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Case Study

University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Founded 1981

Case Summary:
Location:
Greensboro, North Carolina

Systems Installed:
exacqVision Z-Series

UNC Greensboro (UNCG) is one of 17 campuses within the University of North Carolina system. Founded in 1891, UNCG is the largest and most diverse university in the Piedmont Triad region, serving more than 20,000 students and employing approximately 2,800 faculty members.

Introduction

The university is in the heart of Greensboro, which boasts nearly 260,000 people, making it visible within the larger community as well. Landlocked by local streets, the 200-acre campus with 30 buildings poses unique security issues as it is crisscrossed with major roads, making it a priority to ensure pedestrian and bicycle safety. As a public institution, it is also largely open to the community and hosts numerous events, activities, and services regularly accessed by residents of nearby neighborhoods and the city at large. UNCG has its own police department (UNCG PD) with more than 40 members who ensure the safety of the campus. UNCG PD relies on its video surveillance system to alert them to incidents, record video for forensic purposes, and also provide video analytics for traffic and crowd control.

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Challenges

With a growing campus and rising security needs, UNCG PD, with the help of its integrator NETCom Cabling, located in Greensboro, N.C., recognized it required a more efficient and proactive video surveillance and camera management system. The days when DVRs could provide the necessary recorded data quickly gave way to the need for a more responsive approach such as a shared enterprise system to bring together cameras, recording, and the intelligent usage of both.

The Solution

UNCG PD's foray beyond the NVR/DVR world began with the installation of the exacqVision platform, starting with its Z-Series recorders to cover its parking decks. From there it began to incorporate a hybrid platform, including exacqVision VMS, to support the analog cameras used for the parking decks as well as the IP cameras being installed for security elsewhere. The migration began several years ago, but today the campus boasts nearly 900 cameras in use, with about 700 IP and the remainder analog. Each recorder can handle up to 128 IP cameras and 64 analog ones, and it works with thousands of IP camera models. Within that time, the UNCG PD has also grown to become a state-of-the-art department with its own command and emergency operations center where it can monitor and manage its video surveillance system.

In selecting the exacqVision Z-Series, UNCG's police department was seeking an intuitive system that would put the necessary information at the fingertips of whomever was on duty. It was also critical to deploy a system with built-in redundancy to protect against any data loss in the event of a power issue or system fail. "It's a pretty easy end-user experience for our officers without a lot of technological background," said Joshua Green, technical services analyst for the UNCG PD. The software within the system makes it simple to perform tasks such as playing back recordings or searching for data using a single screen.

One of the biggest benefits of the Z-Series is its scalability, offering one of the largest processors and fastest speeds of the DVRs on the market. The system's design also makes it easy to add new cameras and licensing.

One of the common usages of the exacqVision platform, said Green, is for traffic management. Using the video from the exacqVision system, they can perform tasks such as counting parking spaces to know when a lot is full as well as to watch crosswalks to see how pedestrian and vehicle traffic is moving or where people are congregating. It can also be used to help the police department determine where to put resources: How many people are in the workout room and does that area need extra patrols, or are there concerns about equipment in the computer lab and how should that be monitored?

There is also time-savings to be gained by working with exacqVision VMS, a system that lets the user easily search recorded video with a timeline search. Green recalled an instance when someone was concerned that an iPad had been stolen, but a quick check of the video showed within a matter of minutes that the item had been safety stored away, rather than taken.

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As a long-time user of the Z series and exacqVision VMS, UNCG, NETCom and Intelligent Marketing Inc. are quick to share their success stories and concerns to improve the product. "These guys, (Tim Reese, sergeant for the technical services area, and Green), are working with Exacq engineers on changes that everyone will benefit from," such as improvements to the mapping feature," said Bob Moulton, North Carolina territory manager for Intelligent Marketing, a security manufacturer rep firm that works closely with end-user customers.

Reese said the ability to make integrations down the road because of the scalability of the system, whether it's adding card access or expanding the number of cameras, makes the Z -Series a smart strategic investment for the university.

The built-in redundancy of the Z-Series is critical for a department that relies on video for detection and investigation. It has a failover feature that protects against both power and system failures.

"We are looking to the future of our surveillance system to ensure the safety of the university's students, faculty and visitors," said Reese. Migrating to and implementing a new NVR platform "provides the university with an important foundation for future surveillance capabilities and usability."

Systems integrator NETCom Cabling concurred with those sentiments. "We enjoyed the opportunity to collectively work together with the University of North Carolina's police department and Intelligent Marketing Inc. to support the University's goal of continuously making improvements to ensure the campus remains secure," said Aaron Spivey, Director of Security at NETcom Cabling. "Together we've achieved that objective and we look forward to continuing to work together in the future."

Providers

Intelligent Marketing Inc., based in Haverhill, Mass., works in concert with manufacturers, distributors, specifiers, and integrators to assist with system design and specifications. IMI delivers proactive customer service, training, and support from project inception to completion and beyond.

NETcom Cabling and Security Systems, Greensboro, N.C., has been in business since 1990, specializing in category 5e/6 and 6a copper, indoor/outdoor fiber installations, card access, cameras, perimeter detection, gate entry systems, paging and AV solutions. NETcom has the capabilities to create comprehensive commercial cabling and security plans through its in-house CAD department.

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