

CoxHealth prescribes Axis to stem crime.

Missouri hospital curbs vandalism and theft with Axis network cameras and encoders.



Organization:
CoxHealth

Location:
Springfield, Missouri,
USA

Industry segment:
Healthcare

Application:
Deterrence and forensic
evidence

Axis partners:
NetWatch, Inc., OnSSI

Mission

Patrolling its 52-acre campus was stretching security resources to the limit for CoxHealth in Springfield, Missouri. When the hospital built a new 780-car parking garage, public safety managers decided a more robust network-based surveillance system would help them dispatch mobile officers more effectively. They also needed a system that would deliver forensic-quality video both inside and outside of the hospital to expedite investigations and criminal prosecution.

Solution

NetWatch, a Springfield, Missouri-based IP surveillance system provider and Axis partner, installed an array of Axis pan/tilt/zoom and HD-quality network cameras throughout the new parking garage. Network cameras have also been deployed at the new ambulatory surgery center. Due to the hospital's early success with IP, NetWatch is network-enabling older analog technology with video encoders to unify surveillance technology campus-wide.

The cameras now run on a separate, secure video network in order to maintain the chain-of-evidence standards required by the courts. OnSSI's Ocularis NetDVMS recorder with Ocularis Client Lite VMS centralizes viewing and investigation on all of the workstations.

Result

Since security staffers are commissioned law enforcement officers, CoxHealth capitalizes on its extensive video coverage to successfully apprehend and prosecute offenders. The deterrent value of prominently placed cameras has also been enormous. And to further improve on these results, CoxHealth plans to migrate to a full network-based enterprise-wide surveillance system.

"We need to protect more than 2.3 million square feet of property around the clock. We couldn't possibly hire enough people to cover all the ground that the Axis cameras do."

Joe Rushing, director of public safety and security for CoxHealth.

Guards can't be everywhere at once

CoxHealth, a long-time advocate of electronic surveillance, uses more than 300 video cameras to monitor its vast acreage. But gaps in coverage and archiving constraints of its multi-DVR analog systems made it difficult to review weekly incident reports and quickly gather forensic video. As commissioned county law enforcement, hospital security officers have full arrest power on campus. Officers file their own reports and often delight prosecutors during trial with a wealth of video evidence from the new system. With IP, the hospital has centralized surveillance with less hardware and greater storage capacity, and can locate incidents much more easily than with the old analog system.

Centralizing camera controls, storage and management with OnSSI's VMS has also been a huge benefit. Previously, users had several DVRs that required individual login to view and review footage. Now security personnel benefit from an enterprise class system that simplifies camera management and lets them do more with less.

Embedded video motion detection also helps spot trouble to quickly dispatch mobile patrols. The cameras operate 24/7 in fixed locations to observe activity even when patrol cars have left the area. According to Rushing, the crisp Axis camera images were even able to catch thieves stealing a backhoe from a neighboring construction site about a block away.

Extra eyes on high-risk areas

NetWatch installed 40 network cameras to help protect the parking structure. Seven AXIS 215 PTZ Network Cameras guard garage entrances and exits. The remaining cameras – AXIS 225FD Fixed Dome Network Cameras – cover ramps and parking bays.

"We use the cameras to document typical incidents that occur in a parking garage such as thefts, fender benders and break-ins," reports Rushing. "We also use the Axis cameras to track suspicious individuals from hospital buildings to their vehicles and vice versa."

At the ambulatory surgery center, NetWatch focused AXIS 225FD Network Cameras on building entrances, exits and walkways. Inside, the integrator deployed easy-to-install AXIS M3011 Fixed Dome Network Cameras to monitor hallways, sensitive document storage areas and medication dispensaries.

"Hospitals can be a target for narcotics theft," shares Rushing. "So we've put cameras at a number of key distribution points where there is a lot of foot traffic, like medication cabinets, medical disposal areas and our pharmacy."

The video clarity is so detailed that security can even compare the dosage being entered on a computer to the actual amount being dispensed. Advanced H.264 compression used by AXIS M3011 cameras allows the hospital to affordably archive three to four weeks of video typically needed for internal narcotics investigations.

Partnering because of support and service

Besides image clarity, the expanded warranty differentiated the Axis solution. "The unprecedented three-year warranty was a big selling point for CoxHealth," states NetWatch's Matt Lackrone.

Responsive customer support also played a key role. "We always get great support from Axis," explains Lackrone. "We rarely have to call, but when we do, we get total resolution turnaround in less than 24 hours. I don't think anyone else staffs technical support quite like Axis."

Applying HDTV and analytics for the future

CoxHealth will soon move to the forefront of video surveillance by deploying more than 60 Axis HDTV network cameras in its emergency department now under construction. The hospital also plans to leverage video analytics to help direct future expansion and renovation plans. "Counting people and cars certainly has value for security," states Rushing. "But the statistics we gather through video surveillance will also help administrators see what facilities are being under and overused so that they can plan new projects accordingly."

