

DTT Surveillance Camera System Maintenance

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How can you be sure that your DTT Surveillance camera system is always functioning to the best of its ability? Read on to learn more about effectively maintaining your system.

The Scenario

Most surveillance cameras are required to work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. After an extended period of time, cameras can start to look blurry or out of focus and most of the time, the camera is in fact functioning properly but has accumulated dirt or dust over the dome covers. This residue can lower the quality of the recorded images, making it look like the surveillance system is not working as it should. Also, if a camera is mounted outdoors with protective housing, insects and small animals tend to build nests or webs around it, which will degrade the camera's picture quality.

Similarly, infrared cameras, especially when installed outdoors, tend to accumulate spider webs, which cause havoc at night when the illuminators turn on since the webs are clearly visible and consequently obstruct the camera view.

The above scenarios can significantly degrade a camera's picture quality and the surveillance system overall. If you currently have a DTT surveillance system at your restaurant or are considering investing in one, keep in mind that maintenance is essential; and, the basic requirement for successfully preserving a surveillance system is cleanliness.

Dome Camera Maintenance

Remove the camera dome/shell from the camera. Typically, this requires a simple twist of the dome cover counter clock wise to release from the camera mount.

- Always try to use a micro-fiber cloth to remove any dust build up.
 - A micro-fiber cloth is a popular item also used to clean laptop screens, LCD TVs, etc.
- If excessive dirt or grease builds up on the camera dome cover, it is recommended that the dome cover be washed in soapy warm water and dried with a damp cloth.
- **DO NOT** under any circumstances use window cleaner with paper towel or any other cleaning detergent to clean the dome as you could damage and scratch it.

Outdoor Camera Maintenance

The Outdoor cameras are usually installed within a protective housing and do not need to be refocused after installation, unless tampered with, in which case a professional should be called to refocus the cameras.

- Remove any items obstructing the view from the housing glass plate.
- Use a can of compressed air and blow the dust away from the glass cover. If a can of compressed air is not available use a damp cloth and brush lightly over the glass cover to remove the dirt.
- Use the micro-fiber cloth to remove any dirt left over, and then dry the housing glass plate.
- Follow the same procedure for Infra Red Cameras not installed in a protective housing.

DVR Maintenance and Settings

The DVR is one the most important pieces of equipment in a video surveillance system, as it is the brains of the system - it records and manages your video footage. The DVR is often working 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so the importance of maintaining your DVR cannot be underestimated. DTT Surveillance recommends the following to help keep your DVR running for as long as possible.

- Keep the DVR in a cool dust free secure cabinet or room.
- Check the fan on the back of the server. Wipe away any dust that may accumulate on the cover of the fan.
- The DVR should not have any items blocking it from the front, top, sides and/or back.
 - Remember to keep the DVR well ventilated as it needs to breath in order for it not to overheat.
- An Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) must be connected to the DVR.
- Visually check that there is movement on each camera and that the clock on the screen is advancing.
- Perform playback from at least 1 period of the previous week.
- Perform a file back-up and create a CD.

With just a little time spent each month caring for your DTT surveillance system, not only will you be able to keep the system at an optimal state but you will also be extending its life span. Your security cameras will end up paying for themselves in the long run.