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Category: Web_Development File: All-seeing_Eye__The_History_Of_Video_Surveillance_utf8.txt
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Title:
All-seeing Eye: The History Of Video Surveillance

Word Count:
569

Summary:
There are eyes everywhere, and they do not belong to humans. In today's fast-paced modern world, video surveillance has become as essential to society as security guards and gateways. Mention video surveillance and the average Joe will instantly associate the term with video cameras mounted in banks and department stores or videotapes of an erring spouse marked as Exhibit A in a messy divorce proceeding.

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Keywords:
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Article Body:
There are eyes everywhere, and they do not belong to humans. In today's fast-paced modern world, video surveillance has become as essential to society as security guards and gateways. Mention video surveillance and the average Joe will instantly associate the term with video cameras mounted in banks and department stores or videotapes of an erring spouse marked as Exhibit A in a messy divorce proceeding.

The history of video surveillance is as complex as the system behind it. In fact, it goes back much farther in time than most of us realize. Press reports indicate that as early as 1965, United States police have been using video surveillance in public places. By 1969, police cameras had been mounted in strategic areas of the New York City Municipal Building. This set a strong precedent, and it was not long before the practice spread to other cities and police officers kept close watch on key areas, with the use of CCTV, or closed circuit television, systems.

Analog Beginnings
Video cassette tapes are largely responsible for popularizing video surveillance. The analog technology used in video cassette recording gave decision-makers a ground-breaking insight: it is possible to preserve evidence on tape.

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In 1975, England installed video surveillance systems in four of its major underground train stations. At the same time, they also started monitoring traffic flow on major highways. The United States followed suit during the 1980s, and though it had not been as quick as England in utilizing video surveillance, it made up for lost time by widely instituting video surveillance systems in public areas.

Digital Multiplexing and Subsequent Developments
One drawback to analog technology was that users had to change the tapes daily. This was remedied in the 1990s, with the introduction of digital multiplexing. Digital multiplexer units had features like time-lapse and motion-only recording, which saved a great deal of tape space. Additionally, it enabled simultaneous recordings on several cameras.

The next advancement, digitalization, featured compression capability and low cost, thereby allowing users to record a month's worth of surveillance videos on hard drive. Additionally, digitally recorded images are clearer and allowed manipulation of images to improve clarity.

9/11 and the Internet
The events of September 11, 2001 changed the public's perception of video surveillance. Software developers created programs that enhance video surveillance. Facial recognition programs is one of these programs. Using key facial feature points, recorded faces are compared to photographs of terrorists and criminals.

In May 2002, facial recognition software was installed on the computer video surveillance cameras at Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty. That same year, SmartGate was installed at the Sydney International Airport in Australia. SmartGate is an automated border crossing system for airline crew members. The system scans crew members' faces, compares these to passport photos, and confirms identity in less than ten seconds.

In December 2003, the Royal Palm Middle School in Phoenix, Arizona installed face recognition video surveillance. This is a pilot program for registering sex offenders and tracking missing children.

To all these developments, the Internet is the cherry on top. It revolutionized video surveillance by removing all impediments for viewing and monitoring anywhere in the world.

Clearly, humankind has created better and more refined means for video

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surveillance. Smaller, sleeker, and more powerful video surveillance systems come out in the market nearly every month. Satellites bounce signals around the world. There are, indeed, eyes everywhere, and several of them are in the sky.

Someone is always watching.