How Lemon Tree boosts security via face recognition

BY SOURVI BASCHI

Located in the upcoming Aerocity Hospitality in New Delhi, the 92-room Lemon Tree Premier—owned by Lemon Tree Hotels Limited—is a top-end surveillance and security system since it was difficult to track all that was happening on the property throughout the day.

An added challenge was the need to identify a solution that would be easy to set up, be low maintenance and present guidelines provided by Indian security agencies. Besides, the upscale hotel did not want its guests or visitors by appearing to be intrusive—VIP guests, especially, are very sensitive about their privacy.

Lemon Tree Premier opted for a face recognition solution called NeoFace from the India unit of NEC Corp, to help it deliver a more secure and elevated guest experience.

Face recognition software typically identifies a face and extracts it from the rest of the background scene. It is based on the ability of the software to recognize a face and then measure various features such as distinguishable marks, distance between the eyes, width of the nose, depth of the eye sockets, shape of the cheekbones—all features that result in making a faceprint, representing the face in the database.

The hotel needed a solution that helped identify faces throughout the property with high accuracy and auto-generated alerts. "Safety and security of guests has always been paramount to us. It was thus essential that we adopted a solution that would merge innovative and path-breaking technology with accuracy and consistency," said Suman Jadda, chief operating officer (North) at Lemon Tree Hotels.

The system, implemented with NEC Corp, to complement the latest's face recognition software that is designed to capture fast and accurate facial images from five closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras over a standard Internet Protocol network and match it with the hotel's database in real-time. The biggest advantage of the solution lies in the fact that the hotel staff does not have to disturb the guests to verify their identity as it captures facial images from a distance.

The solution also required that Lemon Tree Premier invest in upgrading its existing IT infrastructure such that the IT and the security teams could work in tandem. This was carried out over a period of roughly three months to ensure that the solution was fully operational.

Vivek Khurana, managing director of NEC India, said, "The technology has been added as an advanced layer to the existing security at the hotel, which will ensure safety of the customers and also help the authorities have a better control over the sensitive security areas."

Describing the situation, a project head at NEC India explained, "We were asked for a security system that would help the hotel staff identify a visitor even before he entered the hotel. This required us to engage deeply with the hotel's security team to not just understand their exact requirements but also conduct numerous proof of concept demonstrations to educate them on our face recognition solution."

NEC's face recognition technology, in conjunction with Fastlane’s smart access control system, has been incorporated in all the rooms at the hotel. The system captures and matches a guest's facial features in real-time with information stored in the database, identifying any unauthorized entry.

The technology is expected to provide a significant boost to the hotel's overall security and guest experience. "We are confident that with face recognition solution deployed at the property, we will be able to provide a much-improved security setup and hence better customer service at Lemon Tree Premier. The technology is perfect for providing unmatched and seamless 360° security," said Jadda.

In addition, the system is expected to reduce the number of false alarms, thereby improving the overall guest experience. "It's an excellent solution for any hotel looking to enhance its security and guest experience," added Jadda.

The hotel, in addition to improving its reputation for being a "safe and secure" destination, also aims to provide a personalized experience and believe it will provide the additional differentiation in our customer service."