

Exhibiting caution with Axis.

John Carroll University deploys Axis network cameras to protect traveling museum exhibition.



Organization:
John Carroll University

Location:
University Heights, Ohio,
USA

Industry segment:
Education

Application:
Property protection

Mission

When the Department of Theology and Religious Studies applied to a nationally renowned museum to host one of its traveling exhibitions, part of the contractual agreement included steps for securing the displays against vandalism. Though the museum only required that the exhibition be staffed during open hours and that the room be locked after hours, the department wanted to take security to a higher level by installing network video cameras to aid staff in monitoring the space during and after visiting hours.

Solution

With help from Citi Electrical Inc., an electrical contractor in Cleveland, OH, the university's IT Services Department installed four HDTV-resolution AXIS M1145 Network Cameras in the room housing the temporary exhibition. The cameras were connected to the university's existing network through drop boxes in the ceiling and controlled by a Lenel video management system.

Live video was streamed 24/7 to the Theology and Religious Studies conference room desktop where authorized faculty and staff could remotely monitor exhibit activity throughout the day. Video was also archived in case there was any need for forensic review.

Result

The university believes that the conspicuous display of surveillance cameras coupled with a prominent sign thanking Axis Communications for the loan of the cameras served as excellent deterrents. In the six weeks that the university hosted the exhibition, there was not a single incident.

“The museum required us to inspect the exhibition every day to make sure all the displays were intact and undamaged. With Axis network cameras covering every corner of the room, we were able to do that remotely from our department conference room computer, saving us the trouble of sending someone across campus to inspect the exhibition on the days when it wasn’t staffed and open to the public.”

Professor Sheila E. McGinn, PhD, Chair of the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, John Carroll University.

Protecting diversity appreciation on campus

John Carroll University, a private, co-educational Jesuit Catholic university in suburban University Heights, OH, takes pride in its many diversity training programs for students, faculty, and staff. To raise community awareness of the dynamics of the Holocaust, including the gender and sexual bias of the Nazi regime, the Department of Theology and Religious Studies applied to host a national museum’s traveling exhibit on the persecution of homosexuals during the Nazi era.

“It took about two years and collaboration with a number of departments and student groups on campus to bring the exhibition here,” said Professor Sheila E. McGinn, PhD, Chair of the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at John Carroll University. “The 20-page application required a description of the room in which the exhibition would be housed, how it would be secured, and so forth.”

Though the museum only required staffing of the room during open hours and then locked doors after hours, McGinn thought the university should do more to protect the potentially controversial exhibition. “In addition to changing the locks on the doors to prevent random individuals from having access to the room after hours, we decided to install surveillance cameras in the room to keep a steady watch on foot traffic,” said McGinn. This was especially important as the exhibition was also drawing visitors from outside the university community.

George Alaimo, the senior multi-media specialist in the university’s IT Services Department, directed electricians from Citi Electric Services to conspicuously mount four HDTV-resolution AXIS M1145 Network Cameras around the exhibition room. The cameras connected to the university’s network through network drops in the ceiling enabling them to stream live video to authorized faculty and staff and archive footage for forensic review.

Programmed to record on motion, the compact AXIS M1145 cameras focused on the four points of entry: a main entrance, two side entrances and a row of windows. Because of their strategic placement, they provided staff remotely monitoring the exhibit with a complete view of the room and all the elements on display, even though the room had pillars in the middle. The automatic day/night infrared feature of the cameras also provided clear visibility into the room even after hours when the lights were turned off

Performing due diligence remotely

One of the extra security precautions the museum insisted on for the traveling exhibition was a daily inspection of the displays by the hosting organization. “The Axis cameras were ideal for that task because the installation was in the Student Center, which is clear across campus from the Department of Theology and Religious Studies,” said McGinn.

With a secure log-on to the network, McGinn and the graduate assistant working with the project could conveniently view live feed from cameras every day from the department’s large-screen computer and limit in-person physical inspections to a few times a week. “It was much more convenient to limit the in-person inspections to the days when the exhibition was already open and staffed,” said McGinn.

“We were thrilled to have Axis loan us the cameras as renting them would have cost over 50% more than our existing budget for the project,” said McGinn. “The cameras provided a useful deterrent and made our due diligence much easier.”



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