

"It's probably a challenge for people to initially believe they are going to be putting cameras inside their home and recording themselves," says company president and CEO Charles Black.

"But that is what is going to happen over time."

iWatchLife enables owners of Samsung IP cameras to remotely monitor their property, children, elderly relatives, pets or contractors. Unlike traditional remote monitoring systems that can be falsely triggered by shadows or leaves rustling in the wind, iWatchLife allows customers to draw custom "zones" so they're only notified when, say, a door is opened. Users can then watch a live feed or a recording of an event on their smartphone, tablet or smart TV.

The company was born out of Telewatch, a company that sold digital video recorders and cameras as custom security solutions to large enterprises. Despite landing customers such as FedEx and CIBC, Mr. Black says the firm was undercut by lower-cost Korean and Taiwanese manufacturers.

Mr. Black says he shifted the company from being a hardware provider to a cloud-based software supplier and moved to fill the gap in the consumer home monitoring market.

The firm bought Visual Cortek, a company formed at the University of Ottawa and led by computer science professor Robert Laganière that had developed the ability to analyze video and eliminate false alarms.

The company's big break came earlier this year, when it officially announced a partnership with Samsung. As a result of the pact, the Korean electronics giant has agreed to package its IP cameras with an insert promoting iWatchLife and offering a free 30-day trial.

After attracting 10,000 subscribers who used the service for free during its development phase and will be grandfathered in, iWatchLife began earlier this month to charge new users who want to use the full service. Mr. Black forecasts the company will be cash flow positive by the end of the year.

He expects to announce a "fairly significant round" of financing this spring as iWatchLife focuses on supporting Samsung. The local firm is also pursuing partnerships with other manufacturers that are preparing to market a "wave" of new cameras.

"This industry is really just starting to come to life," Mr. Black says.

— Peter Kovessy

IWATCHLIFE

Seeing what matters

It's like having someone behind the camera, saying, 'This is important.'

— President and CEO Charles Black

The early adopters of iWatchLife typically start with a single camera pointed at their front door for security purposes.

Before long, they'll usually add a second camera aimed at their back door. That's followed by a third camera in the basement and then a fourth in the living room.

Founded: 2009

Employees: 12 (11 in Ottawa, one in Halifax)

Funding: \$3.75 million in angel financing

Customers: Consumers

Product: Intelligent cloud-based video monitoring