Alarm.com Video FAQs

1. What are the core video features?
    1. View live video through web browser clients, iPhone App, BlackBerry App, PDA and cell phone
    2. Motion-triggered recording and notifications
    3. Event-triggered recording and notifications (Alarms, arming/disarming, entry-delay, contact sensors)
    4. Recordings can be attached to email/mms notifications for immediate review on computers and compatible PDAs and cell phones.
    5. Recorded clips can be played back through the web, and on the Alarm.com PDA site through compatible PDAs and cell phones.
    6. Connects to customer Local Area Network through Ethernet or WiFi.

2. Does the video feature work with all types of panels and gateway modules? ➜ Video is compatible with Simon 3, Simon XT, Concord and NetworX Alarm.com accounts. An interactive service plan is required.

3. Will the video feature work with any IP camera or webcam? ➜ No, only Alarm.com cameras and video servers are supported.

4. What kinds of cell phones support Live Video? ➜ iPhones and BlackBerrys (those compatible with the Alarm.com BlackBerry Application) support live video. Any web-enabled cell phone with an HTML browser can view real-time live images on the Alarm.com PDA site. Streaming video is also available on some phones with full HTML browsers. Note that the data charges by the cellular carrier can be significant for using video features on cell phones.

5. What kinds of cell phones support video-clip attachments to emails/text messages? ➜ Video-enabled cell phones can also view recorded clips and receive video-clip email attachments of new video events if their service provider allows video emails. Note that the data charges by the cellular carrier can be significant for using video features on cell phones.

6. Which web browsers can be used to see video? ➜ All video features are available on Internet Explorer, Firefox and Safari on Windows and Macintosh PCs. A Windows PC using Internet Explorer must be used to add a camera to an account.

7. Do I need to install any software on my PC to see the video? ➜ An ActiveX control is required on Internet Explorer and a Java Applet is required on Firefox and Safari to view live video and manage cameras. (Users are automatically prompted to accept the necessary downloads.) A Flash plug-in is required on all browsers to view recorded video clips. No plug-ins or applications are needed for the PDA site.

8. How is my privacy ensured? ➜ The Alarm.com account owner can see all cameras associated with the account, and additional logins created for the account can be assigned permission to see the cameras as required. The cameras employ password protection to prevent access from outside the Alarm.com website, with the Alarm.com cameras employing advanced MD5-based "digest authentication" for user authentication.

9. How much video can I record? ➜ A standard account provides 50 MB of online storage (shared by all cameras), which is enough for up to 90 minutes of recording depending on the recording resolution and quality settings of each camera. Extra video storage is available in 250MB blocks up to 1GB of total storage.

10. How long is each recording? ➜ Camera-triggered recordings can be configured from 15 seconds to 40 seconds in 5 second increments with an optional ~5 seconds of pre-trigger recording. Every Security System-triggered recording is 35 to 45 seconds long depending on Record quality settings.

11. What happens when my video storage is full? ➜ After the storage is full, the system will overwrite the oldest recordings as required to make room for the newest recordings.

12. What if I want to save a recorded clip? ➜ A user can save any particular clip by downloading it to their PC and/or marking it "Protected" on their account to prevent it from being automatically over-written when the storage limit is met.

13. How many days will my recorded clips last before they are over-written? ➜ This depends on the recording frequency and video quality settings and can range from a few hours to a few weeks. Careful camera placement and Video Motion Detection configuration will reduce unwanted recordings and optimize use of online storage capacity.

13. What is the resolution of the video? ➔ The ADC-V510, ADC-V610PT and ADC-V700X support 640x480, 320x240 or 176x144 resolution for Live viewing and 640x480 or 320x240 for Recording. The ADC-VS1 video server offers 704x480, 352x240 and 176x120 options for Live viewing and 704x480 or 352x240 for Recording.

14. What is the frame rate for recorded video? ➔ Video clips are recorded at 3 frames per second (FPS) by default, but users can choose from 1, 2, 3 or 5 FPS. Note that some cameras have a maximum record rate of 3 FPS at their highest recording resolution.

15. What is the frame rate for Live video? ➔ Alarm.com cameras stream live video as fast as the network permits, with an upper limit of 10 Frames per Second (FPS). On a local LAN the 10 FPS may be achieved, but the frame rate will slow if the available bandwidth is not high enough, is shared by multiple cameras or is shared by multiple simultaneous viewers. Reducing resolution or image quality will increase the FPS on remote connections.

16. Will the video use up all of my network bandwidth? ➔ The cameras do not consume any bandwidth unless they are uploading recorded video or someone is actively looking at Live video. The camera can not consume all available bandwidth, because routers allocate bandwidth fairly among all the devices that are competing for bandwidth (video, email, web browsing, etc.).

17. How many users can look at the Live video stream simultaneously? ➔ Each camera supports up to 5 simultaneous viewers.

18. Can Video Motion Detection ignore parts of the scene? ➔ Yes. The Alarm.com cameras allow you to define up to three separate "windows" to monitor for motion. Motion outside of these windows is ignored, so false recordings are minimized.

19. Does the Alarm.com video feature work on Macintosh computers? ➔ Macintosh users have full access to the video features once the camera is installed, but a Microsoft Windows PC is required initially to add cameras to an account.

20. How well can the cameras see in the dark? ➔ The ADC-V700X has integrated IR illuminators that let you see 30 feet from the camera in complete darkness. The other IP cameras cannot see in complete darkness, but they have good performance in low-light conditions down to 0.4 lux. The Alarm.com VS1 video server can be used with any day/night analog camera.

21. What lenses do the cameras use? ➔ The Alarm.com ADC-V700X uses a 4.00 mm, F1.8 fixed lens, the ADC-V510 uses a 4.09 mm, F2.0 fixed lens, and the ADC-V610PT uses a 4.5 mm, F2.8 fixed lens. The ADC-VS1 video server can be used with analog cameras supporting any type of fixed or varifocal lens.

22. Do you support any outdoor, day/night or Pan/Tilt/Zoom cameras? ➔ The Alarm.com ADC-V700X is an outdoor day/night camera, and the ADC-V610PT Pan Tilt IP camera is available for simple indoor Pan/Tilt applications. The ADC-VS1 single camera video server supports any type of camera including outdoor and Day/Night models, but it does not currently support any PTZ protocols.

23. Do any of your cameras support Power-Over-Ethernet? ➔ Yes, the ADC-V700X can be powered by 12V DC, 24V AC or by 802.3af Power-Over-Ethernet. For indoor applications the other cameras can use products like the D-Link DWL-P200 injector/splitter pair to simplify DC power wiring.

24. Can I share a single analog camera between a DVR and the Alarm.com Video Server? ➔ Yes. If the DVR supports "loop-through" you can loop the camera out of the DVR and into the ADC-VS1 video server (you may need to disable "termination" for that camera in the DVR. If your DVR does not support "loop-through" then you can split the camera signal using products like the Kramer PT-102VN video distribution amplifier.

25. Can I use standard CAT5 or CAT6 Ethernet cable to connect the wireless Alarm.com cameras to the LAN? ➔ Yes, the ADC-V510 and ADC-V610PT cameras can be used in either wired or wireless 802.11b/g mode.

26. What kind of wireless security is available on these cameras? ➔ The Alarm.com cameras support WEP wireless encryption and the newer WPA Personal and WPA2 Personal encryption.