

# The Last Word With...

## Steve Bell



**Salient Systems' newly appointed Executive Vice President, Sales, talks to SJA about AI-powered video analytics and what sets Salient apart in a crowded VMS market**

### Can you tell us about yourself and your role?

I recently joined Salient Systems as Executive Vice President, Sales, leading our global sales organization and working closely with our integrator partners and end users. I started my career as a technologist before moving into sales at CompuServe, and I've spent the past 25-plus years leading enterprise software sales teams – most recently at IGEL Technology, Workspot and CSC Digital Brand Services. Outside of work, I'm a proud father of six and grandfather

of three, which keeps me grounded in what really matters.

### How are customers responding to AI-powered video analytics?

The conversation has matured. Customers are past the novelty stage – they're asking how accurate the detection is in real conditions, how it integrates with what they already have and what it costs to scale. That's where Salient's Vaidio AI is resonating. It's hardware-agnostic, works with any camera or video source and delivers 35-plus analytics across people, vehicle, facial and object recognition – no rip-and-replace required. Customers are also using these tools beyond security, from traffic flow to retail operations to workplace safety, which is opening up real value across the business.

### Where do you see the biggest opportunities for Salient Systems?

Three areas stand out. The first is the shift to hybrid cloud – many customers who were hesitant about cloud a few years ago are now choosing full cloud or hybrid options, and Salient's optional cloud service lets integrators layer it onto existing on-premises deployments without an architecture overhaul.

We're also seeing customers expect their VMS to treat cameras as devices to maintain and manage – is the firmware current, are they performing correctly – not just as video sources. The second opportunity is AI analytics, building on what Vaidio AI is already delivering. The third – and where I'll

personally spend most of my time – is deepening our partnership with the integrator community. Salient has earned that channel's trust by being reliable and responsive, and there's real opportunity to keep building on it.

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### How does Salient differentiate itself and stand out in the market?

Three things, and they're connected. First, our truly open architecture: CompleteView integrates with thousands of cameras, access control systems and analytics, and we don't charge platform fees that lock customers in. Second, focus – Salient does one thing, enterprise video management and has been refining it for over 25 years. We're not a hardware company that bolted on software and we're not a portfolio play with VMS as a side product. Third, and most important, the support model: a culture where no end user and no integrator gets left behind, backed by best-in-industry sales engineering, field support and technical services. ■