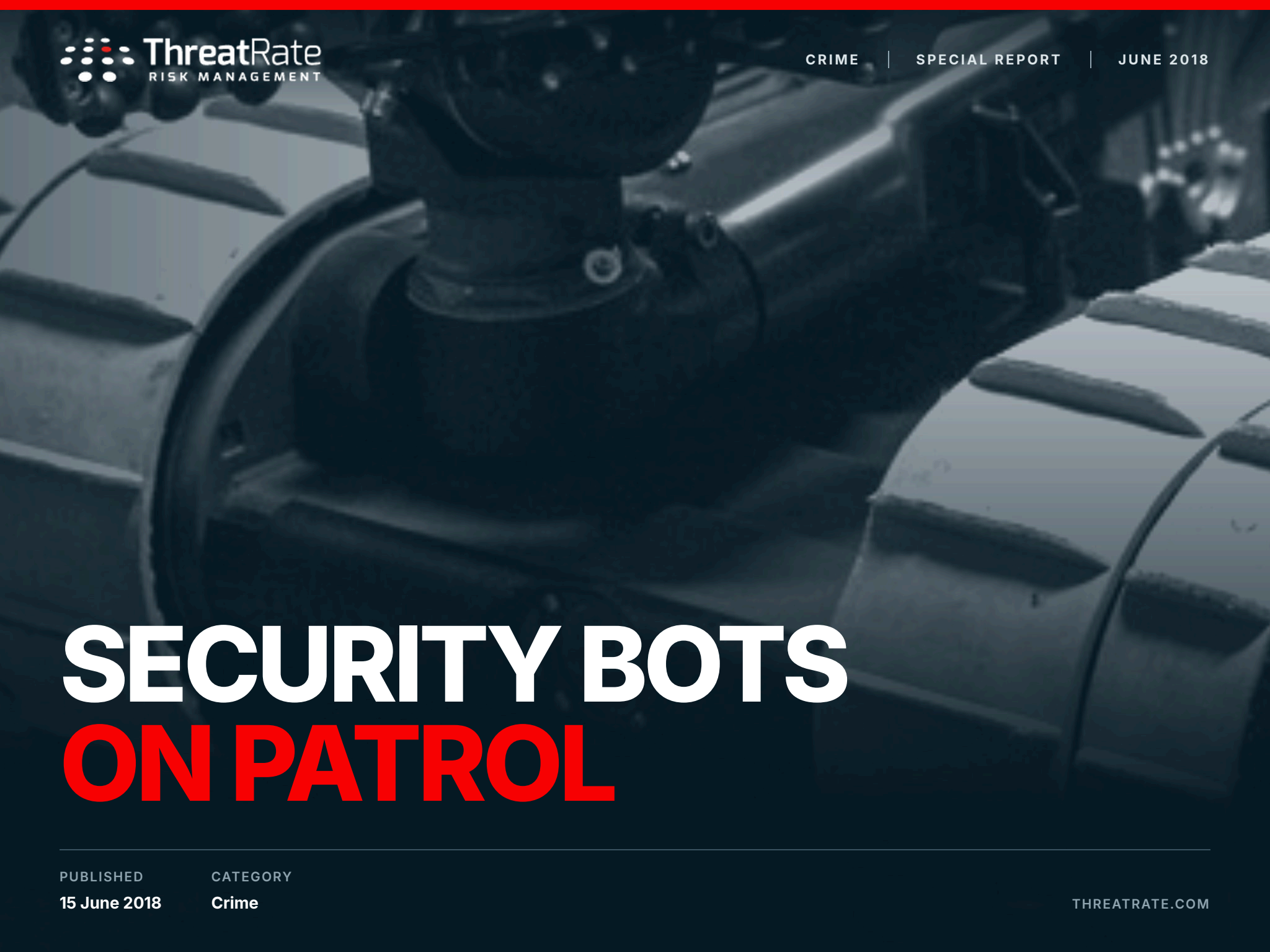


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SECURITY BOTS ON PATROL

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Security Bots on Patrol

Amongst the public, there are both fears and hopes for the use of robots in society. Some, probably best termed of as robotic pessimists, concentrate their commentary on the belief that automation will displace significant numbers of workers and, subsequently, cause social discontent. Others, the optimists, are focused more on the advances in productivity, safety – by removing people from dangerous or injury prone work – and with the capability of allowing surplus labor to concentrate on more value-added processes and activities. Regardless of where one is on this continuum, robots are in use, and their use is continuing to penetrate additional areas of life. For example, only a few years ago, a robotic vacuum was created to help free people up from a relatively labor-intensive task. Public security is another area where robots are both currently present and likely to increase greatly in the future.

Twin Arrows casino in Flagstaff Arizona has begun using Knightscope's Autonomous Data Machines (ADMs) with its 360 degree cameras, thermal imaging, license plate reading capability, and two-way communication capabilities to augment security staffing. Originally, the casino had a shortage of security staff and, instead of continuing to recruit, they used the long-term hourly leasing option to provision the robot with relatively little initial capital investment. Joe Gustafson, the casino's Security Director, chose the K5 model as it is large and easy to notice (it weighs around four-hundred pounds), and such a large size acts as a physical deterrent for would-be troublemakers. Gustafson says, "Another benefit is that it patrols our property and significantly and effectively increases our security footprint, allowing us to further project our security force and cover more area in less time while collecting data."

In weighing the negatives of implementing a robot, Gustafson noted that he believes that robots will create more jobs than they destroy and that they are used for relatively mundane tasks that – while doable by a human may not be either enjoyable for them or performed well as it is human nature to get bored with repetitive tasks. Elizabeth Joh, a UC Davis law professor and legal expert on robotics notes that there will be significant concerns and debate – especially as regulations are not well-developed at this point – on what capabilities robots will be able to possess as they both develop further capabilities and – due to increases in scale – decrease in price so that they become more affordable for private individuals. For example, when – if ever – will robots be able to initiate or use force? That is a still debated topic in the security, legal, and robotics community. Other countries, however, have no issue with using robots or other autonomous devices to initiate force under proper circumstances. Israel's 11-inch Deadly Rover can fire pepper spray or five rounds in two seconds. India has also developed a riot control drone that can disperse 20 non-lethal rounds of ammunition a second. It is likely, despite the concerns that many have about robots using force, their use will both continue and increase as security forces are apt to push for the adoption of technology that both prioritizes safety for personnel and effectiveness in meeting mission requirements.

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Soundbite analytics

- Public records indicate that the law enforcement agencies within the State of Ohio have received forty robots for a military-law enforcement transfer program.
- Knightscope estimates that two of its robots coupled with a human monitor can save a firm 50% on the cost of employing an equivalent force of security guards.
- Knightscope has put 47 robots into production in 10 states.
- The LAPD's Huge Smasher can hold a payload of 12,000.

SOURCES

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