

## Full Service Home Security, Business Security and Automation



**Rajiv Patel – President  
Clear Protection Technologies**

**CEOCFO: Mr. Patel, what is the concept behind Clear Protection?**

**Mr. Patel:** We are a full service home security, business security and automation company. We do everything from the traditional doors, windows and motion detectors, all the way up to thermostat and lighting control. It is all done through low voltage technology that can be installed in a matter of two hours.

**CEOCFO: There are many companies in this space. How are you able to provide a service that is sufficient and effective and worthy of trust?**

**Mr. Patel:** That is a good question. The best way to explain it is that we do not consider ourselves a technology company or an installation company, or even an alarm company. We focus on the service aspect. That is what separates us. Any dealer or alarm company can use the same equipment that we use, and offer the same products that we offer. The only that separates alarm companies in our space is the service they provide to the end user. Therefore, we really focus on our customer interaction, our customer satisfaction and our service to the customers, because that is really the only thing that we can differentiate ourselves with as far as being an alarm company, because there are thousands in the country. We mainly focus on the fact that we are a service company first.

**CEOCFO: Would you give us an example of how the commitment to service plays out day-to-day? What might be different working with Clear Protection?**

**Mr. Patel:** We offer the customer more tutorials and more materials so that they not only have a system, but they know the ins and outs, as well as how to use it. That creates more of what we call a “sticky” customer, which is a customer that is going to use their system more. If they are going to use their system more they are going to like it and not want to cancel or find another company. Therefore, we make sure that our customers are educated in the products that they get and that starts with the company that is giving them the service, so that is a focus of ours. Number two is that we try to interact with our customers online and also by sending them a monthly newsletter, so that they have more education and know what new products are available. When we gain a new customer, we send them a welcome card with a magnet in it, which we feel is a nice touch. Then we only sell and service in markets that we can get out to the customer in less than 48 hours. One of the main issues in the alarm industry is that companies try to branch out too fast, then they are relying on third part service companies to help if they are having an issue. We have all of our technicians trained in house and they are employees of the company. We service where we work, so in that way we can get to customers faster and offer a more reliable service to them, as opposed to relying on third party people to take care of our business.

**CEOCFO: Do people come to you because they know in advance about your reputation, or are they often surprised at the depth of your service?**

**Mr. Patel:** It is a combination of both. As far as Clear Protection, we are an authorized dealer of Monitronics, which is a top three monitoring provider in the country, monitoring over 1 million customers. As far as we are concerned, we do our best to create a presence. Locally, we are an active member of the Arizona Alarm Association, we have a good standing with the Better Business Bureau, and we do all of those things so that customers can go to our website and link to our accreditations and know that we are accredited and have good standings as a business. We make it easy for customers to research us, because the one thing over the years that we have honed in on is understanding that the customer, when doing their research will go online to find us. Therefore, we make it easy for customer to know who we are, and at the same time lean on the credibility of large companies like Monitronics that monitor our customers. All of our interactive customers are linked through a company called ALARM.COM, which has recently gone public. These are names in the industry that people know of if they have done any research, so we lean heavily them and then we offer a way for the customer the quickly link out our accreditations just from our home page.

**CEOCFO: *What is the status of the alarm industry? Are people today embracing alarm systems?***

**Mr. Patel:** It is ever changing. It goes the way of technology and what technology is doing. When I started, alarm systems were very basic. There were not many home automation pieces and now there is. It seems like every quarter there is a new product that we can offer, from controlling a customer's thermostat, to having a light bulb that I can turn on and off from my phone, and that is all linked into one central system. Therefore, the alarm industry is evolving in a positive way. There is more awareness home automation and home control through commercials and through radio ads. That is helping the industry, so that if one of our reps is approaching customer or goes to a home, the customer has probably heard about home automation either by television, or through a magazine or driving home from work on the radio. There is more awareness of the alarm industry than there was 10 years ago, which is very helpful, but part of that means that there are more players that are in the game. Therefore, you have to constantly focus on things that are going to differentiate us from the next guy, and what makes is different is that we put a strong focus on service. They know our name, so that if someone approaches them about switching over to their company, they will say no, because they know Barbara at Clear Protection, and they value their relationship with us.

