones said that will change in the near future as biometrics is put into widespread application at air-

ports and other public spaces.

"This is a technology that could easily be used at airports to identify terrorists by their faces," she said.

Security industry experts, researchers and investors heard the latest on these and other developments in the security industry last month in New York City at the sixth annual "Securing New Ground" conference sponsored by Sandra Jones & Co., Lehman Brothers, Mitchell, Silberberg & Knupp, L.L.P. and ProFinance Associates.

The conference was established in 1996 to "make the security industry less invisible to investors," Ms. Jones said. "Investors were missing some excellent technology and service company investments, and industry participants did not have a forum dedicated to talking about the industry and their company's role within the industry. The conference meets both needs."

Although investment opportunities continued to be an important part of this year's conference, "We have taken a refocus on addressing some of the issues relevant to terrorism," she said. "The economic impact of terrorism, how to prevent terrorism and the safety of stakeholders" were a part of the conference.

Ultimately, Ms. Jones expects that the overall economic impact of terrorism on the security industry will be positive.

"The decline in spending in some sectors due to company closings will be offset by at least a 20% increase in the business," she said. Some sections of the security business, such as biometrics, might experience even greater gains, she added.

Ms. Jones' consulting company has its roots in a security equipment distribution company that Ms. Jones and



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her husband, Charles (Bud) Jones, launched in 1975.

"We were building our home here in Chardon and had stored some furniture in a barn on the property," she said. "The barn was broken into and our things were stolen."

When the couple went shopping for electronic security equipment, they discovered it was not to be found in Ohio. Recognizing their personal dilemma as a business opportunity, they established Security Products Co. in Cleveland's Collinwood neighborhood, one of the first security equipment distribution companies in Ohio.

Ms. Jones worked with her husband at the company until 1990, when she spun off the consulting company.

"At the time, (security) was a fragmented business, nothing like the sophisticated high-tech industry it is today," she said.

—Lynn R. Novelli