

# Smart Security In Multifamily Buildings

Property owners can benefit by including smart home security offerings as standard features in apartments.

By Mike Moran / *Ooma*

**T**he use of smart security is on the rise, and according to research by the Fredonia Group, consumer demand is expected to increase by approximately 10 percent per year through 2025. The market share for internet-connected security devices is already significant, and smart security technology is being used in 57 percent of smart homes, according to Nielsen.

As ISPs, developers and building managers explore new technology solutions, they should consider the ways integrating consumer home security can add value.

## TODAY'S HOME SECURITY TECHNOLOGY

The advanced technology of today's home security mitigates many challenges of legacy security systems, which often require old-fashioned landline connections, long-term contracts and permanent installation that includes drilling holes and running wires.

By contrast, new smart home security systems are easily customizable and can wirelessly pair with an unlimited number of sensors. The infrastructure of security has gotten easier because hard wiring is no longer needed. Instead, internet-enabled smart devices can communicate wirelessly through a user's Wi-Fi network.

Sensors can include any of the following:

- Door and window sensors
- Motion sensors

- Security cameras
- Water sensors
- Garage door sensors
- Sirens
- Smoke alarms.

Users have complete control of their security from their mobile devices, so there's no need for external monitoring services. A system will instantly send an automated notification to alert a user if a sensor detects activity. This helps residents protect their valuables and lets them stay in the know about activity in their homes, such as when a dog walker enters the front door or their children get home from school. Systems can also be customized with sensor integration. For example, an activated motion detector could be set up to trigger a siren.

After receiving alerts, users can control security devices remotely through their mobile devices. For example, a user could activate a siren if an intruder is seen on video footage and then deactivate the siren after the threat is neutralized.

It's easy to take 911 access for granted. However, today's smart technology means that a user could discover a home intruder or a fire while at the office or on an overseas vacation. In these situations, time is critical. A good smart home security app allows users to dial 911 within the app immediately after seeing the notification.

The emergency call should not go to a national 911 phone bank. Instead, calls to 911 should automatically connect the dispatcher



The Ooma Home family of sensors, with the Ooma Butterfly camera

to the user's home, even though the call may come from a remote location. This feature closes the loop on strong security from the moment of detection to the report of a threat.

### BENEFITS TO PROPERTY OWNERS AND MANAGERS

In multifamily properties, residents and property managers are aligned in their desire for security and safety.

The benefits of smart home security to end users are significant, and the majority of users, according to Nielsen, say the technology has increased their peace of mind while securing their possessions.

Because of the strong benefits to consumers, smart security systems can be a way for a business to add value during development projects or technology initiatives. Here are four key business benefits:

- 1 Adding tech-forward technologies such as smart home security positions projects to be ahead of the curve as consumer demand continues to increase.
- 2 Smart home security can provide a competitive edge, potentially attracting more consumer interest than other real estate options that don't offer it.
- 3 Adding home security could increase business revenues, either through bundling monthly security fees or through increased rental rates.
- 4 Because security deters burglars (research conducted at the University

of North Carolina shows that most burglars try to determine whether an alarm is present, and about half discontinue the attempt after finding one), taking steps to reduce break-ins can help protect the reputation of a commercial project, thereby protecting its market value.

These business incentives are not the only ways commercial projects benefit; there are operational benefits as well.

Smart home security can reduce the operational tasks of property managers or administrators responsible for building security. When end users monitor their home security, they contribute to a building's overall safety.

Furthermore, smart home security can reduce potential damages. For example, when an under-sink water sensor signals a water leak, a resident can take action on it immediately even if he or she is not at home. This reduces the potential damage that could occur if the leak weren't discovered for hours or days.

### PARTNERING FOR SMART SECURITY

ISPs, developers and building managers don't need to reinvent the wheel when implementing smart security. Instead, they can partner with trusted security providers.

For example, when one ISP was running a fiber line to a new multifamily housing project, it wanted to add home security to the selection of consumer services offered to residents.

That's when it turned to Ooma Home, a trusted provider of customizable smart home security solutions. Through the partnership, residents were able to access home security packages as a part of their internet service.

In another scenario, a commercial property owner partnered with Ooma Home to provide home security to all the building's tenants. The security service was bundled as part of the building association's service fees, streamlining the solution for tenants while adding value to the property.

### CUSTOMIZABLE SECURITY

Adding home security systems at the scale of commercial projects can have an endless number of variables or special circumstances. That's why security solutions should be completely customizable to fit the needs of a project.

At Ooma, reps coordinate with all parties involved to customize solutions that match security goals, desired customer offerings and price points. In particular, security solutions can allow end-user security to be coordinated directly with Ooma or consolidated into other property management fees or ISP service charges. ❖

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