**CEOCFO: *Do you find that word of mouth is important in your industry?***

**Mr. Patel:** Absolutely! So much of the alarm industry is keeping up with the Joneses and people do what other people are doing. Therefore, if we have a good word of going, it will generate a great deal of business for us. However, it all starts with providing good service.

**"We mainly focus on the fact that we are a service company first."- Rajiv Patel**

**CEOCFO: *Are your customers interested less in the home protection part and more in being able to see if their children are home from school, as well as some of the more flashier features?***

**Mr. Patel:** It has become that way, which is great, because now we have more what we call "hot buttons." Therefore, if someone is not so much interested in protecting their home, they may want to control their thermostat from their phone or to have that camera to see if their children are home from school. We can offer those services at a low price and then in addition secure their home. Whereas ten years ago the alarm system was the prominent piece, today it may be a secondary piece to what they really want. Therefore, it has been a blessing with home automation entering in and marrying with the home security industry.

**CEOCFO: *How do you help a customer figure out what features they need and are their certain areas where people tend to overlook the importance?***

**Mr. Patel:** We really train our sales representatives the difference between features and benefits. We have thousands of features that we can offer in one single home, but we focus on what is going to benefit that specific customer. How we get to that point is we ask what are their needs. For example, if someone has a home business, we will focus on what will benefit them. That is why we do not have packages. We do every system a la cart, based on their needs and how it is going to benefit their specific situation. If they have a live-in grandmother, we want to offer them our medical protection through our medical pendent, so that if there is an emergency they will have that. If they are younger we will not offer that to them. We do not prepackage deals for customers and force them to use products are not going to benefit them. We focus on the benefits not the features of the system and we get to the benefits from understanding their needs using clues, which creates a customized experience for our customers. Then they feel better because they know that their system was created specifically for them, and that is how we want to make the customer feel.

**CEOCFO: *Do people recognize that Clear Protection understands the fine line between being helpful and being a pushy?***

**Mr. Patel:** There is a fine line and so much of our sales engine is based off of emotions. We use emotions in our sale, because if a there is something emotional behind it for the customer, they will feel like they need it. We also understand that there is a difference between urgency and being eager. However, it comes down to what will benefit the customer and if they feel that they have a need and they see value in the system, and if we can paint that picture for them, they will want it. Therefore, we train our sales reps in building value in our system, being urgent, not eager, and making the customer feel that we are customizing things for them, as well as focusing on the benefits for them.

**CEOCFO: *Clear Protection was recognized on the Inc. 5000 list. How do you continue the trajectory?***

**Mr. Patel:** With us, our growth has always been inside out. We build off of our success by looking inward and the thing that has driven our success is our sales reps. We train, retain and empower them for a great living for themselves. We ask them to "find another you", so in that way we can crop up leaders from our sales representatives and have them bring

people in so that we can grow that way. Some companies grow through acquisitions, some by bringing a great deal of money and spending it through SEO and advertising. However, we have grown from our sales force and from supporting them recruiting and bringing others in. That is our main focus and our bread and butter.

**CEOCFO: *What might be different a year from now at Clear Protection?***

**Mr. Patel:** We are always looking at ways to get more involved with our customers, so we will probably have new initiative to get more involved with our customers and get in tune with what they want. We will always stay on the front of technology and look to have some new pieces that will be out that we can offer our customers to make their lives not only safer, but easier. We will also be a bigger company in terms of our sales representatives that are out in the field working and acquiring accounts. Lastly, we will be looking at ways to be more involved with the community, which I feel is something where when we set out the goals for the next year was one of our top priorities; finding causes in which we want to be involved. We want to be better not only money wise or size wise, but also community wise.

**Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine**

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