

Loan franchise cashes in on Hosted Video with Axis and ASG. Texas Title Loans secures shops with Axis cameras and hosted video solution from ASG.



Organization:
Texas Title Loans, LLC

Location:
Dallas, Texas, USA

Industry segment:
Banking and finance

Application:
Store security and operations

Axis partners:
ASG Security,
Secure-i, Inc.

Mission

The cash payouts might be small, but for Texas Title Loans – a chain of short-term loan shops stretching from Dallas to San Antonio – keeping an eye on the till was creating big problems. Not only was it difficult for corporate to extract incident clips from each store's DVR, but the image quality from the analog cameras was too fuzzy to identify perpetrators. It was time to upgrade to a higher-resolution network video system. Rather than purchasing onsite storage and maintaining software in-house, they sought a hosted video service that would provide off-site storage, a secure portal to access video footage, and on-call technical support.

Solution

ASG Security, a national systems integrator and service provider of electronic security solutions, replaced the analog cameras with compact AXIS M1031-W Network Cameras. Built on AXIS Video Hosting System and leveraging the cameras' One-Click Camera Connection, a Secure-i Hosted Video Recorder streams the video to a dedicated server in ASG's secure data center in Austin, TX.

Texas Title Loans uses a standard web browser to access the video through a password-protected portal. The network cameras feature built-in microphones and two-way speakers that allow operations staff to see and hear activity at each of the 14 outlets.

Result

Corporate has used the cameras to investigate employee theft, monitor the quality of customer service, and improve safety and security in the workplace. Should a robbery or other criminal activity occur on any of the premises, corporate can quickly retrieve a clip of the incident and e-mail it to law enforcement to assist in apprehending the culprit.

"Using the Axis hosted video solution from ASG made economic sense for us. I still have full control over all my cameras at all times, but our security provider [ASG] manages all the servers and software for us. That's real peace of mind."

Mark Autrey, Project Manager for Texas Title Loans.

The buck starts here

Texas Title Loans, LLC, which offers short-term loans against future paychecks and personal vehicles, operates 14 offices across Texas. The one-room storefronts measure less than 800 square feet and typically handle up to three transactions a day. Customers can request instant payouts from the cash drawers, and employees split their time between phone sales and walk-in business.

Each store had an analog CCTV system, but the video quality proved next to useless when investigating an incident. Additionally, the operations managers at the corporate offices were tired of managing the disparate DVRs, and they experienced video retrieval issues. Additionally, if a location lost power, Texas Title Loans would have to contact their security vendor to manually reset the analog system. This lack of control left executives feeling vulnerable to coverage blackouts.

But with the need for only two cameras in each store, network video appeared costly compared to their analog system despite the additional benefits; that was until ASG Security presented a hosted video proposal that allowed the company to cut capital expenses and streamline surveillance operations.

"Going the hosted video route just made economic sense for us," says Mark Autrey, project manager for Texas Title Loans, LLC. "If we did it all ourselves, we'd not only have to shoulder the capital expense of all that equipment, but we'd also be forced to hire two more full-time IT people to handle the workload."

Plug-and-play simplicity

Installing the hosted video system was incredibly simple, because the new Axis cameras arrived at each site pre-configured to automatically communicate via Secure-i's Hosted Video Recorder to the ASG server. Since DSL lines, RJ45 connectors, and power outlets were already in place, ASG simply removed the old cameras and plugged in the Axis ones. As soon as the cameras powered up, they automatically started streaming to ASG's secure data center.

"The One-Click Camera Connection eliminated a lot of painstaking configuration, which made the switchover go a lot faster than we hoped," says Autrey.

Texas Title Loans now logs onto a secure portal via a standard web browser to access live and recorded video from each store. "It's a completely secure system that gives us 100% control over our chain-wide surveillance operations," assures Autrey. Texas Title Loans can also reset cameras after power outages and modify resolutions, frame rates, microphone volumes, and other camera features from headquarters rather than sending a technician on a service call.

Camera selection: See all. Hear all.

Given the physical dimensions of the stores, ASG strategically placed two AXIS M1031-W Network Cameras in each location to capture the store's entrance and transactions at the loan desks. The cameras record continuously during business hours and are set to detect motion after hours.

"The VGA resolution of the IP cameras gives Texas Title Loans great visual details – much greater than they were accustomed to with analog – while the microphones capture conversations in crystal clear clarity," explains Bob Ryan, vice president of ASG Security. "Corporate knows what's going on during the business day, and if an alarm goes off after hours they can verify if it's a real break-in before calling police."

All-in-one tool: Loss prevention, safety and revenue building

Texas Title Loans initially installed the cameras for the safety and security of their employees in the event of an unhappy customer or a robbery. But the image clarity has given them fresh eyes on day-to-day operations as well. Corporate can use video for training purposes and improve efficiency, including customer service. With new audio capabilities, the company uses the surveillance system to monitor the quality of employee service during telephone calls and face-to-face interactions with customers.



"The Axis hosted video system has become a big part of our corporate quality control program," states Autrey. "It helps us coach managers, minimize staff turnover, and provide assistance on closing the deal, which directly relates to our bottom line."

