Section 4: Week 7: IoT and Gun Violence

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# IoT and Gun Violence

## Background

A recent mass shooting in El Paso, Texas, resulted in twenty fatalities and another twenty-six injuries (CBS, 2019). Politicians and lobbyists are using the event for justification for additional background checks and the banning of specific weapon styles.

The National Institute of Justice states that many juveniles and young adults can access illegal weapons (NIJ, 2013). They continue to describe that many of these youths purchase the guns, not to commit a crime but as a deterrent against becoming a victim.

Families make the same argument that they want protection against intruders. The validity of this claim has debated extensively on both sides, and neither party will budge. Those on the left argue the gun owner is more likely to shoot a loved one. Those on the right believe that training and common sense adequately address the issues.

Many gun enthusiasts own multiple weapons in multiple styles for the same reasons many shoe enthusiasts have many shoes. They have different characteristics and function more ideally for various scenarios. Those scenarios do not need to be malicious and in all likelihood, are not.

## Problem Statement

Instead of rehashing the same debates, we need to move the conversation forward in a new direction. One approach is to incorporate software technologies into the ecosystem and build smart weapons. The Internet of Things (IoT) can provide or extend human senses – sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing – to make more informed decisions that guide us to more beneficial outcomes.

With a tighter integration of software defined policies, there could be more assurances that smart guns are only used in an intended purpose. For instance, when a youth might be authorized to work on their marksmenship. That does not mean the parents want the neighbor’s windows damaged. Nor does it mean that we want to mistakenly shoot a family member.