

SECURITY SYSTEMS NEWS

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Central rekindles old business

BY ANDREA GURAL

EUCLID, Ohio—A central station general manager has rekindled his old business and reopened a new UL-listed central station under a different name only a few years after Security Associates International Inc. acquired it.

Jim Osborne, president of American Response Center, opened the doors of his new company late last year. Osborne's previous employer Bob Ambros had

sold Emergency Response Center and its 120,000 accounts and more than 1,000 dealers to SAI in 1997. (corrected statement from original)

But around the time SAI closed down its Cleveland central station, the most local facility as part of a central station consolidation program the company undertook last year, Osborne said many of his

former dealer customers were calling him in search of another monitoring option. After enough demand surfaced, Osborne and his wife, Carrie, shelved their consulting jobs and, in November 2001, opened ARC.

The company boasts 10,000 accounts, a level that it took Emer-



gency Response Center six years to accumulate.

"Our intention was not to get that large, but right after we opened up (SAI) announced their closing and the whole thing changed," Osborne said.

The company applied for its UL listing, which it received in late July, and now has a staff of 13,

most of which were employees of Emergency Response. About a dozen other former ERC employees are on a waiting list for positions at the new company, Osborne said.

Those 13 employees man the central's five workstations in a 1,500-square-foot space on the third floor of a three-story office building that has a self-contained HVAC system for the central.

Despite growing interest in the company, Osborne said his growth plan for the company is to reach between 40,000 and 50,000 accounts, and steer clear of the 120,000 plus account volume handled by his former company.

"We're putting on 300 to 500 new systems a month, and we anticipate that growing to 1,000, but we're not looking to push for much more than that," he said. "That's an excellent growth rate for us." ❖