Centralizing Surveillance for a California University

A prominent university in California updates their video surveillance to centralize management and control.

Overview:

Today, safety on school campuses is essential to promote a positive learning experience. Traditionally, most universities have used video surveillance exclusively to identify criminals after the fact. This was the case at a large California college campus. Each individual school or department managed their video data at the building level. Reviewing footage was extremely cumbersome with the data being held in different DVRs in each building. Storing the data on site also left it open to loss, damage or theft.

Challenges:

On-site Surveillance Video Storage is Inconsistent, Inefficient and Unsecure

The Campus Security Manager's main responsibility is to ensure the security and health of the educational environment. With an educational community of more than 10,000 people and multiple buildings across an extensive campus, the onsite video surveillance system was complex and required constant maintenance and monitoring. Each department had their own surveillance system — there was no centralized management or ability to see the entire campus as a whole which made it very difficult to ensure safety and timely incident response.

> *"With multiple buildings across an extensive campus, I need a video surveillance system with unlimited storage that centralizes management and is accessible from any authorized mobile device or computer."*
>
> – IT Manager

Challenge:

How can a large university centralize control of over 250 surveillance cameras and continue to scale for the future?

On-premise cameras weren't working.

Additionally, the University was growing and with an on-premises solution, they were looking at deploying more hardware on their network which would require more maintenance, more resources and more data storage costs.

When the on-premises DVR solution failed, the university decided to look for something that would increase their safety and emergency response, provide consistent centralized monitoring and reduce total cost of ownership while possibly providing greater surveillance capabilities.

"Our college community's safety is one of my main responsibilities.

I'm looking for an integrated surveillance system with facial recognition and high quality images to easily identify bad actors and take quick action."

— IT Manager

Solution:

Consistency, Control and the Cloud

Cloudastructure's Linux-based cyber secure solution allowed the University's IT Department to centralize control of surveillance and provide live and recorded views of every building on campus accessible from any mobile device. Video is recorded in the cloud eliminating the need for expensive onsite storage and server management and maintenance.

Just like e-mail servers moved to the cloud with Gmail, or Microsoft 365 and CRM servers moved to the cloud with Salesforce and others, on-site video surveillance servers (the traditional Network Video Recorders (NVRs)) are now moving to the cloud for the very same reasons.

Cloudastructure's surveillance solution:

- Is easier to control and manage across multiple locations.

- Provides greater security – no holes in the firewall, only an outbound HTTPS request.

- Offers more affordable, flexible and secure data storage – eliminating hacking.

- Allows enterprises to scale quickly – the CVR connects to all new and existing cameras on the IP network.

- Reduces IT resources – all upgrades and maintenance are done via the cloud.

Cloudastructure has been operating at this university for almost seven years. During this time, the campus has also improved incident response timing using the rapid search feature that looks for activity and motion based on tags.

Also, the University is adding another building to its campus with 26 new cameras and they incurred no additional capital costs. Once online, the 26 cameras will immediately integrate into the Cloudastructure centralized management system.

Looking to the Future:

The University is looking to deploy some of Cloudastructure's newer features such as:

- Counting – to better understand occupancy in some of their more publicly accessible buildings like the library
- Mask detection and compliance monitoring – to ensure students can return safely License plate recognition
- Bad actor search – to rapidly find where a bad actor has been on campus and where they are currently

And, the IT dept. is moving more of its hardware to a virtual server environment to reduce costs and simplify management. When Cloudastructure learned of this, they offered to deploy their CVR software in the virtual server environment. The University is now operating some of its CVR capabilities in the virtual server eliminating the need for rack-mounted servers.

"Cloudastructure's response to our ongoing surveillance needs has been incredible. They are a great partner to work with and have allowed me to focus on the safety and security of the students and staff instead of the headaches of managing an on-premise solution."

—IT Administrator, in the U.C. system