

## **Flow enters home security market**



Roberta Norman-Reverand, director of Technical Operations, Flow Trinidad, shakes hands with Christopher Maraj, Quality Health Safety and Security manager, Allpro Security, after the security deal. PHOTO BY KERWIN PIERRE



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As the T&T Police Service tries to grapple with crime and robberies, communications provider Flow has partnered with Allpro Security to provide residential security to its customers.

In an exclusive interview with the Business Guardian, Roberta Norman-Reverand, director of technical operations at Flow Trinidad explained that two years ago after listening to the customers' complaints and woes, the company launched a campaign called Inspired By You to deal with the upgrading of the network and improved customer care.

Norman-Reverand said under the umbrella of Inspired by You the security aspect is just another addition to the campaign offering secure home security for its customers and their families.

On why a security product, she said the decision was driven by the increase in crime citizens are being faced with in the country.

"The company saw security as a need for our customers to protect themselves and their families at the most affordable rates."

Norman-Reverand said the typical John Doe probably could not afford security, but with the packages Flow was providing to its customers, everyone could afford some sort of security for their homes.

The entry-level rate she said is \$120 a month, with the top package being offered at \$725 a month. That package is called 360 Rapid Response.

Asked to explain the payment structure, the director of technical operations said it would be built as an add-on service to customers' existing bills and upgrading to a higher package is also available.

Outlining the service's key features and benefits, Norman-Reverand said it is a wireless design that allows for easy installation and flexible placements anywhere in and around the property.

"The system comes with an app that you load on your mobile phone, and it allows remote access, facilitating the user to perform several actions from outside of their home. You can arm this from your home. Another feature if you have small kids and you want to arm the home there is a safe zone to protect them from the activated beam," she said.

In terms of competency from the security firm regarding response times, she said, "Partnering with Allpro was our way of guaranteeing that our customers receive the best in residential security services while dependent on connectivity of our high-speed internet. We're partnering with the best of the best. I would tell you personally, I do have the service and Allpro's response is within seconds. Quite a few of our employees have tested the system and have reported the best response ever."

The Flow executive said there is an upfront cost for the equipment, but that the company has made it easier for

existing customers by offering them financing terms for the security equipment.

“There are three options of financing. They can either pay for six months, 12 months, or 24 months and again.”

#### Providing proper security

Giving further details as to how efficient the company's service will be, Christopher Maraj, Allpro's quality health safety and security manager at Allpro Security, said the company visits customers at their homes and installs the unit. They also install the phone application.

“That person is now managing the access control of their facility based on the app. Other than that, we have monitoring and response, which is the aspect of the security firm. We have a command centre which operates 24-7 and some operators are looking all the time. Within that, particular panic or alarm signals will come in.

For instance, within that armour, we have the panic alarm. The panic alarm, you can wear it around your neck. You can have it in your shoes. You can have it in your bag,” Maraj explained.

Many have complained about the response times of security firms when an incident occurs on their premises.

Responding to this perception, Maraj said, “We have something called AMBA GPS, which is we can look on our map and see where the closest location is so that we can get a response team to you. We will now make sure that the operator looks and says, all right, this particular response team is five minutes away, ten minutes away and we dispatch the closest response team to you.”

Maraj noted that within 15 minutes of the security firm being notified, a team is usually dispatched to the client's location once there was an alarm. He also noted that the company works closely with the T&T Police Service.

“We have a very close relationship with them, and they would also assist us when we have to respond. So that also helps with the response time.”

Maraj made it clear that it was an armed response system and two armed officers were in the vehicle that was going to the client's location.

“One of the things that happens, once you take a contract with Flow, your home now becomes our estate. The company now has laws and authority as you've taken a response contract with us and the security officers can detain criminals, then hand them over to the police.”

He outlined that Allpro Security Services Ltd has been in existence since 1994 and boasted that the security officers are usually at a distressed location before the police, as its officers are precepted.

Maraj highlighted that the security firm services 1,200 residential and commercial clients throughout T&T.

“Our system that Flow is carrying right now has a CCTV system and the camera system's video is recorded and stored in the cloud. One of the good features we have that Flow got onto was that 360-surveillance rapid response. With that comes cameras, CCTV cameras that come into the system that's built into your alarm system. However, we only have command of the camera, when the panic button goes off. Other than that, the camera system is not on during normal circumstances,” he disclosed.

Maraj added that this is the security company's first time providing a company with a service and they are powering its system.

#### ABOUT FLOW

Flow is the trade name of the former regional telecommunications provider Cable & Wireless Communications used to market cable television, internet, telephone, and wireless services.

Flow is owned by Liberty Global Plc, which acquired Cable and Wireless Communications (CWC), in 2016, in a transaction valued at approximately US\$7.4 billion on an enterprise value basis.

Having acquired CWC, Liberty Global is the minority shareholder in majority stateowned Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT).