Securing the evidence.

State forensic lab keeps building secure with networked security system.

Organization:
Michigan state police's
forensic science lab

Location:
State of Michigan, USA

Industry segment:
Government

Application:
Remote monitoring
of facility

Mission

When the Michigan state police's forensic science lab moved from a building on the headquarters compound to a new off-site facility, the lab needed a cutting-edge security system that would allow officers at the compound to remotely monitor the facility.

Solution

The lab worked with Axis Communications, Cisco Systems®, and Honeywell to develop a state-of-the-art networked security system, complete with integrated surveillance video, access control devices and intrusion detection.

Result

The result is a cost-efficient security system integrated over the computer network, providing authorized personnel with real-time information via a secure connection to the state of Michigan's private intranet.

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Detective Lieutenant Bob Slick, Michigan State Police

Investigating security options

The Michigan State Police's Forensic Science Lab, located in Lansing, Mich., is a nationally accredited crime lab. Because the analysis of crime evidence is a highly controlled process, evidence must be protected and secured at all times. No one is admitted into the building without proper screening and security clearances. In addition, those permitted have limited access and are closely monitored.

When the lab was located on the police compound, it used the compound's traditional gated entrances, analog cameras and guards to keep the evidence secure. However, when the lab moved off site, there were no secure entrances in place or guards to monitor daily activities. "When the lab was on the police compound, security was easier because of the surrounding safety measures," said Detective Lieutenant Bob Slick. "As we were planning the move, we knew we would have more than 60 employees accessing a building in a more open area. We recognized the situation and started planning a 24-hour security system that would enable us to keep a close watch on all activities."

Keeping order

The Michigan State Police selected Honeywell, an international technology and manufacturing leader, to design and install the security system. Using its own Digital Video Manager surveillance system, network video technology from Axis Communications, and a Cisco fiber-optic network infrastructure, Honeywell created a solution that reduces security risks, improves employee productivity, and uses network integration and intelligence to lower the total cost of ownership.

Axis network video technology is designed to integrate over the network with various security devices, such as access control and intrusion detection systems, making it ideal for complex security installations. For the new lab facility, Axis video servers were used to digitize the images from analog security cameras. The images can

then be linked to the Honeywell access control and intrusion detection data and transmitted over the local area network (LAN) powered by Cisco and the state's intranet. Now when police at the remote operations center at the compound receive an alarm, they can access real-time images from the Axis network video system using a standard web browser and Honeywell's Digital Video Manager system. This allows them to visually verify the cause of the alarm and whether the incident requires further investigation.

Because Honeywell integrated the Axis network video solution with the access control and intrusion detection system, images can be taken as an employee uses a proximity card to access restricted areas. This allows images of the person accessing the room to be matched against images of the actual cardholder, providing visual proof that the person using the card is authorized to do so. In addition, the Honeywell intrusion detection system notfies police when a door is left open, whether accidentally or otherwise, and the networked video technology allows them to determine whether a breach has occurred.

"The security system has saved us a lot of time and money because we no longer have to send officers out to investigate every false alarm," said Detective Lieutenant Slick. "In addition, too many false alarms can breed complacency, so reducing them keeps our officers alert when they are called to the building." If an alarm occurs, the digital video management system saves images from before, during and after the alarm. This way, officers can review the events and determine whether the images need to be saved for evidence. If there is no incident, the images are discarded.

"The overall security system is efficient because Honeywell's software and integration enable us to operate one system for all of our security components," said Detective Lieutenant Slick. "In addition, everything runs over our computer network, which saved us money by not having to install a separate network for our complex security needs."

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